



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

No cuts

Pat Fua <patfua@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:28 PM

You cannot cut teachers



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

Testimony

BRANDI TULANG MAHUNA <bmahuna@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:34 PM

Teachers are already under paid. I feel that working from home has made me appreciate being in the classroom so much more. A 20% pay cut would put my family in a big bind. I have a hard time as it is paying for my mortgage, household bills and for a baby sitter. Not to mention teachers DO NOT qualify for any assistance such as SNAP or QUEST medical. Taking a 20% pay cut would be very devastating "living" wise for myself and my 5 children.



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

Pay cuts for teachers

Gary Roberts <isamathteacher@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:36 PM

As a single elder person, pay cuts would force me to return to the mainland where what I make pays the bills.

Gary Roberts
Curriculum Coordinator/RTI/Registrar



Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

S.M. Yamauchi <sm.yamauchi@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:36 PM

Dear HI BOE,

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my family but the students I serve as well. cutting teacher salaries is a bad idea. For instance:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. My math partner who has dialysis-related health issues was told that her job line was cut and she has an elderly mother to care for as well! What is going to happen to her? I am worried!
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. My team's elective wheel position had a long term sub this entire spring 2020 semester. Our Japanese language classroom had a long term sub and the sub. teacher was not certified in the subject of Japanese.

My name is Shirley Yamauchi.

I have been teaching at Kapolei Middle School, Leeward, for twenty years now. I am a grade seven, English language arts teacher.

Shirley M. Yamauchi
HSTA Leeward Chapter President
Hawaii State Teachers Association, Leeward
Cell: (808) 387-7281

<https://yesforourkeiki.com/why/>
<https://www.stitchfix.com/referral/13325745>
<http://www.isecretshop.com/register/1112247>



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

Testimony for May 7 agenda

Meggan Lint <lint.meggan@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:36 PM

Hi! My name is Meggan Lint and I am a 7th grade Special Education teacher at Ewa Makai Middle. I am urging you to not cut teacher salary. As a teacher who moved here from the mainland I am living on a much lower salary than I would back home. I moved here because I knew I wanted to support a community that is rich in culture. Cutting salary for teachers would make it much more difficult to live on the islands and for me to do my job well. It is already costly to live on the islands with rent, groceries, and overall well-being. Reducing teacher salary would cause me to move away from a place and from keiki that I love. Please look at other alternatives before reducing teacher salary. The students and communities deserve to have teachers who are qualified and love to do their job. Teachers are teaching our future business owners, entrepreneurs, nurses, lawyers, doctors, and such. Please give them the tools to be successful to go out into the world to make a difference.

Sincerely,

A teacher who loves her job



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

Teacher Salary Reductions

Erica Puu <ericapuu@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:37 PM

Aloha,

Please reconsider any pay reduction for Hawaii's public school teachers.

I have been teaching in the DOE for 19 years. I am one of the teachers who have been most affected by pay compression issues. I am only holding on because of retirement benefits that I will be eligible for in 14 years (with 33 years of service). If teachers receive a pay cut, I will immediately begin seeking employment elsewhere. It is already difficult to survive on my current salary. A 20% pay cut will be impossible to overcome. I won't be able to pay my mortgage. My 11th grade child will not be able to go to college. I will not be on track for retirement. I will not be able to afford to continue teaching in the DOE. I am worth more. My students are worth more. Hawaii's keiki are worth more.

Erica Kaneshiro
Kindergarten teacher



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

Testimony for 5/7/20

Jennie Hancock <mrshancock808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:37 PM

Aloha,

My name is Jennie Hancock, a 5th grade teacher at Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School on the Big Island. Cutting teacher pay will drive my family from Hawaii because we will no longer be able to afford our rent. I've worked tirelessly for Hawaii Public Schools since 2012. During this time when I've been working hard to provide quality learning and connection to my students while keeping my own child engaged in his teacher's efforts, the idea of pay cuts is sickening. Please find another way to balance the budget, because if I (and others like me) leave Hawaii or the profession it will hurt the students of Hawaii not just next school year but for years to come.

Sincerely,

Jennie Hancock
5th Grade Teacher
Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School



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

Salary cuts

Melany Savard <melj1717@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:38 PM

My name is Melany Savard, and I am the student services coordinator at Kahalu'u Elementary. I am strongly against the proposed pay cuts. My salary is not enough for me to live on independently in this state. Now there's a proposal to cut my salary significantly!

If this cut goes through, Hawaii will lose MANY teachers. I will be one of them. As a teacher with dual licensure in elementary and special education I know I can relocate to a state that I can afford to live in and easily get a job. I urge you all to reconsider this pay cut and look for other alternatives.

Sincerely,
Melany Savard

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device



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

Pay cuts

Matt O'Brien <mattobrien324@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:43 PM

I am just getting back on my feet after the 5% pay cut several years ago. My wife and I are living from paycheck to paycheck because of the cost of living in Hawaii. If you reduce my salary I will have to move to the mainland. I do not want to leave my students or Hawaii. We already have a shortage of experienced teachers in Hawaii. The proposed pay cut would be devastating. One of the last places budget cuts should affect is education. These kids are our future. It is hard enough to get money for education as it is. I am a science teacher which requires me to offer lots of hands-on scientific study. I already spend my own money to make sure my kids get the best education I can give them. This Proposed pay cut would make it impossible for me to stay in Hawaii. It would be devastating.

Best regards
Matthew OBrien



NO Pay Cuts!

Pi'ikea Kalakau-Baarde to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 12:44 PM

From: "Pi'ikea Kalakau-Baarde" <piiikeakalakau@gmail.com>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Board of Education Members,

In considering all options for balancing budgets during this pandemic, please do not cut teacher pay. Our keiki deserve a quality education and pay cuts of any kind will be extremely detrimental to ensuring educational equity in Hawai'i. We are already facing a drastic teacher shortage, and cutting teacher pay will exacerbate this problem further. Also, our local economy will suffer more as growing families face hunger and houselessness in light of pay reductions and job loss. Many local families depend on a teacher or state worker's income, and a 20% reduction will be extremely difficult to recover from. Please do not balance the budget on the backs of Hawai'i's public school teachers and children.

--

Mahalo Nui,

Pi'ikea Kalakau-Baarde, MEd

808-429-0466



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

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries

Rachael Fujii <rachaelfujii@yahoo.com>
Reply-To: "rachaelfujii@yahoo.com" <rachaelfujii@yahoo.com>
To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:44 PM

Dear Board of Education,

Please do not cut teachers' salaries. Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only negatively impact my family, it would also hit the students we serve as well. By saying this I mean more students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would also be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. Thank you for listening to us.

Me Ke Aloha,

Rachael Watson

Pu'u Kukui Elementary School

K-2 School Counselor

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



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

Salary cuts

Carol Gray <carolgray3@mac.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:44 PM

Aloha,

I have fifteen years experience teaching middle and high school in East Hawaii schools. I have always taught in full inclusion classrooms in schools with large percentages of low income and at risk students. I have a Masters in Teaching and am highly qualified in social studies and science and also certified in Teaching English for Speakers of other languages. I love teaching in Hawaii, after 15 years I walk into my school every day thinking I have the best job in the world.

However, I will not be able to afford to stay a teacher in Hawaii with a 20% cut in my salary. My husband is disabled and I am the primary breadwinner for my household, we have been able to tough it out with stagnate wages so far, but we will have to move someplace with more affordable cost of living if this cut takes place.

Carol Gray
Pahoa, HI



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

Covid-19 and ramifications of pay reduction

Katherine Brown <katecitrustwo@msn.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:44 PM

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

We should not even be considering the proposed pay cuts that Gov Ige has in mind. It would mean senior teachers would retire. Others would leave the state to teach elsewhere. Unqualified teachers and substitutes would be in the classroom. Already there is a teacher shortage and the Keiki are the ones who are missing out on good education.

Katherine Brown

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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Kristina De Witt <kristinakauai@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:45 PM

Dear BOE,

My name is Kristina De Witt. I am a special education teacher teaching in a fully self contained classroom at Pearl Harbor Elementary School.

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me (as I live paycheck to paycheck) but the students teachers serve as well. Teachers are currently working harder than ever to discover new and engaging ways to provide instruction for their students. Cuts would cause more students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would force senior teachers into early retirement (they will make more off retirement). Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. Students would be provided education from an unqualified professional who is led under the direction of qualified teachers. Which makes more work for these teachers and takes away from their time to prepare for their own students. These teachers work day and night to help their unqualified colleagues and prepare quality instruction for their own students.

I am concerned for our Keiki! Please do not reduce teachers' salaries!



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

Please Don't Cut Teacher Pay

Laura Shaler <lshaler3@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:46 PM

Aloha,

I am a highly qualified, passionate educator who chose to come to Hawaii from California last year. I love our schools and our keiki and I hope to continue to share my expertise with our beautiful community.

At 40 years old, with two masters degrees, I must share an apartment with two roommates order to meet my expenses. Not only that but I drained my California teachers' retirement to cover moving expenses and make up the gap between my income and expenses.

I cannot stay here with a salary cut. I am out of savings and was just barely going to cover expenses next year due to a second job I am working and reclassifying plus the 3.5% raise. I cannot work three jobs, there's not enough time in the day.

This is not right for our teachers and not right for our keiki. They need teachers who can put their full energy into teaching; not teachers who are trying to find third jobs.

Please consider alternate options. Why is the property tax here 75% less than California? Increase property taxes for nonresidents before forcing teachers like me to subsidize tourism with our salaries.

Sincerely,
Laura Shaler
Kindergarten Teacher
Kihei Elementary



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

Teacher salaries

Janet Chou <jchou@lihikaischool.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:46 PM

Aloha,

I am a teacher who is currently on the lowest level of the pay scale and need to make ends meet while attending school online myself. Each day since I was hired as a teacher I have been working past my allotted work hours to provide students in my Title I school quality education to the best of my ability. I am on the lowest level of the pay scale because I am a new teacher who was brought in because there is a teacher shortage in Hawaii. I learn from the more experienced teachers around me, some who are able to retire but continue to work as a teacher. More students will go without licensed teachers if pay cuts drive senior teachers into early retirement. There is already a lack of qualified teachers in Hawaii. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession.

Mahalo for your consideration. I will be praying for an outcome that will not result in students losing out on educational opportunities due to the loss of income for teachers.

Janet Chou



testimony

Tani Saito to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 12:47 PM

From: "Tani Saito" <tani.saito@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hello BOE,

My name is Tani Saito and I am a tenured special education teacher at Campbell High School, working there for the past 8 years. I appreciate the sped differential that went into effect, as it has allowed me to save up on a mortgage to purchase a house here in Hawaii. I was never able to save up for a mortgage based on my income before the differential, as my salary was just enough to cover my bills, rent, and child care.

If there is a 19.2% cut in my salary, I would lose my dream of being able to afford a mortgage here in Hawaii, and I would have to withdraw from the current offer I made to buy my dream home. I will not be able to afford to live in Hawaii with a paycut. It is unfortunate that teachers are being considered for this 19.2% pay cut as we support Hawaii's keiki daily and provide them with the highest level of differentiated instruction and support. Special education teachers have worked so hard to earn the differential, as we consistently meet with parents for IEP meetings throughout the year, and even stay at school as late as 6pm while holding IEP meetings with parents. Sped teachers will pretty much lose their hard earned differential with the 19.2% pay cut. Please reconsider the potential paycut and take care of the teachers in Hawaii, as we take care of all our keiki in Hawaii.

--

Mahalo,

Tani Saito
Special Education Teacher
James Campbell High School
Room: F4
808.305.3804

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

Say no to pay cuts

Maile W <mailewikum@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:47 PM

Aloha,

My name is Maile Wikum and I am a Librarian at Konawaena Elementary School on the Big Island. Please consider any other way to balance the state's budget rather than cut teachers' pay. Many of the teachers I know and work with already have doubts about continuing to be a teacher. Some were ready to look for work elsewhere because their salary wasn't providing enough for them to stay and teach in Hawaii. Luckily they decided to stay due to the incentive payments for Hard to fill positions. Our poor kids at our school have been learning from several long term subs. They are great teachers but struggle with management and keeping up because of their lack of training.

If these cuts happen there is a guarantee that this will be the case for many more of our already struggling students. Add to their struggles an unqualified teacher who also is struggling and our keiki get the worst of it all just so we can balance the budget. Please look elsewhere or soon we will need to have 40+ Kindergartners in a small classroom. We already do not have enough substitutes as it is so this will be the new normal if the cuts go through. I beg of you, do it for the keiki.

Mahalo,
Maile Wikum



Do not reduce teachers' salaries

Brittini Dilwith <brittnijanae@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:48 PM

Hi,

My name is Brittini Ramos and I am a special education teacher at Holomua Elementary School. I currently continue to service students on a one-on-one basis through distance learning, conduct and facilitate IEP meetings, and provide students and their families social emotional support in this devastating time. Should the state decide to cut salaries by 19.62% through directed leave without pay or supplemental time off without pay, my students, who are the most vulnerable, will go without the services they need to have access to their education. These students are entitled to specific services, modifications and accommodations that are provided by a highly qualified teacher in accordance to federal law and their individualized educational plan. This cannot be carried out if they do not have a teacher to do so. These proposed salary cuts will force highly qualified teachers to retire or quit the profession altogether because of the high cost of living in Hawaii. Our most vulnerable students will be left with teachers who are unqualified to meet their unique needs. The salary cuts the governor is proposing will only continue to widen the gap between students with disabilities and their general education peers.

My daughter is also at a public elementary school. While her teacher has been fantastic at providing enrichment activities weekly, checking in regularly, and providing face-to-face contact, this cannot replace the education that is provided in school. I feel that my daughter and her peers are entitled to a full school year in the fall. Cutting teacher salaries by 19.62% through directed leave without pay or supplemental time off without pay with take away from learning time. Our kids education should not suffer because of a deficit in money when the governor has access to other options. Not providing education to our students with highly qualified teachers will have a long lasting impact on our communities and our economy in the future. How will our children provide for themselves in the future if they do not have adequate access to an education they should be entitled to?

When making your decision please consider the impact that your decision will have on our children, our future.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Brittini Ramos



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

Possible teacher pay cuts

Kathryn Whitman <kathryn@kalo.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:48 PM

Aloha-I am a Big Island special education teacher, and I love my job and students. Please do not reduce Hawaii teacher pay if at all possible! As we all know, our pay is already lower than it should be, especially given our cost of living.

The results of pay cuts will be devastating to both teachers and students. Quality, veteran teachers will likely retire in large numbers, and younger teachers will be forced to either move out of state for better teacher pay or leave the teaching profession altogether in order to make ends meet. Because of the pay reduction, the state will be unable to hire qualified teachers to replace them, and students will suffer, being taught by less qualified, long term subs.

Please consider every other option before resorting to such drastic measures!

Mahalo, Katy Whitman
Sent from my iPhone



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

Don't cut teacher salaries

Amy M <amypopieski@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:49 PM

Aloha,

I teach math at Kailua Intermediate School. I am concerned about the proposed salary cuts for teachers. I understand that there are serious budget concerns for the state but it isn't right to make the keiki suffer to balance the budget. A reduction in teacher salaries would make it harder to retain and recruit teachers. My own family would need to consider moving from the state if I suffered a twenty percent pay cut, leaving you short another qualified math teacher. Please find another way to manage the budget.

Amy Spencer

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony Against Teacher Salary Reduction

Amber Fontes <arf22@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:49 PM

Aloha,

My name is Amber Fontes and I am a teacher at Kohala Middle School. This is my 3rd year as a teacher. I teach study skills, financial literacy, and a special motivational program to students in grades 6 - 8. I am asking you, please do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only affect me and my family but the students I serve as well. I already am having to move schools for next school year due to lack of affordable housing in my area. I can barely survive on my salary now, as a beginning teacher. Please do not make this any harder on us new teachers. These pay cuts will also hurt my students as more students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Thank you for your time and help,
Amber Fontes



HALT PAY CUTS

Brenda Palumbo to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 12:49 PM

From: "Brenda Palumbo" <brenda.palumbo@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Members of the BOE:

I am the ELL teacher for Lana'i middle and high school. If the threatened pay reduction is put into effect you can rest assured that it will be the students, their families and our communities as well as our teachers who will suffer the consequences.

Lana'i High and Elementary School already struggles mightily to bring on board qualified, licensed teachers due to the EXTREMELY high cost of living here. Imagine how much more difficult the task is going to be with a pay cut!

These are terrible financial times granted, but the burden should not be born on the backs of your teachers.

Brenda Palumbo
LHES

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

re: do not cut teachers' pay

Teresita/Chris Neuhart <neuhart@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:50 PM

Aloha,

I am a kindergarten teacher at Kaunakakai School on Molokai. I kindly ask that teachers' pay do not get cut or compromised in any way. Teachers here already feel the economic strains of the high cost of living on Molokai and in Hawaii. We have families to support, mouths to feed and bills to pay. On Molokai, we have one the highest gas prices, electric/water rates, food costs and those are just a few to mention. If you've never been to our island and have never experienced living here, you would not know the cost to live here. Cutting our pay means we'd have to obtain second jobs which I feel will affect our ability to focus on our students and their educational needs. I have been in the school system for over 20 years and have been a teacher for almost 13 years. I love being a teacher and I love my students! I would like to continue being a teacher for as long as I am physically and mentally able! Please help me and other teachers by not cutting our pay!

Aloha Pumehana,
Tere Neuhart, Kindergarten Teacher
Molokai



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

Response to Your Draft of COVID-19 Re-Balancing Framework

Ashley Katamoto <akatomoto13@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:51 PM

Dear Superintendent Christina Kishimoto,

My name is Ashley Katamoto and I have been working for University Laboratory School public charter for 7 years. I teach visual art to grades 6-12.

I have read through your proposed presentation for Thursday, May 7 and I do not agree with your plan to reduce our already low salaries. The governor has stated he is looking into alternative plans to prevent reducing state workers salaries and we are still awaiting to see if another CARES act will be signed to help the states with their revenue losses.

You say your approach is students centered, but our students deserve better. Your teachers are their first contacts in the schools and by putting additional financial strain on teachers, you will lose more teachers to other states and other professions as well as increase the shortage of qualified teachers in our state. Not only that, but be a reduction of salary and freezing negotiated pay increases, this will only cause our economy to sink further into a recession as people stop spending for the fear that they will not make enough money to get by.

Please consider other options before making decisions that will gravely impact the lives of all the teachers in your state.

Thank you,
Ashley Katamoto



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

Proposed salary cuts

Cara Gebhard <gebsemail@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:51 PM

Aloha BOE members,

I urge you to find alternative ways to solve our State's financial woes other than cutting our pay. As a veteran teacher/counselor, I clearly recognize the impact this decision will have on our educational landscape. Our young, promising teachers will leave the profession because they can barely afford to live on their current salaries. I see this year after year in my school's complex and district. I know of young couples who struggle to pay their rent and utilities with what they currently earn. Sadly, my own niece is leaving the profession after the school year is over.

Teaching and educating our youth is tougher than ever and retaining qualified teachers with a lower salary scale will devastate these teachers and force them to leave the profession. Please do not support cutting teacher salaries.

Mahalo,
Cara Gebhard
Highlands Intermediate



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

Do not cut teachers' pay!

Kimi Kawachi <kimikawachi@yahoo.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:51 PM

Reply-To: "kimikawachi@yahoo.com" <kimikawachi@yahoo.com>

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

Time and time again it is the teachers who have to save the economy. We are not wealthy people. We are barely scraping by. The high cost of living makes it really difficult to pay a mortgage in Hawaii. I am a single mother of three kids. I worked extremely hard to obtain two Masters degrees in teaching. I am dual certified in both general education and special education. I work long hours and put my heart and soul into my class and students. It is so disheartening that every time the state needs money the first thing to go is teacher pay. We rarely get a raise, and if we do it is 1-3%. Then we get a pay cut of 20%! We are undervalued and unappreciated. Why can't Larry Ellison or Mark Zuckerberg chip in this time? They own large swaths of land in Hawaii, but the economy can only be fixed with a pay cut for teachers? How do we expect to keep teachers? How do we expect to have an educated populace? My heart breaks I feel so unappreciated.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



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

Do not lower our salary

Chelsea Wily <wilychelsea@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:52 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Chelsea Wily. I currently teach 2nd grade at Sunset Beach Elementary School. I am a mother of 5 children. I went back to school with 4 children to get my degree to become a teacher. I love teaching and I love my students. I find it hard to afford the supplies I need for my class work and often come out of pocket to purchase items needed for my class. It is hard to balance the needs of my family and my students (who I consider my children). I already make next to nothing. I have 5 mouths to feed at home. I have bills to cover and can barely meet them now. I am paying off student loans which helped me earn the degree to teach. I pay money out of pocket to earn PD credits to try and raise my pay level. Everything is on us already as it is. We need more support and higher pay. We are asked to do so much more with distant learning and we gladly do it. We love our students and families. But decreasing our pay would be a huge slap in the face. It would be almost impossible to survive.

Please reconsider possibly ways to sort this out.

Chelsea Wily
Sunset Beach Elementary School
Windward District

Sent from my iPhone



A Call to Action From a Special Education Teacher

Lilian Rebamonte to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/04/2020 12:52 PM

From: "Lilian Rebamonte" <lilianbr@outlook.com>

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

To the Members of the Hawaii Board of Education,

My name is Lilian Rebamonte and I am a special education teacher at Holomua Elementary School in Ewa Beach (one of three multi-track schools in the state). I would like to take this opportunity, out of a busy, stressful day of distance learning planning and teaching, virtual meetings, and special education paperwork to urge you to reject salary cut options.

As a single parent, I already have an enormous amount of financial responsibilities and burdens and am forced to request help from family and friends often. I have, on numerous occasions, pondered my ability and willingness to remain in Hawaii when I could easily return to a special education position in Nevada where I previously taught.

With the differentials recently provided to Hawaii special education teachers, I have been able to remain right here in my home state, teaching students with special needs. Please don't make a decision that would make it difficult for me to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. I surely would really reconsider moving back to the mainland which would leave an already difficult to staff special education position open to be filled by long-term subs and unqualified teachers.

Please think about the teachers who want to stay and teach in Hawaii and think about the keiki who will be affected if their teachers have to leave because they cannot afford to live in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration!

Sincerely,
Lilian Rebamonte



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

Testimony of a special education teacher

Madeline Bucheit <madelinebucheit@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:53 PM

To whom it may concern,

Please consider the effects of cutting teacher salary on both the lives of Hawaii's teachers and students. As a three year fully self contained special education teacher for grades k-2 In the Honolulu district salary cuts would not allow for me to pay rent and would force me to return to the mainland in search of sustainable pay. I do not want to leave this beautiful island nor leave a vacancy at my school subjecting my students to unqualified or long term substitutes but I will not be able to afford the cost of living here if the salary of teachers is cut.

Thank you for your time,
Madeline Bucheit

FSC SPED Teacher
Queen Kaahumanu Elementary School



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

Not right to cut teacher pay!

Kimi Kawachi <kimikawachi@yahoo.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:54 PM

Reply-To: "kimikawachi@yahoo.com" <kimikawachi@yahoo.com>

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

it is not right that we make less than a manager at Panda Express or Taco Bell. Please don't disrespect us any more!

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Kimberly Tangaro <ktangaro@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:45 PM

Aloha Hawaii State Board of Education Directors,

Thank you for taking time to read my message and testimony.

My name is Kimberly B Tangaro. I am a High School Spanish teacher at Mililani High School. I am a single mother of two middle school students who attend Mililani Middle School. I also have a part time job teaching English online through VIPKid to supplement my income.

PLEASE DO NOT REDUCE TEACHER'S PAY! We are under paid 10-month employees who work well beyond our contracted hours. Many of us have part time jobs to supplement our income in order to live above the low income/poverty line established for the cost of living in Hawaii.

Discussing a 20% pay cut to already underpaid educators is disheartening not to mention causing extra stress that has come to our entire nation as a result of COVID19 restrictions. Gov. David Ige has publicly stated that he is looking into alternatives, such as borrowing from the Federal Reserve and waiting for more state stimulus funding from Congress.

Please consider other options.

If you do reduce teacher salaries by 20%, please be the servant leaders you expect us to be by taking a 25% pay cut as you stand in solidarity with us.

Sincerely,
Kimberly B Tangaro
808-778-3009



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Señora Blanco <kehaulani.white@mililanihs.k12.hi.us>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:54
PM

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

Aloha Hawaii State Board of Education Directors,

Thank you for taking time to read my message and testimony.

My name is Kehaulani White. I am a High School Spanish teacher at Mililani High School. My husband and I are both DOE educators for over ten years and parents of 4 children. Two of them are in the DOE system in a pearl city school. My husband and I both part time musicians that gig monthly to supplement our household income.

PLEASE DO NOT REDUCE TEACHER'S PAY! We are under paid 10-month employees who work well beyond our contracted hours. Many of us have part time jobs to supplement our income in order to live above the low income/poverty line established for the cost of living in Hawaii.

Discussing a 20% pay cut to already underpaid educators is disheartening not to mention causing extra stress that has come to our entire nation as a result of COVID19 restrictions. Gov. David Ige has publicly stated that he is looking into alternatives, such as borrowing from the Federal Reserve and waiting for more state stimulus funding from Congress.

Please consider other options.

If you do reduce teacher salaries by 20%, please be the servant leaders you expect us to be by taking a 25% pay cut as you stand in solidarity with us.

Sincerely,
Kehaulani White
808-728-7733

--

Kehaulani White "Señora Blanco"

Dept. Head- World Languages

Advisor- Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica, Capítulo "El Oleaje"

classroom N-202 ph.#307-4333



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

I BEG OF YOU...

Kristy Ku <kristyku4@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:56 PM

Please, do NOT cut the salary of our teachers. I am a new mother, and the devastating cut would force me to leave this profession. I love my job, I love our keiki, and I cannot bear to see my daughter grow up in a school system with unqualified teachers.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Kristy Ku
First Grade Teacher
Kohala Elementary School

Kristy Ku'uipo Ku

PO Box 190775
Hawi, HI 96719
808-345-8435

--

Kristy Ku'uipo Ku

PO Box 190775
Hawi, HI 96719
808-345-8435



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

Teacher Salary Reduction

Bo Frank <radfordrams@hotmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:56 PM

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

Aloha BOE,

Thank you for reading my testimony. My partner and I are both teachers who over the past 20 years have been on the short hand of the salary schedule and still haven't reached the top after 20 years of service. We have taken pay cuts, been furloughed and forced to both work second jobs. We both have masters degrees and I am a PhD candidate, yet our teaching salary and second jobs combined still only leave us with enough funds to live pay check to pay check while supporting the three children we adopted. We adopted because wanted to help kids and provide them a better life but finances make it difficult.

If we face pay cuts of 20% each, that is 40% of our income. Any pay cut would be detrimental. Already living check to check this would devastate our family and and finally break us, forcing our hand to leave the profession we were called to do, and possibly even have to leave our home state and family to go to one of the several other states that do not balance budgets with Keiki and schools! We are both proud graduates of Hawaii public schools and would like our children to be also! Please help us!

Please, I urge you, on the welfare of my family and my children and all the students that we inspire to do great things, fight the budget cuts on the table for our teachers!

Mahalo,

Bo Frank
Radford High School Teacher
Moanalua High School Graduate

Sent from my iPhone



Do not reduce teachers' salaries

Tani Chamberlin <tani.chamberlin@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:56 PM

Aloha,

I stand by HSTA and my fellow colleagues and urge you not to cut or reduce teachers' salaries. The school that I teach at is a hard to staff school so we are already struggling to find new teachers as well as keep current teachers. These poor students are being left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers and I can imagine that it would only get worse if teachers' salaries are cut or reduced. I have already heard from numerous colleagues that if these cuts are made, they would be forced to move out of state where the teacher salaries are higher. Teachers can barely afford the cost of living while on the current salary and cutting our salaries would definitely make it even harder to live here. I was born and raised in Hawai'i and lived here my entire life. It would be very sad that I would have to leave my home to live somewhere else that is more affordable because of these cuts in my salary. For most, a 20% reduction would be a \$800 cut per month. So here are my questions, what would you do if you lost out on \$800 a month. How would you adjust your budget? What would you cut out so you could afford to live here?

I have dedicated my life to educating the youth in Hawai'i and I would hate to throw that all away to move to the mainland where the cost of living is lower and the salary is higher.

Thank you for your time,
Tani Chamberlin
Kealakehe Elementary School Grade 2 teacher

--

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

Testimony

Courtney Dinges <ccdinges@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:56 PM

To whom it may concern:

If Governor Ige put the 20% paycut in effect, he would cause me to have to evacuate Hawai'i, my home for the past 17 years. I would leave my kindergarten teaching job for the past 10 years at Wailuku elementary school (a title 1 school) because I would not financially be able to support myself. He is literally kicking me out of my home and my school. I have worked so hard at completing PD classes and growing myself as an educator and Governor Ige is pulling through rug right from under me. Having to wait til June 1st to find out our financial future is not ok, this has been the most stressful weeks since finding out that this was a possibility. Do not cut teachers pay, it truly breaks my heart that you would do this to us.

Courtney Fullmer

Sent from my iPhone



Please do not reduce teacher pay

MWIS STEMworks <mwis.suzuki@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:57 PM

Aloha,

My name is Jennifer Suzuki and I have been teaching for 21 years, 20 of which have been at Maui Waena Intermediate School. I went through the strikes and the furloughs, and was finally looking forward to an equitable pay raise, as we are the absolute lowest paid teachers in the nation based on the adjustment for the cost of living.

Teaching is not my job, it is my life. I spend everyday after school with my students and most weekends, I take them to state and national media and robotics competitions. My students have run a summer program for the past 4 years, and I am not getting paid for even half of this. That is my choice. If my pay were to be decreased by 20% I don't know if I can afford to do what I do. I spend thousands of my own dollars on my students and program, along with the time. I feel like I, and so many teachers I know, give everything they have to their students.

I am personally insulted by this proposal, but even more I am worried about my students. I have 3 former students who are becoming teachers, and none of them plan on teaching here because of the pay. It is heartbreaking to think that we were chasing caring, young, smart educators away even before this national emergency. How do we expect to give the best to our students when we are consistently underpaid and not given the respect we really do deserve.

Most importantly though, how are we going to help create our future leaders, if our students are not given the very best instruction, and this will not be possible if teachers are chased away by low pay. This leaves our students at a disadvantage. They are left with long term subs, if they are lucky, and a rotation of subs if they are not. What kind of message are we sending them if we don't care enough to provide them with highly qualified and satisfied teachers.

We realize that times are hard now and I for one am willing to put a hold on raises and steps until we can bounce back, but our education system may not bounce back from the mass exodus that a 20% pay reduction would force.

Respectfully,

--

Jennifer Suzuki
Media Teacher
Coordinator
STEMworks AFTERSchool Program
Maui Waena Intermediate School
808-385-2942



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

NO pay cut

Sanoe Kalahiki <skalahiki01@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:58 PM

Aloha,

My name is Sanoe Kalahiki and I am a special education teacher for the FSC-D program at Castle High School. My students are at risk youth from struggling families that also have IEP's. They need to be surrounded by as many qualified and hard working teachers and educators as possible to succeed. If these pay cuts happen teachers will have to find other ways to make money and this will directly affect the students we serve. My students have no other safe place but school. I already work too jobs even though I am a full time teacher. The work we do and the amount we have of it is already not comparable to what we get paid. A cut will just make the situation worse. Bringing in less qualified teachers, cheaper teachers, and in some cases teachers that are not even from here and struggle to build rapport and relate to our local students will only further weaken our current education system.

There are other areas that can be cut. Look at those instead of cutting from the people that are actually working. Less teachers equal a lower level of education, which in turn will cripple our economy and society not only now but in our future as well. Think long term, not short term band aid.

mahalo



Testimony against 20% cuts

Joyce Vea <joycebvea@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:58 PM

Aloha,

I am a school counselor for the HIDOE at Waimea Canyon Middle School on the island of Kauai. I have dedicated 12 years to the DOE. I am very concerned about our state leadership, policy makers, and our educational leaders (DOE, BOE) continuing to threaten our profession as well as threatening the education of this generation of keiki. It is disheartening to feel like you leaders are giving the public lip service as to the proposed 20% pay cuts. It has been heavily reported and researched that our profession in Hawaii already lacks highly qualified teachers with low pay (in comparison to our counterparts on the mainland) being one of the main points. I am appalled that during a global pandemic, you (our "leaders") are putting the burden of balancing the state budget on the backs of educators, state workers, first responders, and our keiki. SHAME ON YOU! If this proposal passes, it will have a massive negative impact on our state community. Teachers will leave the profession by way of retiring early or moving away to another state - we already have a hard time filling these vacant positions with subs that are not highly qualified. This impacts our children's learning - how do you expect schools to close the gap if you (as a collective leadership) refuse to acknowledge that this is a problem? I also foresee that cutting our pay will directly send the message to our youngsters that education is not a field that they want to go into. There will be continued turnover and openings at schools across the state and our children will suffer. As an educator, it is quite easy for me to see the short and long term implications of enforcing a 20% pay cut. I urge you to consider other options that would not negatively impact our state community. If the priority of the state is to balance the budget instead of caring about people and children, then I would say that it is time for you all to reevaluate your "why" and find a way to be courageous to do the right thing during this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Joyce B. Vea



No to Cutting Salaries!

Lauren Fuchigami <laurenfuchigami@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 12:59 PM

Hey, i'm Lauren Fuchigami. I am a 5th grade teacher at Queen Kaahumanu Elementary. I am also a new teacher finishing up my 2nd year of teaching. So far, I have loved it. My admin is extremely supportive and I have found an excellent team and fellow teachers who have given me loads of support through this process. Absolutely no one at my school has given me a reason to leave, nor give up in this profession even when students can get tough. I hear a lot of stories about why many teachers leave (unsupportive staff/team or lack of funds/resources) and I am so lucky that has never been an issue for me. During the year, I am pulling a 7am-4pm work schedule to prepare and create awesome lessons for our students, and volunteer with our after school basketball team and tutoring of SPED students which has drastically changed the dynamic of our students this year.

I am a teacher who graduated from a teacher preparation program (UHM), have a certificate of teaching and was born and raised in Hawaii. I am 24 years old and currently living at home with my parents until I can boost the already low salary I have. Within the next 2 years, I have planned to move to a new condo in Kakaako and getting ready to pay those bills. I also was planning to go back to school to further my credentials.

IF my salary were to be cut, every thing I've been planning for would disappear. I would be bringing in about \$1000 a paycheck with these cuts which does not help my future \$800 rent. This rent has drastically been compromised based off the salary I have now. I would also not be able to go back to school without being years within student debt. I was going to use these credits from my Masters program to move me up in steps in the pay process. You would lose a 1 year to almost tenured teacher who found no other reason to quit other than the cut. I would have to reduce or completely stop feeding into my 401K at the age of 24 in order to meet all my other needs.

I have pulled countless long days and weekends (as do other teachers) to bring the success I have with my students with the salary I have now. If I were to stay 1 more year with these cuts, that would mean cut and dry 8-3 contract hours and no basketball/after school tutoring. We all know that structured sports or group activities and individualized extra help has proven dramatic success within students. It teaches them responsibility, group-skills, communication, and accountability. We've been able to change around behaviors of students who have the "hard student" reputation. We've been able to get students who have family history of criminal activity to rethink their choices and take a more positive route. We come from a demographic of students whose families can't afford, nor have the time to enroll their students in extra-curricular activities. If we don't keep the programs we do, our students would not receive some important skills taught through these programs that could impact the choices they make with their future.

I understand that everyone across the world has been impacted by the economic fall of Covid-19. There is no "right" situation to solve this and I know we are just brainstorming every possible situation to help others out. The unemployment rate in Hawaii is higher than ever, but do you think that by taking away one profession, it will save the rest? Absolutely not. The only way the economy can be saved is when people can go back to work. No one can go back to work if they have kids to watch at home and if there are no teachers to watch your students, this can not be possible. I can guarantee that if these cuts go through, you'll lose half the teachers we have now and no one will be able to watch their kids. No one can make a living off the salary we will have with these cuts. You won't get other teachers here from other states as we pay one of the lowest salaries already.

Thank you,
Lauren Fuchigami



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

Proposed pay cuts to teachers

Perry Buchalter <psbuchalter@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:00 PM

To whom this may concern,

Where we recognize the need for everyone to do their part, those of us teachers in line for the compression increase have already taken ours. In fact, twice now we've given without any compensation for having done so when the economy recovered after the last crisis.

Those of us who've had our Step Movements frozen for years were finally going to be recognized and compensated witnessed the bill die as this pandemic unfolded. This loss is more than the 20% the State is now asking and is yet another slap in the face for those of us continuing to support our students, colleagues, schools, and communities.

--

Perry S. Buchalter, NBCT
BA, Fine Arts/CTE Department
Molokai High School



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

Please reject salary cuts

Cristy Hasha <chasha@voyagerpcs.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:00 PM

Aloha,

I am a middle school special education teacher at Voyager Public Charter School. I am writing to plead my case against any sort of budget cut that would affect Hawaii's educators. The proposed almost 20% cut is the difference between my being able to pay my current rent and not. It is the difference between being able to save money to visit my family on the mainland and not being able to. It is the difference between staying here and having to eventually move off island to find work that provides for it's employees.

I moved here from TN, where the cost of living is significantly lower than in Hawaii. This pay cut would force me to receive a salary that is almost equal to what I was receiving in TN, even though my cost of living here is 3 times higher. That is unacceptable for a teacher of my caliber. I am in my 15th heard of teaching and was a state finalist for Teacher of the Year in the state of TN. It is shocking to me that I could be receiving a salary that is so low.

Both of my children attend Hawaii Public Schools. I've already heard from some colleagues who will have no choice but to leave Hawaii to teach somewhere else where they can afford the cost of living. This pay cut would mean we will lose qualified professionals and won't be able to replace them. No self respecting teacher will accept a job with such little pay.

Please don't just consider every other option, instead, please execute every other option you have available before even considering salary cuts to our educators. This is a decision that will have detrimental effects for years to come.

Sincerely,

Cristy Hasha
205-401-2265



Please, NO CUTS!

Carly Ambrose to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 01:03 PM

From: "Carly Ambrose" <carly.ambrose@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

I am a 1st grade teacher at Pu'u Kukui Elementary school on Maui. I have dedicated 12 years to the DOE. I am very concerned about our state leadership, policy makers, and our educational leaders (DOE, BOE) continuing to threaten our profession as well as threatening the education of this generation of keiki. It is disheartening to feel like you leaders are giving the public lip service as to the proposed 20% pay cuts. It has been heavily reported and researched that our profession in Hawaii already lacks highly qualified teachers with low pay (in comparison to our counterparts on the mainland) being one of the main points. I am appalled that during a global pandemic, you (our "leaders") are putting the burden of balancing the state budget on the backs of educators, state workers, first responders, and our keiki. SHAME ON YOU! If this proposal passes, it will have a massive negative impact on our state community. Teachers will leave the profession by way of retiring early or moving away to another state - we already have a hard time filling these vacant positions with subs that are not highly qualified. This impacts our children's learning - how do you expect schools to close the gap if you (as a collective leadership) refuse to acknowledge that this is a problem? I also foresee that cutting our pay will directly send the message to our youngsters that education is not a field that they want to go into. There will be continued turnover and openings at schools across the state and our children will suffer. As an educator, it is quite easy for me to see the short and long term implications of enforcing a 20% pay cut. I urge you to consider other options that would not negatively impact our state community. If the priority of the state is to balance the budget instead of caring about people and children, then I would say that it is time for you all to reevaluate your "why" and find a way to be courageous to do the right thing during this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Carly Ambrose

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Detrimental effects of reduciug teacher salaries

Angelita laea <a.iaea@mililaniwaena.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:04 PM

Aloha,

My name is Angie laea, School Counselor, Mililani Waena Elementary School, grades Pre-5

I am voicing my concerns of how reducing teacher salaries will lead to:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.
- **How will teachers and essentially school counselors and behavioral health specialists be able to provide that emotional support and necessary mental health services and support without carrying the stress and burden of finding another part time job to take care of their own family's financial needs?**
- **As a result, MANY teachers and school counselors will no longer be able to commit time beyond their regular school work hours to plan and develop necessary and effective plans to address the emotional and academic needs of our students; this cannot be done effectively during the normal work hours because we dedicate our school day time to effectively work with our students. Unfortunately, this dedication and committment of after hours WILL NO LONGER BE POSSIBLE, if we need to supplement our reduction in income.**

Thank you for reading through my plea.

Angie laea



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

Teacher Pay Cuts

Shanti Fryar <shantif37@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:06 PM

Big Island-Honaunau Elementary School
3rd-5th grade math teacher

- Public education in Hawaii has already suffered enough because teachers are not paid competitively. We will lose qualified teachers and fail to attract new ones because the cost of living here is ridiculous. The education system in Hawaii will be crippled once again.
- The State will be forced to make emergency hires of unlicensed teachers because many teachers will leave to pursue better opportunities elsewhere.
- Single teachers with children, such as myself, already live paycheck to paycheck because of the high cost of living. Any reduction to my salary will force me to go on public assistance or find work someplace else.



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

REJECT TEACHER SALARY CUTS!

jayb00m . <jaykfb@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:07 PM

BOE memebbers,
I urge you to reject teacher salary cuts! Why?

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. What happened to focusing on teacher retention?
- The mental well being of teachers and the pressures in being successful in the profession. We are going to be asked to do more and be put in tough situations when it come to teaching in the classroom and handling financial obligations outside of the classroom.
- It's a slap to the face to all teachers. No value in the education system. No value in the future of our keikis. What kind of information are we sending out to our keikis when we take away their number one resource for learning!

Do what's right! Fight the good fight! A'ole Teacher Salary Cuts!

Testimony submitted by,
Jay Bumanglag
Pahoa High School



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

REJECT SALARY PAYCUTS

Rosemarie Bayari Holi <rosecbay@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:08 PM

Dear Board of Education,

I work for the population of special education students. For 12 years, I have worked with the passion to not only teach but realistically care for students in the severe disabilities population. I received my Master of Education to provide quality education for my student (with continuous student loans payments) I have used much of my personal funds -- although advised not to -- to buy supplies and equipment needed for my students to progress in their individualized education program. Beyond my passion to work for my students, I also need to think about the pay and affordability of life as I now have kids and my kids will need care. A pay cut would increase financial burdens as it is. I know of my financial difficulties, and if it happens, it will be very trying to have a pay cut.

I believe teachers deserve their pay as scheduled, as of now, because we not only teacher, we care and with this quarantine -- myself, as well as others, have been putting our best efforts despite of the current situation (having our families at home to teach and care for too) to provide quality education to our students. I will stress -- especially to the students with disabilities! I have been providing work tasks and printing from my personal printer, driving to homes in my personal vehicle, holding virtual classes, phones call and message through my personal phone, one to one meetings with families, and continue to hold and coordinate meetings past the teacher contractual time.

Please consider, reject salary paycuts!

Best regards, stay safe,
Rosemarie Bayari Holi, MaEd Sped
Makakilo Elementary
Fully Self Contained Teacher



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

Please do not reduce teacher salaries

Gregory Poppy <greg.poppy@sbcglobal.net>
Reply-To: Gregory Poppy <greg.poppy@sbcglobal.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:09 PM

Dear Board of Education,

I am a teacher at Lahaina Intermediate School, 7th Grade Social Studies. I noticed on the agenda for this upcoming BOE that there is a 19.62% salary reduction to balance the budget.

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing my pay and that of other teachers will put a financial strain on our families. Additionally, more students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Greg Poppy



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

Balancing the Budget

Jeremiah Ellard <jeremiah_ellard@hotmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:09 PM

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

Aloha, my name is Jeremiah Ellard and I am a sixth grade social studies teacher at Lahaina Intermediate School. I know these are tough times and I appreciate your hard work and consideration of the needs of our keiki and our teachers. Please weigh all possibilities including urging the governor to borrow money to balance the budget over cutting teacher pay. Mahalo for your efforts.

Sent from [Outlook Mobile](#)



Do Not Reduce Teachers' Salaries

brooke nasser <b.l.nasser@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:09 PM

I am an English and Journalism teacher at Kalani High School. I was born and raised in Hawai'i, went to Punahou School from kindergarten to 12th grade, earned my B.A. from Dartmouth College in 2000, and an MFA in Film Production from the University of Southern California in 2006. I was the assistant to Academy Award-winning director Kathryn Bigelow on Zero Dark Thirty, assisted Academy Award-winning screenwriting Mark Boal on script rewrites, was on the board of Emerge Film Festival in Maine, have written for national art and lifestyle magazines, and have been working as a journalist and filmmaker for the past fifteen years. In 2017 I returned home to Hawai'i to be near my aging father and mother and see my sister's kids grow up.

Once home, I immediately decided I wanted to give back to my community and my home state. That is why I decided to become a public-school educator, an area of great need in this state, and one that I felt qualified to fill. I became an emergency hire secondary education teacher for the 2017-2018 academic year, while simultaneously pursuing a master's in teaching English from Western Governor's University. I have been teaching at Kalani High School for the past three years, and also now coach Girls' Cross Country, JV Girls' Soccer, and Girls' Track & Field. I earned my MAT in December 2018.

We are now six weeks into Distance Learning and are facing an uncertain future: we don't know when schools will reopen, we are learning how to redesign a curriculum on the fly, and our livelihood is being threatened by significant and devastating pay cuts — despite the fact that Hawai'i is already [routinely listed as one of the worst states in the nation for teachers](#).

The past six months have been, at various times, awkward, enriching, frustrating, profound, and tedious. One way that I've found it more enriching than in-class learning is with the switch from in-class journals to Google Doc Journals. Though I miss the unique flourishes of their handwriting, I now benefit from deeper, more conscientious reflection.

Many studies over the past decade (like this one) have suggested that writing by hand produces deeper and more abstract thought. This past month has presented contrasting data (albeit anecdotally). I wonder if it's the nature of typing that allows/forces students to be more precious and careful of their ideas. They take more time with it. Or perhaps it is generational, and students who have grown up with the appendage of technology are more facile with it.

Another change is with this new unwieldy beast: Zoom. We actually can't use Zoom because of privacy issues so we use Google Hangout. The platform is irrelevant but figuring out the best platform is relevant. As is navigating the etiquette of video conferencing with 125 teenagers.

And here's what's profound: the students show up. We see each other's personal spaces which is

vulnerable and intimate and implies a level of trust I have never achieved in a classroom. I don't know what it is — maybe the nature of distance learning or the scary, confusing situation we find ourselves in right now — but our video discussions are thoughtful and authentic. At the end of my most recent video class, I teared up, which I've never done in a classroom.

And yet... It's also still school. And educators face many of the same challenges we've always faced: how do we engage, how do we inspire, how do we check for understanding, how do we quantify learning? These basic questions hearken back to the essential question consistently asked of educators: what is our value?

Our value is always in question. The value of teachers, of resources for classrooms, of education itself. I've received so many closing reflections from students this month asking to "learn something that's actually useful in real life." These are requests I hear often but they seemed to have hit a crescendo.

Perhaps the stress and newness of this pandemic have pinpointed how fragile we all are, both individually and within communities, and reflective students, in their struggle for answers, are resolving to be more prepared. They blame our fragility on a lack of preparation, and they seek to correct that by learning "real-life skills" that would be more "useful" to them should catastrophe strike again.

Or perhaps the current situation has raised important questions about the system as a whole. Students are also beginning to wonder if there's a better way of learning. These are important questions and they should be asked.

I hear parents repeat this sometimes at Open Houses as they look through my annual syllabus of poetry and creative writing and Shakespeare. How will writing a Petrarchan sonnet help my child get into college?

It's always funny when I hear the refrain, as if the purpose of school is to teach you extraneous stuff that you will never ever need in "real life".

What can Macbeth possibly teach my child about life?

What can it possibly, indeed. If you can look into the seeds of time, and say which grain will grow and which will not, speak then unto me.

Did you know my school's custodian trimmed all of the plumeria trees on campus last spring so they would grow at a height where students could pick their blossoms? Did you know the cafeteria aide who helped me administer Pre-ACT tests to special education students this past February brought her own stash of popsicles during the break because they were so stressed out they gave up?

But I digress. I'm meant to be reflecting on the idea of value and usefulness. On an educator's value and usefulness — which is now being threatened.

What do students learn in high school that they can carry with them for the rest of their lives? I'm 42 years old. Since high school, I have used algebra every single day. I've used geometry and physics often, and chemistry sometimes. I use knowledge of history too often to count (which I can do without a calculator)! The artistic principles I learned in 9th grade still inform the way I see the world and appreciate unexpected moments of symmetry and synergy, balance and contrast.

Does it matter that I read *The Great Gatsby* and *The Sound and the Fury*? No! It matters that when I read "Clocks slay time... time is dead as long as it is being clicked off by little wheels; only when the clock stops does time come to life" my heart leapt from a cliff into the ocean and struggled to breathe. I didn't know what the line meant but I struggled, and that struggle is learning and learning to struggle taught me to tackle challenges with joy and enthusiasm.

The 2020 coronavirus pandemic is going to end. No one asked us if we could switch our curriculums to respond to this situation, but we did it. We taught through the pandemic and we'll keep teaching. The students — and teachers — who are responding the best are those who are self-directed and disciplined, who are adaptable and creative. The leaders of government who have responded the best are those who have those very same skills, many of whom were educated by public school teachers.

In a decade, we'll need students who experienced this and grew up to be the kind of scientists, economists, educators, business owners, and leaders who can respond to future pandemics with critical thinking and creative solutions, with compassion and empathy and courage—all those so-called "soft" skills that public school educators prioritize.

That is what public school educators are looking at when they draw back their bows. This is our value. If the government cuts our pay so drastically that we will be unable to work, to stay in this profession, or to stay in Hawai'i, they are not only inflicting additional hardship on our present situation, but they are robbing Hawai'i's future to do it.



Look for alternatives to cutting education

Christina Vien <christyvien@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:11 PM

I urge you to consider other revenue sources and other areas for cuts before you consider impacting education in Hawaii. As a teacher I have committed to teaching here for the long haul, but faced with budget cuts, I would not be able to continue to do so. Here is my personal testimony.

I am a sixth year teacher in this beautiful state. I decide to become a teacher at age 29. It wasn't a path I originally wanted to choose because of the low pay. Yet, I continued to feel drawn to teaching. I love it. I feel that it is my career destiny. I continue to look for ways to make it financially sustainable. I have taught summer school and after school programs to make extra money. I got my masters degree, though now I carry a load of debt. I continue to take credits to move up the pay scale. At one point I decided to move back to the mainland because it is more financially sustainable as a teacher. But after only once academic year I moved back to this state, to the very same school I started teaching at, because I love it here. And I love teaching here. I want to be teaching in Hawaii for the long term. I made that commitment when I moved back. Yet, as a single person who lives in a tiny studio with education graduate school debt, I am barely able to get by on the salary that I do have.

In the last two years, with the October union negotiated pay raises, with the January 2020 differential and with an increase of one class due to my choice to take credits, my take home pay has increased \$272/month. This is a decent raise, but it is still significantly less than I was making in Washington state. The potential pay cuts would be around \$700-800/month of my take home pay. I would not be able to afford living here as a teacher if this were to happen.

I am 100% positive that cutting teacher pay would only make our teacher shortage worse. I have spoken to many other teachers who say they would move to the mainland or have to quit teaching. Even for the ones who are able to stay teaching, the income difference would greatly impact spending and further hurt the economy. Teachers have a contract. As a minimum, I hope that would be honored through the end of the fiscal year.

I know there are other proposed solutions. Cutting education, an already hurting sector would only worsen the situation.

Christina Vien
Kealakehe Elementary
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740



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

DOE Testimony

Ryan Kanetani <kanetanir07@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:11 PM

Good Afternoon,

My name is Ryan Kanetani, a special education teacher at Holomua Elementary School. I am writing this email as a testimony to NOT Support pay cuts for Hawaii Teachers, and public workers.

I understand that the state is in an economic crisis, however, a huge cut of 20% is outrageous! Considering we are short on teachers, the cut will increase that gap as well as chase out current teachers from continuing the "thankless" job of being an educator. Being a special education teacher, the shortage is even greater and the workload is only getting more and more unbearable. Please explore other venues to ensuring the wellbeing of the state, Education system, and our students.

Thank you,
Ryan Kanetani



Keiki Matter

Claire Dobson <clairejdobson0@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:11 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my concern about the potential plan to cut educators' salaries in response to the virus and state funding. I am extremely displeased that such an action is even being considered, as Hawai'i already has the reputation of being 50th out of the 50 states in teacher pay due to the cost of living. Wanting to further cut these already knowingly low salaries has alarmed many working in education. I have spoken with teachers who would plan to retire early or would move and find work elsewhere. I have yet to hear a single word in favor of this plan from any one I have connected with about it. Parents are outraged at what this will mean for their students, students are worried about their own futures, and teachers are worried about being able to continue to do what they love. This action will lead to a negative and long term effect on Hawai'i's education. Many of us hold our breath and are waiting for Thursday's meeting news.

On a personal note, I would end up having to move back to the mainland and would be unable to continue my work with the Hawai'i DOE. Every single teacher I have spoken to regarding this matter (10+) has shared a similar plan. To make this clear, I already work in a "hard to staff area" and so we are already understaffed. We cannot afford to cut these professionals' salaries as Hawai'i already has an awful teacher shortage. Can we afford for the teachers we already have to leave the island and possibly the profession all together? We need to be looking into other options. Ones that don't place the financial responsibility of this unexpected virus on the shoulders of our wonderful keiki and their hardworking and already underpaid educators. These are the same educators who, when faced with the unexpected, stood up and are now working hard to bring education to students in new and creative ways. These educators out here, who are changing and adjusting almost every thing about their profession and the way learning is conducted, are working to connect with students and ensure learning and interaction. These individuals who stepped up to that plate, those are who we want to cut pay from? Do we expect that the educators who do decide to stay and try to make this incredulous pay cut work will be more motivated to work HARDER and take on the responsibility and work load of others who have gone? These teachers need to be appreciated and CELEBRATED for the way they are handling all of these unexpected circumstances. To top it all off, this week happens to also be teacher appreciation week. Please make the right call on Thursday. So many of us are counting on you. Please consider the long term impact these actions will have and seriously consider options that instead allow our keiki and Hawai'i's department of education to thrive and build. Let's come out of this as a state that is growing stronger, more prepared for the unexpected in the future, and one that refuses to compromise the education of our keiki.

I appreciate your time,
Claire Dobson
Maui County
Princess Nāhi'ena'ena Elementary
K-2 School Counselor



(no subject)

Kileigh Sanchez <kileighsanchez@gmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:12 PM

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

My name is Kileigh Sanchez, and I am a 7th and 8th grader teacher at Wai'anae Intermediate School on O'ahu. As a sixth year teacher, I have committed the last six years of my career and life to the students on the Leeward Coast. I have seen improvements towards paying teachers a truly professional wage, but I am dismayed with the lack of funding provided to fix the teacher salary compression issue and pay differentials. Teaching is very difficult AND it is THE most important vocation in terms of the future of our state and islands, as it determines whether our society can improve or if it will decline due to an underserved population of young people rising up to become leaders of our schools, communities and families that they have been ill-equipped to lead. Many of our students are already falling behind, scores are dropping at record highs, and this is all directly connected to teachers fleeing the classroom. Teachers are realizing that they can be paid a professional wage in countless other jobs even though they have the skills, training, and education to lead a classroom of students to success. Many teachers, including myself, find themselves struggling to pay mortgages for houses in an increasingly ridiculous housing market in Hawai'i and have found that teaching just won't cut it if we intend to have families, homes, and lives outside of school. How can we be expected to remain in a career where we are not paid as respected professionals, many of whom have higher ed degrees beyond a teaching certification and 4-year degree. Deciding against cutting teacher salaries at this critical time would be a sign of good faith that teachers deserve respect and to not be undercut as they have been in the past time and time again. Teacher shortages on the Leeward Coast are not improving and will only worsen with paycut slap in the face and many positions are filled with untrained, long-term substitutes. This is a pivotal decision for a lot of teachers in deciding whether or not they will return next year, including myself. I'm sick of the uncertainty and lack of respect for the profession and believe our children deserve better than teachers who feel unappreciated and underpaid. This decision is about INVESTING in the future of our keiki and continuing to pay our teachers a fair and respectable wage for the work they are already doing.

Mahalo for your time.

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Do Not Reduce Teachers' Salaries

sheryl O <petmongoose@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:12 PM

Aloha Honorable Members of the Board of Education,
We understand the need to balance the budget, but not by reducing teachers' salaries.


Our school, Pahoa High & Intermediate School at which I am a teacher, has a number of Emergency Hires. If their pay is reduced, they cannot remain as emergency hires and will move back to the mainland. The message the State is sending is conflicted - we need good teachers, but we are not going to compensate them for a job well done.

Reducing our salaries will impact my students, as my teacher spending for basic supplies for my classroom is around \$800 a year. For a single parent teacher, salary cuts will be devastating by shifting money from low income earners to middle income earners. It is easier for teachers to donate to charities, than for low income teachers to help out.

Teachers on the Big Island have gone through a lot of things including the Leilani Eruption, the Pahoa Eruption, Splitting the school, and TS Isele and a pay cut will have a devastating impact on students because we are already struggling to provide them stability and comfort. How do we do this when we aren't there for them in person? During this pandemic, teacher stepped up. I had to learn to use technology more effectively and on my own. There wasn't anyone around to support me. Our hours changed to meet student hours. Students do wake up around 9:00am, and they don't go to bed at 10:00pm either! Answering email at midnight was really new to me! Spending hours looking for on-line assignments occupied my mornings. Teaching wasn't a 7:20 - 2:55 day anymore. Not to mention the emotional toll having no set hours incurred. There really wasn't any "down-time." My work hours were 24/7 to meet the needs of our students. Instead of a pay-cut, we actually deserve a bonus!

Mahalo for your concern and understanding. Please do not balance the budget on the backs of teachers.

Sheryl Ogawa
Pahoa High & Intermediate School
ELA 7 and AP Psych Teacher

Sent through 'ope'ape'a express 



Balancing the Budget Meeting May 7, 2020

Kelly E Duell, MA, NBCT <mauitechgirl@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:14 PM

Aloha,

I wanted to address the budget cuts being discussed at the May 7th meeting.

Under discussion items, there is a document titled, "Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ('CARES Act') K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process." On page six of the presentation, under Draft COVID Re-Balancing Framework, there is a list of potential expenditure adjustments to rebalance the state's general fund budget.

While the HIDOE and the BOE have supported teachers and the need to increase teacher pay in the past, HSTA does not want the conversation to return to balancing the budget on the backs of educators and our keiki.

More importantly, since Ige's initial meeting with public sector union leaders, Gov. David Ige has publicly stated that he is looking into alternatives, such as borrowing from the Federal Reserve and waiting for more state stimulus funding from Congress.

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my family but the students I serve as well. More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. Teachers are already one of the lowest paid in the nation and can barely afford to live here, and the majority have some type of second job.

The budget needs to be balanced by other means, such as reducing expenditures of various departments, cutting rail altogether (such a waste of our tax

dollars, especially those not on Oahu!), reducing salaries of government officials and direct employees of the governor and legislation personnel. There are a lot of other ways to cut the budget without screwing over the teachers once again!

Keep in mind, us teachers are the ones who have been keeping the economy going right now and it is us teachers who are still working diligently to continue the students' education and well-being, at our own expense, for internet, electricity, phone bills, air conditioning, etc. The State is not paying those expenses, they are coming out of our pockets!

Thank you,

Kelly E. Duell, M.A., NBCT

[68-3755 Mahina Street](#)

[Waikoloa, HI 96738](#)

808-238-5450



Please Reject Teacher Salary Cuts

Shelby Stern <shelby.desilva@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:15 PM

5/2/2020

To: Hawaii Board of Education
Re: Salary Cuts

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you today to strongly discourage you from reducing teacher salaries. I say this for a multitude of reasons, but let me outline some of the most important points here:

1) Teachers in Hawaii already have the LOWEST salary nationwide when adjusted for cost of living

If you were to look at Hawaii's teacher salaries in comparison to the rest of the nation, you will quickly see that Hawaii's teachers have the lowest salaries when you adjust it for the cost of living. Essentially, in cutting our salaries you are opening up the floodgates to a slew of negative economic impacts. What I mean by this is that there are going to be teachers who will no longer be able to make ends meet and will be forced to leave Hawaii, a place that we all know and love. I was born and raised here and have taught in the HIDOE for the past 5 years. I love working with my students but I don't think I could cut it continuing to live in Hawaii if my pay were cut.

2) Cutting salaries would force many teachers to retire or leave the profession completely

Point one easily leads itself to point two here: that cutting teacher salaries would cause many teachers to retire or leave the profession. It's no secret that teachers aren't raking in cash every month, regardless of the tireless and thankless work that we do each day. However, cutting our salaries would cause many of our veteran teachers to retire and many of our newer teachers (who are already low on the salary scale) to leave out profession completely. This is going to cause major issues for the HIDOE and for schools as we will be struggling to find teachers for our classrooms.

3) Students would be left without qualified teachers

Likewise, point two leads us here to point three. If you were to cut our salaries, students in many many classrooms across the state are going to find themselves without a qualified teacher (or any teacher at all since subs are going to be hard to come by) come the time for us to return to school. The HIDOE was already struggling to find enough teachers to begin with...can you just imagine how much this will exacerbate the problem?!

I honestly and truly think that cutting teachers' salaries would be the most unwise solution possible. It doesn't make sense for Hawaii's economy or for Hawaii's future either. I strongly encourage you to look into other options and to do everything possible to prevent teacher salary cuts. We shape the future of Hawaii and we cannot do that if there are not enough of us left after salary cuts.

Stop handing teachers the burden,

Shelby Stern
Grade 4 Teacher
Pohakea Elementary School



Teacher testimonial

daniel curran <danielcurran31@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:15 PM

Greetings,

My name is Dan Curran, I am a secondary teacher at Konawaena High school and this school year will conclude my tenth year as a loyal educator in the department of education. Before I give my brief testimony I want to share with you a short story. My father who recently passed away from suicide two years ago spent most of his life as a labor and relations negotiator for the state of New York. He once told me that his purpose in life was to fight for the "little guy", advocating for the steel workers, road site construction laborers, stone masons and so on. He believed that those individuals had the right to a "thriving wage" not just a "living wage", an opportunity to get ahead in life, to provide for their family, own a home, pay for medical bills, and maybe take a vacation once a year...because in his eyes not only did they earn it but they deserved it! In all of my ten years working in the DOE, I have never been able to achieve a "thriving wage". When I was hired in 2008 I had to cancel my health insurance because I needed the extra money so that I could cover my basic living expenses. Martin Luther King once said that "the ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." I have stood by the DOE in challenging times, providing loyal and highly effective service for the students of Hawaii, the question I am asking you is... where do you stand? If you approve these salary cuts you are sending a very clear and direct message, you are blatantly saying you do not care. You do not care about our keiki, you do not care about our teachers, you do not care about the personnel in our schools, you do not care about the families of these children, you do not care about the mental or emotional health of your state employees and most importantly...**YOU DO NOT CARE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF HAWAII.** Make no mistake, your actions speak far louder than your words, there is only one thing to do in this situation and that is, the right thing!

Sincerely,
Dan Curran



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

Do not cut our pay!

teaz K <teazk1@hotmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:16 PM

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

Dear BOE and Governor Ige:

I'm submitting my short testimony

against a potential 20% pay cut. A pay cut will be detrimental to me as I'm a single mother of 2 public school student. Living on one income in Hawaii has been difficult for years. As I near my 20th year of teaching, I'm FINALLY doing "ok" with my salary. I'm struggling but finally "ok". I've been on the strike line as well as endured the Furlough Friday's. It's been a rough 20 years of teaching in the special education classroom. We are already struggling with a shortage of Sped Teachers . The amount of work endured with the in the classroom and out is difficult.

Cutting our salary will set me back

And others back financially!! I could lose my home as I'm the sole provider for daughters. How will I make ends meet with a 20% pay cut?

This will definitely contribute to teachers leaving or retiring form the work force which will leave our classrooms with non certified teachers! Our students will be paying the price.

I am asking for alternate ways to balance the budget; for the sake of the students and as well as the teachers.

Thank you.!

Teresa Kwok

Central District Full Release Special Education Mentor

Sent from my iPhone



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

Potential Pay-Cuts For Teachers

Jeremy Percich <jeremypercich@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:17 PM

Aloha,

I will keep this very simple. If pay cuts are made, I will leave Hawaii to teach elsewhere and you will have 1 less qualified teacher. I have spoken to numerous colleagues throughout the state who feel the exact same way. Please don't let education to go down the drain in Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Jeremy

Jeremy Percich
Teacher - 4th Grade
Waihe`e Elementary School



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Hana Mauldin <hanamauldin@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:17 PM

My name is Hana Mauldin and I'm a kindergarten teacher at Mountain View elementary in Mountain View on Hawai'i Island. If the almost 20% pay cut goes through I will lose thousands of dollars. My husband lost his job for 6 weeks due to the COVID-19 crisis, and could potentially get laid off again. I personally have been working hard to increase my pay by taking PD credit classes, I have worked so hard over the last 3 years and am so close to reaching class 7. This pay cut will take all of that financial gain away. I'm concerned I won't be able to afford my bills.

I teach in an area with high poverty, our students deserve the best. If teachers are financially struggling and stressed we will not be able to give our students anything extra. Each year I spend hundreds of dollars of my own money. Please find other ways to fix the budget other than cutting teacher pay or at the last resort please limit the pay cut to less than 5%.

Thank you for your time.
Hana Mauldin



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

Testimony

Colleen Pau <pauohana@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:18 PM

Aloha! My name is Colleen Pau and I teach at Hilo Union School on the Big Island. I teach all general ed subjects for grade 3.

Please do not cut teachers salaries. I am nearing retirement and would definitely consider leaving the profession early if it comes to this. As certified teachers, we spend a lot of our personal money on trainings to stay well updated and providing food and supplies to our students. Our school has a 95% poverty rate and our students have needs that the state does not provide. By cutting our salaries, you will lose valuable teachers and support for our students.



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

Do not cut teacher pay

Elizabeth Clemens <eclemens@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:19 PM

Aloha,

My name is Liz Clemens and I am a 4th year science teacher at Roosevelt high. If you cut teachers pay by 20% I will have no choice but to move back to the mainland and teach there. Teachers are already below the poverty line and cutting our salary 20% will make it impossible to live and teach. This will affect all teachers well being. If you do this, it will affect the students as well. Teachers will leave and we already have unqualified teachers teaching this year. Students need qualified teachers and happy teachers especially when they have already missed a quarter of structured curriculum. The worst thing you could do for both the economy and education of Hawaii is reducing our salary.

I beg you to take this seriously as you will affect everyone in the state of Hawaii with this decision.

Sincerely,
Liz Clemens

Sent from my iPhone



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

Potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education

Debi schmeding <schmedin@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:20 PM

Writing to express my concern regarding any cuts the BOE may be considering to the education budget for SY 2020-21. Any cuts to salary, either in the form of DLWOP or STOWOP for educators would negatively affect our students for many years to come.

In my 4 member department at King Intermediate, I have 2 teachers in their first year of teaching and 1 in her second year. All three have indicated they will not be able to continue teaching in Hawaii if faced with a cut to their already low salary. We need our new teachers!

Additionally, many veteran teachers may end up deciding to retire if faced with a pay cut, which will lead to yet more students being taught by long term substitutes with no training in the content area.

As a veteran of 22 years of teaching in Hawaii I am asking that you think of our keiki, whose education has already been disrupted due to school closures, and look to balancing the state's general fund budget in another manner.

Deborah Schmeding
King Intermediate
7th grade Life Science Teacher



Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Marisa Miyashiro <miyashirom004@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:21 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Marisa Miyashiro and I work at Koloa Elementary School on Kauai. I am the one and only School Counselor at my school because our enrollment is about 300+ students. It is my job to do what I can to make sure that our students feel safe, cared for and that they have the best learning experience that they possibly can. By the end of this school year I will have 7 years under my belt but I don't consider myself to be experienced at all. I am always learning, always trying to grow as a School Counselor. I have worked summers until I had kids because teaching alone just doesn't cut it out here on Kauai where my local grocery store's average price for milk is over \$6. My coworker has shared that if a salary cut is what's coming she will have to pick up her family and move with two adult children in college it just isn't possible to survive here.

More than focusing on the direct impact this budget cut on our amazing, dedicated Teachers as always my focus is our **students**. A nearby school that is difficult to staff has had multiple classes in the cafeteria so administration could supervise them because of lack of Teachers. Teacher at that school quit all along the school year and it is SO difficult to find long term subs... even subs here on Kauai. Substitute Teachers can be a temporary fix, but have you seen classes when there is no trust in their Teacher? They are not very forgiving or willing to follow rules and instead of learning they are figuring out how much they can get away with their sub. IS this the type of school system Hawaii wants?

My examples may seem exaggerated but her on Kauai it is the truth. If you have more questions please feel free to contact me.

Marisa Miyashiro



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

Reject Cuts to Teacher Pay

Emily Meng <emalee06@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:22 PM

To: Hawaii State Government,

I strongly encourage you to reject any cuts to teacher pay or required time off for teachers without pay. As a middle school teacher here on the Island of Oahu. I can attest that teachers are essential employees that are responsible for caring for the children of families everywhere. We are balancing online teaching and mentoring while caring for our families, putting in extra hours on top of the difficult balance that everyone is facing.

There is a grave teacher shortage here in the islands. At my middle school alone, we have had a shortage of three teachers all year, relying on substitute and unlicensed support staff to provide education in the place of certificated teachers. This shortage will get much bigger if you reduce teacher pay by nearly 20%. New certificated teachers will be forced to leave the island because they are scraping by. A significant amount of senior teachers will be forced into early retirement because the cut in pay will downgrade their quality of life so much that the little pay they are making for a taxing job with extreme responsibilities will not be worth waiting to retire later. These two scenarios will drop our teachers by about 25%.

I am a middle school teacher with 12 years experience in the teaching field, married to a newly graduated university professor. The 20% you will be cutting is the exact amount that we pay for childcare so we can teach the island's Keiki. Without that 20% we can no longer afford to send our children to childcare cutting my ability to continue teaching. This will also eliminate any extra money we would be putting back into our local economy. We won't be able to afford to go to restaurants, theater, movies, zoos, museums and so on. State employees who have income are still contributing to the economy, but you will be eliminating our ability to do so and therefore further dropping Hawaii's economic gains.

Instead of harming our keiki by taking away 25% of their qualified teachers to the mainland and early retirement, look at the financial plans differently. Now isn't the right time to be making renovations to the airport and roads, we do have a surplus and a rainy day fund. Look through the budget and do not make a rash first response to this financial problem on the backs of our teachers. I know you will do the right thing.

Most Sincerely,

-Emily Meng-



Teacher input for Thursday, May 7, 2020 Meeting

Jeff Duggan to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov, crosenlee@hsta.org 05/04/2020 01:23 PM

From: "Jeff Duggan" <konajduggan@hotmail.com>

To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>, "crosenlee@hsta.org" <crosenlee@hsta.org>

Dear Board of Education and others at the meeting,

My name is Jeff Duggan. I am a Social Studies teacher at Konawaena High School on the Big Island. I am also a lawyer licensed in Hawaii, Washington State and South Carolina.

I have been teaching for 18+ years. This year I taught Advanced Placement U.S. History, Advanced Placement Government and Politics and Honors U.S. History. However, over the years I have taught every Social Studies course the State of Hawaii offers, as well as ELA one year and in another year I had 1/2 line of math another year. (Teacher shortages had me fill in!) I have been the Debate Coach and the Mock Trial Teacher Advisor and Coach.

Teacher shortages and teacher pay in Hawaii has been ignored for too long. We endured "Furlough Fridays" and the "Last Best Final Offer." My salary was frozen or went down for years. Finally, after years of record state revenue generation, the issue of "Compression" was being addressed. Then the pandemic hit. Now, it seems, once again, teachers are being used as political tools to help balance the budget. PLEASE STOP!

There are other options; our own flagship University report indicates the economy will suffer more if teacher and other government employees pay is cut. Pay cuts are not the answer.

Personally, I am nearing retirement and have options. If I were compelled to take a 20% or 10% pay cut, I would seriously consider deferring my pension for a few years. leave teaching and do something else. Obviously, I am not alone. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other teachers would do the same. In a state where we have a crisis of teacher shortage, that outcome would be shortsighted and would irreparably hurt our students.

Please do the right thing. Say NO to teacher pay cuts.

Sincerely,

Jeff Duggan



Do not reduce teachers' salaries

Anthony Arneson <aarneson@my.hpu.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:24 PM

Good Afternoon,

My name is Anthony Arneson, I teach Resource (SPED) Modern History of Hawaii, Participation In A Democracy, Alg 1, and Social Emotional Learning. This is my first year as a licenced teacher and I have found teaching in SPED to be an extremely rewarding career. Seeing how far my students have come in the past three and a half quarters is so amazing. Teaching is definitely a lot harder to do than I had originally thought, especially for SPED teachers. Over this past year on average I would arrive at the High School at about 6:00a.m. and would leave school around 4:30 or 5:00p.m. Unfortunately my day was not over yet though, there is so much paperwork that teachers are required to create/complete. On an average week day I would not stop working on lessons, IEP's, grading assignments, differentiating my lessons subject matter (so that every one of my students would be challenged but not overwhelmed in the classroom) until around 11:00 - 12:00p.m.

Please Do NOT reduce teachers' salaries! My family and I are already considered to be in the low income bracket. Reducing teachers salaries would have devastating effects on our already critical teaching shortage. I myself have spent the past 6 years attending HPU to attain my Masters in Secondary Education. I would be forced to either leave the profession or move to another state where the cost of living is not so high. I know that there are HUNDREDS more like me throughout the DOE.

By reducing teacher pay you will be harming our keiki, by forcing more students to go without licensed teachers because these pay cuts will drive many senior teachers into early retirement. Our keiki will then be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession. Now I know that my calling is to be a teacher and I absolutely love the dramatic difference that I make in my students' lives. Do you think unqualified and part time teachers are going to be putting in upwards of 16 hours a day to make sure school is challenging but not overwhelming for all of their students. If your answer to this question is yes then cut away, but if you think the answer is no, you must find a way to balance the budget without cutting our educators pay.

V/R
Anthony Arneson



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

Please NO PAYCUTS

Lore Lei <lkuheana@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:27 PM

Aloha Members of the Board.

I am a veteran teacher of 25 years at Highlands Intermediate School in Pearl City. I humbly ask that you please reconsider any salary paycuts for teachers for the upcoming school year. Since the start of Quarantine I have worked tirelessly to train myself on how to setup and use Google Classroom. I've been communicating with my 124 students daily, not just about school work, but also checking on them and sending them other activities to keep them engaged in their learning. I also participate weekly in staff meetings and department planning sessions. Besides my teacher responsibilities, I am also supporting my high school senior and checking on his emotional well-being daily, and caring for two senior citizens in my home and keeping hope alive for the near future.

I am a single mom and have worked long hours to secure my teacher salary. I have seen classrooms and students who have to work with long-term subs. I strongly believe those students are working at a great disadvantage because they don't have a trained, certified teacher leading the charge. Cutting teachers salary will hurt the profession greatly at a time when we need to have qualified educators to recover time lost and the continuation of a rigorous education. With the high cost of living in Hawaii, a pay cut to our salaries will force many teachers to leave the profession permanently. I have considered it myself, but with retirement knocking on my door it would be foolish to leave prematurely.

Please do not cut teacher salaries and education budgets. Hawaii's kids deserve the best. Our future deserves a fighting chance. Cover-19 has taught us that is imperative to be innovative and pro-active. We have also learned the true value of teachers and what they do daily for kids. I know parents will agree wholeheartedly. Teachers love what they do truly but should not be punished with a salary cut. Thank you kindly for your support.

Sincerely,
Lorelei Kuheana



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Liana White <white@whea.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:26 PM

Aloha, my name is Liana White. I work at West Hawaii Explorations Academy as part of the high school team. I have worked as an educator in this state since 2004. I am a proud product of Hawaii's public school system and I hope to continue to be a part of this critical organization for many years to come.

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my family but the students I serve as well.

More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. Also the future of teaching will be limited by the lack of people entering into the education field, who would do this job for less? Overall, the effect will be devastating and the negative impacts will be a sure way to cut the future of Hawaii short. Thank you for your time

Liana White



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

No to Pay Cut

sara yamaguchi <sarayamaguchi2@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:28 PM

Aloha,

A pay cut of any amount will have devastating impact on teachers, students and an already failing economy. Hawaii's cost of living is overwhelming for teachers already. Over the past decade, I have encountered teachers working second jobs and struggling to provide for themselves and families. We have never been paid enough with the consideration of cost of living like other states. A pay cut will add further injury to committed teachers already struggling to survive.

In addition, We cannot lose anymore highly qualified teachers if care about our keiki and future economy. Many teachers will be forced into retirement and vacancies will increase even further by teachers leaving Hawaii to find affordable living conditions. I have seen the negative effects inexperienced and under qualified teachers have on our students, and it is extremely heartbreaking and disappointing. Our state must consider all options and find a solution that will not have irrevocable impact our teachers, students and future economy.

Sincerely,
Sara Yamaguchi



Draft COVID Re-Balancing Framework

Corey <cayasuda@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:30 PM

Dear BOE,

I am writing to you as a humble Grade 1 Teacher and husband of an elementary teacher with two young children, living in a small condo unit. I urge you not to take the drastic, unprecedented step of cutting teacher salaries or instituting furloughs or layoffs in response to the fiscal impact of COVID-19. I would like to remind you of the importance of early education and the positive impact it will have on community as a whole. I would also like to share a part of the letter written by our president of the National Education Association (NEA), Lily Eskelsen Garcia, to our Governor Ige:

"Furloughing, laying off, or reducing the pay of teachers and other public employees will only compound this crisis. Taking any of these steps would greatly limit these individuals' ability to purchase goods and services. Not only would their families suffer the consequences of not having enough to make ends meet; damage to the communities in which they live and work, and ultimately to your state, would be severe when Hawaii's economy is already contracting. In fact, the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization has estimated that such a contraction would have a multiplier effect, causing a \$3.3-billion drop in GDP in 2020-2022. As a teacher, however, what troubles me most about what you are considering is the impact on students."

At my own school, there are family stresses which are being brought to light. The teachers are the constant to help families to get through this critical time during the pandemic by supporting their social and emotional needs. Our students need our time and energy. With the increase in unemployment, there will tremendous stress on families and they will need teachers to support their children.

Lily continues by saying, "Teachers are rising to meet this challenge because we know our students need us now, and will rely on us to restore a sense of normalcy when the crisis ebbs. This will be much more difficult if pay cuts or furloughs are enacted because Hawaii will very likely lose teachers across the spectrum: those who are close to retirement, those with several years of experience and expertise, and those just entering the profession, bringing new insights and perspectives. Given the teacher shortage your state already faces, **students** will ultimately pay for this loss at a time when Hawaii will need all hands on-deck to create the nurturing environments that will help students recover and thrive.

Let me add that of all the states, only Hawaii is considering taking this dangerous step. In other states, the emphasis has been on maintaining public services during the pandemic by making full use of the provisions of the CARES Act, which has allocated \$53 million to Hawaii's schools and colleges (funds that can be used to pay salaries). Governor Ige, I ask that you not cut, furlough, or lay off teachers and other public employees, but rather,

use all methods available through the CARES Act and the state's rainy day fund to avoid these drastic measures. Surely, **Hawaii's students and their families deserve better.**"

I reiterate that Hawaii does deserve better,

Corey

Grade 1 Teacher and parent



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

Juan Espinal, Konawaena Elementary, Grade 5

Juan Espinal <thejuanespinal@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:30 PM

Aloha,

My name is Juan Espinal and I am a fifth grade teacher at Konawaena Elementary School. I have served this rural Kona Community for 8 years now and I am honored to do so.

Living here is not easy. Having moved here after graduating New York University and leaving my family, I know how to buckle down and work hard. I understand daily struggles to succeed.

It is difficult for teachers to succeed in Hawai'i already. It is directly related to the teacher shortage crisis and the inadequacies prevalent in our entire state school system.

I've discussed this and the hope for the future on Hawaii's first education podcast, [Maestros Vibe](#)

I know there's hope for the future because there's so many important people working for our keiki's future.

Cutting teacher salaries will further drive away even more qualified educators. I know I love this work, but it would make it impossible for me to survive on this island with the high cost of living and the low wages.

Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Mahalo for all you've done and continue to do. Fairly compensate teachers to legitimize the teaching profession on these islands and build a better future.

+ Juan Espinal

PS I am a huge sports fan. I have never seen any sports team succeed after cutting their player's salaries. It's quite the opposite. We need to learn the same lessons.



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

(no subject)

Kalikolehua Goo <kalikolehuagoo@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:30 PM

My name is Rachel Kalikolehua Goo and I currently work at elementary school on the island of Kauai'i, teaching 4th grade. I find it absurd that the budget will be balanced on the backs of already underpaid teachers. As a result of COVID-19 I am busier than I have ever been ensuring that I meet the needs of each student, adapt curriculum, and move to online formats of teaching. I am also paying for internet service as well as online meeting platforms on my own to reach my students.

Let me also add that I barely make ends meet as a teacher and live pay check to pay check because our pay does not match the high cost of living. I work two jobs so that I can pay a mortgage, car payment, bills, and childcare. A pay deduction would put huge financial strain on me and is NOT FAIR! Neither is this fair to our children. How many teachers will be less dedicated to their jobs as a result of this? Or have to leave the profession? Resulting in more overcrowded classrooms!

Please consider alternatives to this salary cut!



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

Testimony against Teacher Pay Cuts

Yvette Rapozo <outlook_1E66F7A871429B10@outlook.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at
1:31 PM

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

Dear Board of Education,

I am writing to you today in regards to the options that will be proposed to you regarding balancing the state budget. I am a teacher in Hawaii and have been for the last 14 years. I am extremely concerned about cutting teacher pay for many reasons. Teachers in Hawaii were already the lowest paid in the nation especially when you consider the cost of living here. Thus, we already had a teacher shortage and had many unqualified people in the classroom trying to fill these positions. Due to the many demands on teachers, the enrollment in teacher preparation programs has declined steadily over the years. So we cannot look forward to having qualified teachers in the classroom anytime soon. With talk of cutting teachers pay, many teachers will retire and many will move back to the mainland where they will not be cutting teachers pay. I have already heard many teachers talk about moving and many who were not considering retire yet, were talking about leaving after this school year. They want to leave when their pay was the highest so that they can benefit from those last 3 years. Why would they stick around to see their pay decline and then have to work many years to possibly see it go up again and then retire? They can retire now and find another less stressful full time job to help make up that loss of income.

Although we are teaching from home where it is more difficult to teach and reach students, we are doing it. We are working much longer hours since we respond to students and parents needs day and night to make sure our students are succeeding. To make sure students are getting feedback and video taped lessons, packets, etc. **Why? Because THAT'S WHAT WE DO!!** Whether we are in the classroom teaching or at home teaching. What a slap in the face to suggest cutting back salaries so much and not actively fighting for us and all that may be impacted by cuts. There are rainy day funds (and yes it is absolutely pouring right now) and federal aid. Look at those funding options and fight for the state and the workers who are

trying to maintain some sense of normalcy during this crazy time. We are trying harder than ever to help our students and our students families with providing support (whether it is academic, social, and emotional), sharing resources in the community that can benefit our students families and by planning and working around some unusual technology issues to make sure they continue to learn.

This is not an easy job and we do it for many reasons. One of which is not to be poor and to have a side hustle (tutoring, selling craft items, or other products) or 2 or 3 other jobs. That's ridiculous!! The least we can ask for now is that our pay does not get cut. The teacher crisis we are already experiencing will become a problem we will not be able to repair for years to come and **will undoubtedly impact student learning**. If we continue to say that children matter and that education matters, then we need to show it. We need to continue to pay teachers and not cut their pay.

When teachers and other state workers continue to work and continue to get their pay, we continue to contribute to the states economy and even though it doesn't seem like much, we help it to stay afloat for now and help others get back to work. When we do take out, we help a restaurant get back on its feet and survive. When we pay our student debt, utilities, loans, mortgages, rent, credit card bills, groceries, etc., we help those businesses keep their door open and retain their employees and we continue to help support the economy. Imagine what the economy would be like if we couldn't pay those bills? Just imagine. I don't want to. Economic and business experts have told you about the ramifications that would entail if you would cut our pay. Were you listening? They have the states economy in mind when they say these things. Please listen.

Again, I wholeheartedly hope that you will fight for teachers and help them keep their pay. And when this all blows over, may you continue to fight for us and help us to be treated like the professionals that we are and that we should receive the proper pay and respect that our profession deserves.

Sincerely,

Yvette A. Rapozo

Kapa'a Elementary School

Teacher-2nd grade

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10



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

Proposed Teacher Cuts Please Reconsider

Adam Skal <adam_skal@ams204.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:31 PM

Good Afternoon,

My name is Adam Reid Skal, and I am an educator. I have taught ELA and AVID at Aliamanu Middle School for nine years and I love my job.

Since the very first day I stepped in the classroom I have lived in abject poverty. I do not have a family home or relatives to rely on. I have lived on Heleua St in Nanakuli for many years and commuted to AMS. For the past three years I have live on Lakeview Circle in Wahiawa. My children cannot play outside due the rampant open drug use, prostitution, and criminal mischief that besets these neighborhoods. But I do not complain, this is all I can afford and I am ashamed that I have given so much to our students while continuing to struggle to put food on my kids plates. I do this job because I am a heck of teacher and students benefit from caring and relatable teachers.

I have teacher colleagues in CT and MA whose government pays their teachers a live-able salary and are not being subjected to pay cuts.

If the pay-cuts go through, I will be financially forced to take my family to a state that respects its teachers. Many of my colleagues share the same sentiment. Please, do not be near sighted or rash. My children are part Hawaiian and I would love for them to be nurtured in the community but not at the expense of being homeless. You are not only affecting teachers but essentially you will be forcing generations of kids to lose their connection with the land.

Respectfully reconsider!

V/r
Adam Reid Skal

--

Adam Skal
Aliamanu Middle School
Language Arts/ AVID 8
808-421-4100 EXT: 289



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

Teacher pay cuts testimony

Michael Press <press.michaeld@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:31 PM

Good Afternoon,

My name is Michael Press and I am a 7/8 Social Studies teacher at Ilima Intermediate School. I moved to Hawaii with the intent to work at Ilima and with my current Principal. I believe in the school's mission and message. After crunching the numbers we decided that it would be possible to move but it would be tight. So I moved myself and wife here in the summer of 2018. I left a position in the state of Michigan where I was a "Highly Effective" teacher on my last two yearly evaluations. I am good at my job and now as a department DH I can affect real change.

These pay cuts that you are proposing are game changer for me. Cuts to teacher salaries would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

For me, it would mean leaving a place that I call home. I would be forced out of a place close to my heart. I can not as my family to go without BASIC NEEDS to work a job, even if I love that job.

"A time of crisis is not just a time of anxiety and worry. It gives a chance, an opportunity, to choose well or to choose badly."

Choose well.

Thank you for your time,

Michael Press
7/8 Grade Social Studies Teacher
SS Department Head
Ilima Intermediate School
HSTA member
Voter



Message to the BOE: Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Rachael to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 01:32 PM

From: "Rachael" <hudes.r@gmail.com>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Hawaii BOE,

Please do not consider balancing the state budget at the expense of the education of our keiki. Pay cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage.

I am a teacher with 19 years of experience. I work 10-12 hours per day on average and I need to work on weekends too, in order to fulfill the requirements of teaching middle school English. I will not be able to work this hard for my students if I receive a pay cut.

As a matter of fact, I am done working two jobs just to get by in Hawaii. If pay cuts are implemented, I will be forced to stop working as a classroom teacher and find a job that pays me for the work I do. If there is not a better career option in Hawaii then I will take my teaching expertise and move to another state, giving those students the benefit of my many years of teaching.

Expect the following if salary cuts are implemented in Hawaii:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Please do not harm the future generations of Hawaii by defunding public education. The 12% across the board cut for operating budgets is another area for concern. Hawaii's public schools already operate on a tight budget. Teachers already pay out of pocket for expenses that school budget does not cover. Please show our keiki that they are important enough to be invested in by funding their public educations properly.

Mahalo,
Rachael Hudes
8th Grade English Teacher
Kailua Intermediate School



Please don't cut teacher time and pay!

Colleen Gosser to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/04/2020 01:32 PM

From: "Colleen Gosser" <colleen_gosser@hotmail.com>

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

I am a full-time HIDOE teacher that has been teaching English Language Arts and Literacy for 12 years. My focus has always been on inclusion and support for struggling students in literacy. Most of my students are the students who need support IN the classroom to practice and master skills. Distance learning has been a challenge for me because these students have difficulty understanding and completing work independently. They are fully capable of mastering the skills, but need individual, face-to-face support to get there from an experienced teacher who understands the various types of learning styles, the nuances necessary to build confidence in literacy, the gentle ways of pushing students to work harder and feel good about every little gain they make, and a teacher who understands what "proficient" looks like.

In short, I work with students who will be severely held back if they are not provided with in- the -classroom learning provided by an experienced and qualified teacher who has spent years learning about teaching literacy.

If you approve of teacher furloughs, my students will lose out on the imperative learning that they must receive now. They are in middle school - the bridge that transitions them into high school. For my students, it is now or never for learning to read and write at even close to grade level. Parents teaching at home cannot replace teachers teaching in the classrooms. Teachers are more than day care - we are trained and experienced in what we do. It is our craft. It is an art to be an effective teacher. It takes years to learn to do well. We do it because, yes, we love our students, but also because we love our art.

I have been hoping that families facing the challenge of distance learning will help communities to understand and appreciate more the need for our teachers and the unique skills necessary to teach their children. But after reviewing Dr. Kishimoto's and Governor Ige's ideas about saving the state millions of dollars by cutting funds from public education, it feels like instead of finally feeling recognized and appreciated for our important place in the communities, we are being slapped down again, asked to do more with less, taken advantage of, expected to drag ourselves through the sludge again because if we don't, we don't love the keiki.

How can the media be reporting all over the world about the need to get schools going again because of the important place we fill in the economy, about how quickly student skills will slide if we don't get back into the classrooms, about the mental health challenges students are facing being home all day, about the support special education students aren't receiving while schools are closed, about how students aren't receiving breakfasts and lunches that used to come from schools, and about how teachers are the touchstone in the lives of so many of your youth? So after all this, you are going to respond by slashing pay and resources? There must be a better way!!

Please dig down deep, find courage and creativity to make some innovative changes to this bulky HIDOE and state system that will bring in savings without hurting the people on the front lines. I have been in HIDOE offices that are air-conditioned, use big computer screens, hand out colored glossy comment cards, large office rooms for one person, and then I go back to my school where

teachers are pouring sweat, buying their own paper, jammed in classrooms with students, lucky to have a laptop with projecting capability. Where are the cuts at the top in this very top-heavy system? This can be an opportunity to restructure an outdated system that is truly focused on kids and learning and the teachers who are the most ESSENTIAL part of this process. Please do not prop up a failing and broke system on the backs of your front line workers.

Please send us a message that you care about us, that you appreciate us, that you support us, that you acknowledge that we are fundamental to our communities and that we are trained professionals that are difficult to replace. Teachers need to hear it - more now than ever.



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

Educator Salary Cuts

Sarah Schults <sjschults@gmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:33 PM

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

To whom this may concern;

I am writing this email in regards to the idea proposed to reduce teacher salary in order to rebalance the economical impacts of COVID-19 here in Hawaii.

Simply put, this is a mistake and a horrible decision. I am currently a teacher in Maui and have decided to leave Hawaii at the end of this school year and work elsewhere due in large part to the high cost of living and absurdly low salary ratio this state offers its educators. In light of this new proposed "solution" my decision has only been confirmed. To be quite frank, I am disgusted that those who have the responsibility of "protecting the people" are taking advantage of those who truly take care of "the people" on a daily basis.

If you choose this route you will not only hurt those who have been working hard during his time but will ultimately hurt the rising generations. Educators will be forced to either quit and find another occupation, resulting in a lack of qualified teachers, or take on yet another job to support a stable lifestyle here in Hawaii. Either way, the repercussions of this decision will end in lower quality education, at not fault to the educators.

I URGE you to rethink the impacts of this decision and find another way. There are other options that hurt less people and can provide a better future and outlook for our keiki and people of Hawaii.

Please do not let your people down.

Sincerely,

Sarah Schults

7th Grade Life Science Teacher

MWIS



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

Testimony

Chadd Engel <chaddwilliamengel@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:33 PM

Aloha BOE,

Two points that need to be addressed if the proposed pay cuts were enacted:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

The level of fiscal ignorance in even discussing cutting public teacher salaries when we have some the worse shortages in the nation is perplexing. The foundation to any community and economy is our intellectual wealth. This would certainly hurt all of us. I urged you to show leadership and proactive thought in eliminating any discourse about reducing teacher salaries.

Mahalo for your time,

Chadd Engel
7th Grade Mathematics
Lahaina Intermediate School

--

Mahalo,

Chadd William Engel
808.250.8027
ChaddWilliamEngel@gmail.com



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

Testimony to BOE

Joseph & Dayna Wood <dayjoe0723@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:34 PM

Hello BOE,

Please strongly reconsider cutting teacher salaries. I fear if you cut teachers salaries even in the slightest, you're looking at what could possibly be catastrophic repercussions. Thousands of students will be without a high qualified teacher, at a time when many students already don't have a highly qualified teacher to begin with. You'll lose teachers by the hundreds because we just simply can't afford to live here. Especially families like myself who are two teacher households. Under this proposal that would mean almost a 40% reduction for our family of four.

My eldest daughter looks up to my wife and I because we are teachers. However I, every time she tells us she wants to be a teacher when she grows up we cringe because we don't want her to go into a profession where she'll need to work multiple jobs just to pay all her bills. My wife and I really struggle with this because we are not only both teacher but also coach for Kailua High School. We love teaching and bettering students lives, but to worry everyday about money is a horrible feeling. I wish we lived in a society and country where I could encourage and be happy that my daughter wants to be like her parents.

I appreciate you taking the time to listen to my testimony and I hope you'll do the right thing and NOT cut teachers pay in any way.

Mahalo



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

Pay cut

Brian Breeze <mauiboz@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:35 PM

As a Special Education teacher, my students need me. In the 18 years I have taught Special Education in Hawaii, I have experienced 2 pay cuts. One contract called for a 5% pay cut and the following contract was an 8% pay cut. Now, just am I able to finally make ends meet you are proposing a 20% pay cut. Really? There are no cases of Covid-19 Corona virus where I teach, Keonepoko Elementary School. Instead of hitting teachers, why don't you trim the fat. There are a lot of teachers not in the class room. Why not eliminate those jobs? Do we really need District Resource teachers? I anticipate the governor raising taxes in the not to distant future and a 20% pay cut is going to make it extremely difficult to continue living and teaching in Hawaii. We want/need to be with our students. The state has closed down the schools since March 19. It is now May 4. Time we cannot recoup. Again, I reiterate, we have no cases in Pahoia. Let's stop playing politics and do what is best for our keiki. Respectfully, Brian Bratcher



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

Cutting DOE teacher pay

Paige Yerxa <pyerxa@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:36 PM

My name is Paige Yerxa and I work at Jarrett Middle School as an 8th grade science teacher. I am urging you to please not make any pay cuts to teachers. I am a super hard worker and really want to stay in education. Teachers work long hours outside of our normal 8 - 3 paid day. This is just the time I spend with my students. The planning and assessing starts after 3. I hardly make enough to live in Hawaii. I cannot get my pay cut. Getting a pay cut will definitely force me into getting another job. Educating our keiki to be community contributors to they can run this place in the future is what we need and teachers are where this starts. Please do not cut our pay or you will loose good teachers like me!



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

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Una Burns <unaburns@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:38 PM

Aloha BOE: Please do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me, my colleagues (some of whom are single parent) & their families but the students we serve as well.

More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.

Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

If not for the teachers please do it for the children (possible future teachers!) of our state.

Your sincerely and with aloha,
Una Burns

HS Teacher for 16 years in Hawai'i, multiple subjects including geometry, US History & leadership as well as registrar
WHEA, Island of Hawai'i



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

AGAINST REDUCTION TO TEACHERS' SALARIES

Anjelica Ayers <aiayers@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: Angela Sagisi <angesagisi@gmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:39 PM

Aloha,

My name is Anjelica Ayers. I am a 4th grade teacher at Queen Ka`ahumanu School. I write to you not only as an educator to our keiki, but as a concerned resident of Hawai'i. I understand that the state is debating on how to tackle the financial impacts of COVID-19. I urge you to no cut teacher salaries as a way to manage the state budget cuts. Education is the most important aspect of our society and our community. If you cut teacher salaries, you will drive highly qualified, dedicated, and passionate individuals away from the profession and from this state. Salary reductions will leave our students with long term subs, unqualified teachers, oversized classrooms, and more. All of these will hinder the learning and success of Hawai`i's future!

INVEST IN OUR STATE'S EDUCATION, INVEST IN OUR STATE'S FUTURE!

Mahalo,

Anjelica Ayers



Oppose Teacher Salary Cuts

Phillippe Galicinao <pfgalici@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:41 PM

Board of Education:

My name is Phillippe Galicinao and I am a secondary mathematics and science teacher at Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School. I teach 8th grade math, 10th grade biology, Geometry, and a place-based project in traditional Hawaiian arts. I am also a PhD student in Education, Curriculum & Instruction at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm teachers and teacher families, there will be a direct impact to the students we serve as well. More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

I do not support any salary cuts to teacher salaries, which are already the lowest factoring cost of living in Hawai'i. Public servants do not get paid enough to survive in Hawai'i. State and County employees getting more than \$100,000 should be reduced first as they will be able to survive. Anyone earning less than \$70,000 should not have salaries cut as this will be devastating for families in Hawai'i. This is about equity and 20% salary cuts across the board is not equitable when people early so much more than teachers will still have a salary that is livable, while teachers that have lower salaries like \$35,000-\$70,000 will struggle!

Mahalo,

Phillippe Galicinao, M.Ed.
Student, PhD in Education: Curriculum and Instruction
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
pfgalici@hawaii.edu

Kumu, Secondary Mathematics and Science
Hālau Kū Māna New Century Public Charter School
phil@halaukumana.org
<https://www.donorschoose.org/KumuPhil>



testimony

Jenn Grant to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/04/2020 01:43 PM

From: "Jenn Grant" <jenn3737@hotmail.com>

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

Dear BOE,

My name is Jennifer Grant and I am a 10th/12th grade history teacher at Farrington High School. I urge you not to cut the teachers pay. I have seen so many long term subs at our school over the last couple of years due to the teacher shortages. If pay cuts go into effect, senior teachers will retire and many unqualified teachers will be left to teach the students. Ultimately, the students will suffer the most from this! I have taught at Farrington and have seen the results of students who had a qualified teacher teach them history vs. a long term sub who does as much as they can but is not the same quality.

My husband and I are both teachers. A pay cut of 20% would impact our family immensely. I feel like many teachers would need to move out of state because they would be unable to afford our high cost of living. Our teachers are the lowest paid in the nation already with cost of living factored in. Please seek out other options then cutting our pay. We are all working really hard if not harder and this crisis should not be put on our backs to solve the states money shortfall.

Respectfully,
Jennifer Grant



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

Teacher Testimony

Val Maluyo <valluyo@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:44 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

Aloha. My name is Mrs. Val Maluyo. I am a third grade teacher at Waialua Elementary. A pay cut of any size would place a heavy financial burden on our household. My husband and I both work full-time professional jobs and barely stay afloat in Hawai'i 's high cost of living. Additionally, the message sent to future highly-qualified teachers will have a lasting negative impact. Thank you for your consideration.



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

Teacher Salary Cuts

Ted Edwards <tede83@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:45 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am Ted Edwards, a middle school special ed math teacher at Jarrett Middle School. Reducing our salary will have a major negative impact on me, my students, and my family. I do not think my family will be able to survive financially in a place with the highest cost of living. In a position where we are already stretched so thin professionally and financially, a salary cut will only make the problem worse. More teachers will leave our state, less teachers will apply, and the shortages will continue. Especially, in special education.

Please consider this carefully and do not cause further harm to an already struggling profession.

Thank you,
Ted Edwards
Sped math teacher 6-8
Jarrett Middle School



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

Don't cut classroom teachers' pay; Look into cutting non-classroom teacher positions!

matthew calica <mcalica1@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:49 PM

As a teacher here in Hawaii, the thought of having my pay cut infuriates me. We are already struggling to fill vacancies, now you want to make that problem even worse? What needs to happen is this: what state jobs have we NOT noticed during this time? Those are the jobs that need to be cut. In the Hawaii department of education, there are literally thousands of jobs where people work as "support" personnel. They are called educational officers and resource teachers. During the school year, what do they do? No, it's a rhetorical question, I have no clue what they do. Most new classroom teachers don't know they exist, and veteran teachers know their jobs exist... To exist.

So during this pandemic, what are they doing? Same thing they do all school year... Nothing; Not providing support or resources. If all these doe support jobs disappeared, NO ONE would notice. And this is just the department of education. Think of all the other state jobs that are like this. I've always been concerned about these state positions, but I personally know some of them, and so I rationalized to "well, they need to earn a living"... But now that my livelihood is on the line, I say "let them lose their job, they've been abusing the system for years". What a lot of these people are doing is basically wage-theft, and I am sick of them getting away with it.



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

BOE - No Cut Teachers' Salaries

keith colvin <kcolvinkona@hotmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:47 PM

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

Dears Sirs or Madame,

The Board of Education should not cut teachers' salaries. This is a very bad idea. More students will go without licensed teachers because pay cuts will cause many to leave Hawaii or retire. Just imagine, you will cut teachers' salaries and more and more students will have long-term substitutes and unqualified teachers. The high cost of living here will create an even more teacher shortage if you decide to cut teacher salaries. I know at my school, Kealakehe High, the buses are not running and the kitchen is not being used. My school is closed. There has to be some or maybe a WHOLE BUNCH of money being saved right now because ALL schools in Hawaii do not have bus service. There has to be another way to balance the budget instead of placing the burden on the teacher and the keiki. Look at the services that are not being engaged right now. Perhaps this is a good time to cull the administration at the BOE and the the DOE. It would be nice to have an administrator shortage instead of a teacher shortage for a change.

I implore you to not cut the teacher salaries. This will create more problems and more challenges the keiki education in Hawaii.

Thanks for the read, cheers, KC.

Keith Colvin
Mathematics Teacher
Kealakehe High
[74-5000 Puohuluhuli Street](#)
[Kailua Kona, Hawaii 96740](#)
Phone (808) 313- 3742
Fax (808) 327 - 4307
Hawaii Standard Time



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

Stop pay cut

Lillian Shaw <lilshaw168@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:47 PM

Lillian Shaw
Math special ed inclusion / resource teacher
Kawanānakoā Middle School

Sent from my iPhone



May 7th Meeting Testimony

Mary S. <lokelani86@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:46 PM

Aloha,

My name is Mary Shire, I am a National Board Certified 7th grade English Language Arts teacher at Aiea Intermediate School. I mentor new teachers at my school through the State Mentoring program. I also mentor new teachers all over Hawaii and the country as a professor with Johns Hopkins University.

I started teaching a year before Furlough Fridays and DWOP days were implemented in the 2009-2010 school year. I know firsthand from that time how difficult it was to survive on a reduced teachers salary. I was able to make ends meet and continue teaching with the support of my family who lives in Hawaii, but many new teachers in our state do not have that kind of support. From my work as a mentor I've worked with many new teachers who love their schools and students, but struggle to make ends meet here in Hawaii. With a reduction of almost 20% many of these teachers might choose to leave the profession. Those who stay may have to take on second or third jobs and their work in the classroom will suffer.

We already do not have enough qualified teachers in our state, a cut like this will make it even harder to recruit and retain teachers. Senior teachers may retire, which will leave even more empty classrooms. One of the biggest deficits we have in teachers is in the area of Special Education. If Special Education students do not have teachers who can provide them with appropriate services this will open the state up to lawsuits, costing money that we do not have.

I strongly encourage you to reconsider giving teachers a massive cut. These are tough times, and I understand that there needs to be some give. Perhaps every state employee must take on a small pay cut. But cutting the pay of teachers almost 20% is inappropriate, insulting and irreparably damage schools in Hawaii.

Sincerely,
Mary Shire



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

Teacher Pay Cut Testimony

Melissa Brilhante <mrsbrilhante@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:48 PM

This is a message that responds to the proposed 20% pay cut for state workers. I'm writing on behalf of teachers. Without dedicated public educators, many of our children would not have a safe place that can go to for 6 hours a day. Many wouldn't have a trusted adult in their lives. Many wouldn't have someone who believes in them. Many of them wouldn't have someone that loves them. My own children come from a traditional family whose parents are married, supportive and have the values that promote citizenship and compassion. However, the adults at their school have served an integral part in defining for them what exactly is compassion and providing opportunities for engagement and motivation. These adults included the custodian, the cafeteria manager, the EA, the librarian. All of those adults have been their teachers in one way or another. Being an educator myself, I know that teachers work beyond the 7 contract hours and many of us spend our money to complete our classroom inventory. The teachers and staff at my school love our students. I don't know how else to put it into words. We are worried about some of them. In addition, teachers strongly support our state's economy. Our eateries, small businesses, mom and pop's, farmers markets, etc. The list goes on. I can't pretend to know the scope and heavy kuleana of your job, but I do know without our teachers we'd have more drop outs, addicts, and low motivation. Your wife is an educator and you have children of your own. I'm sure you can make a personal connection. Thank you for time. Take Care.

Melissa Brilhante
Teacher
Kea'au Elementary School



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

BOE: DO not reduce teachers' salaries!

Sarah Kalawe <kalawesarah@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:48 PM

Board of Education Members,

As you know, teacher salary cuts could devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my family, but the students I serve as well.

Pay cuts to teachers will do our students and community more harm by:

- having more students go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession due to being unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Pay cuts show the community that the government undervalues our keiki's future, the future of our community, and the Hawaii education system. Teachers have made many personal sacrifices (including sacrificing their health and safety) in order to ensure our keiki are getting what they deserve at school for an already low salary. The proposed pay cuts not only will cause a tremendous financial burden on teachers but the community as well because teachers are a part of the community and we interact with many within the community. Do the right thing. Do not cut teachers' already low and unfair salaries. You've seen the conditions they work in day to day; it is a demanding and stressful job but we love what we do.

Sarah Kalawe
Hilo High School
Grade 12 English



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

Proposed Salary Reduction

Lee Guyer <leeguyer1@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:49 PM

My name is Lee Guyer I am a 7th grade Social Studies teacher at Wahiawa Middle School. I have been a teacher for 17 years and have worked through Furlough Fridays and State imposed DLWOP. I find it appalling that the reduction of teacher's salaries is once more a consideration by the State to bridge the economic gap. How the State expects to solve the teacher shortage in Hawaii with a reduction in teacher salary seems counter productive and utterly absurd. I have known numerous certified and exceptional teachers that have left our State due to the overwhelming workload and underwhelming financial compensation. Or to put it simply they couldn't afford to live in these islands they were born. Our schools will be soon be staffed by a majority of non-qualified emergency hire staff and substitutes if you pass this app reduction. You claim to care about the students in our State. Start by fairly compensating those professionals who educate them. I urge you to reconsider this drastic salary reduction if you honestly care about the students of Hawaii.

Respectfully,
Lee Guyer



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

(no subject)

Sonya Purba <spurba@kamiloikies.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:49 PM

Sonya Purba
3rd grade teacher
Kamiloiki Elementary School

Taking a pay cut will not suffice. I barely can make it with the pay that I currently am receiving. I tutor privately on the side to make ends meet. I am a licensed teacher with a masters degree. This payout will force me into working a corporate job utilizing my bachelors degree in business. Students will loose many highly qualified liscened teachers because we simply need to pay our bills to feed our mouths and put a roof over our heads. It is disgraceful to think how undervalued us teachers are. We already go above and beyond and we all do this job because we love our job. But at the end of the day we have responsibilities which require us to be compensated fairly and in line with cost of living.



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

Hawaii Department of Education Budget Cuts

Lester Rivera <riveralg@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:51 PM

Aloha BOE,

I'm writing to respectfully and humbly request to not reduce teacher salary. If teacher salary decreases, many experienced teachers will leave the profession for careers that will allow them the resources needed to provide for their families, thus more students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. Also, many teachers will get a second job to provide for their families, which will decrease the volunteer time teachers use for after school programs, communicate with families, and lesson preparations. Many teachers will become financially unstable, which will reduce their ability to be thinking about their students because they will be too worried on how to provide for their families. Another effect is that teachers will have less personal funds to supplement the classroom resources needed to best support the needs of students because schools do not have sufficient funds and how the school's funds are used is limited.

Thank you for your past support in helping to ensure that public school students receive the best education possible, by ensuring teacher quality and retention is maintained by increasing teachers pay. Please continue to ensure that public school students are provided the best opportunity to achieve their full potential, by continuing to increase teacher pay.

Mahalo for all your efforts and support. 😊

Lester Rivera



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

state worker salary reductions

Leah Rampolla <leahrampolla@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:53 PM

Dear Sir or Madame:

My name is Leah Rampolla. I am a licensed English teacher at Castle High School in Kaneohe, HI; I have more than a decade of experience as an educator. I am urging you to find an alternative solution for state salary reductions. These reductions will have a detrimental impact on the entire community.

There is already an extreme shortage of teachers in the state of Hawaii, and this drastic reduction in salary will exacerbate this already critical issue. Many, many licensed teachers, including myself, would be unable to remain a resident in the state due to the high cost of living and would seek employment back on the mainland in areas where the cost of living is more affordable. Other teachers would retire early, leaving even more vacancies.

Additionally, fewer licensed teachers will result in less than optimal instruction for all students. The quality of education would be severely impacted, and this is a huge disservice to students and the community as a whole. I encourage the BOE to consider alternatives to reducing state salaries, as the effects of this decision will have significant, negative impacts on teachers, students, and the entire community.

Sincerely,
Leah Rampolla, M.A.



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

Do Not Reduce Teachers' Salaries

Leilani Yamauchi <ellis.leilani@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:54 PM

Aloha,

My name is Leilani Yamauchi. I am a First Grade teacher on the island of Maui at Waihe'e School. I have been teaching for 9 years.

I am sure that you know that all educators' work hard regardless of what we are paid. Our workload is non stop and does not end when the school day ends. We continue working on the weekends and late at night when our own family has gone off to bed.

It saddens me to hear about a possibility of a salary reduction. I am the sole provider of medical for my family of 4 and because of this, only bring home \$1300 every two weeks. I am blessed to have a husband who is employed and helps carry the financial burden but, imagine if I was a single mother. I would not be able to support my family on my paycheck alone, and this is before ever receiving a 20% pay reduction.

I cannot afford to have my salary reduced and will be forced into finding employment elsewhere. I love what I do. I love my students. I love my school community but ultimately I will have to do what's best for my family and I financially.

Thank you for your time and for allowing me to voice my concerns.



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

Salary cuts

Ombac, Skye <Skye.Ombac@uj.edu>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:54 PM

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

Aloha,

I urge you to deeply consider cutting teacher salaries. We are working harder than ever during this time to provide for our communities. We already have a severely low income! Will all of my bills to pay, I only have about \$900 to put into my savings account and for groceries each month. I am barely making ends meet with my currently salary and I would not be able to handle a pay cut. Teacher retention is extremely low due to a teachers salary. Do you want more inexperienced teachers in the classroom? I am asking you to strongly consider the possible outcomes of a salary cut. The money can be found in different places. Thank you for your time and understanding of how important this issue is.

Skye Ombac



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

Do not cut teacher pay

Amy Stoddart <stoddartal@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:55 PM

My name is Amy Stoddart and I am a kindergarten teacher at Lihikai Elementary School on Maui, Hi. Cutting teacher pay is completely unacceptable. Teachers already do not make enough as it is and it is hard to make ends meet without having two or three jobs. I have had up to three jobs in the past few years to ensure that all of my bills are paid and have a small amount to put into my savings account. Hearing the news of cutting teacher's pay was like being stabbed in the back. We put our entire heart and soul into everything we do for our students, participate in extra curricular activities after school hours, and go in on weekends.

There is already a teacher shortage here in the state of Hawaii. Cutting teacher salary will not entice future teachers to work in our state, will force many to have to leave the islands due to high cost of living, and those who are close to retirement will probably retire early. There is a sub shortage as well and it is hard enough to find subs to fill in in the classrooms and the more teachers leave, the more spots will have to be filled.

Cutting teacher salary is completely unacceptable and it must NOT happen. If it does, expect an exodus of teachers who are close to retiring, new teachers, and teachers who have been teaching for many years to resign.

Aloha,
Amy Stoddart



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

No salary cuts

johnny bravo <jhnnnybravoo@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:58 PM

I've been a teacher on the leeward coast for 16 years and have planned to retire as a teacher. If there is a 20% pay cut I will not be able to survive. I would need to find another occupation. Teaching is my desire! Please don't make students have to settle getting their education from long-term subs and unqualified teachers because new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. I'd like to retire giving back to my community through teaching and not have to leave my profession and what I love due to pay cuts. Teachers already don't get paid enough!
Sent from my iPhone



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

No Pay Cuts for Teachers

roxane hirahara <roxane-y@hotmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:58 PM

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

To whom it may concern,

Please do not cut teacher pay. Please continue to look for other avenues to adjust the budget. Pay cuts for teachers and other state employees would be devastating to our schools, families, and our economy.

Hawaii's schools are already facing a teacher shortage. I have experienced it first hand at my own school and grade level. It is extremely difficult to find qualified teachers to fill vacant positions. More students will go with out licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into retirement earlier than initially intended. This would **cause students to be left with a slew of subs or long-term subs (if we're lucky to find them) and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.**

It is a recipe for disaster.

Please reconsider. Do not cut teacher pay. Hawaii's keiki deserve qualified teachers in their classrooms.

Mahalo,
Roxane Yi

Sent from my iPhone



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

No pay cuts

johnny bravoo <jhnnnybravoo@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:59 PM

I've been a teacher on the leeward coast for 16 years and have planned to retire as a teacher. If there is a 20% pay cut I will not be able to survive. I would need to find another occupation. Teaching is my desire! Please don't make students have to settle getting their education from long-term subs and unqualified teachers because new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. I'd like to retire giving back to my community through teaching and not have to leave my profession and what I love due to pay cuts. Teachers already don't get paid enough!

Michelle Santos
Leihökū Elementary
4th grade
Math and Science

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony for the Board of Education

Joyce Haase <joyce.a.haase@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:59 PM

May 4, 2020

Dear Board of Education,

Aloha from the quiet island of Molokai where I am a National Board Certified 6th grade teacher and have taught in this small, tight-knit community for over 10 years. I had 57 11 to 12 year olds rotate through my English Language Arts classes and my Science classes each week and now I am rolling with the punches and teaching online from my home. The stay at home measures have hit our community hard, but as always, we stick together and get by through improvising and putting innovation into action.

I am sure at the state level you are looking for ways to reduce costs but I must implore you to consider the costs to the students. Students only get one shot at a K-12 education and the foundation we provide them is irreplaceable and also something that can never be taken away from them. A qualified teacher has been trained in four main categories: content, instructional methodology, classroom management, and social emotional supports. Untrained teachers do not have the same crucial expertise. I can tell you from experience it makes a big difference. We need certified teachers!

If you cut our pay, qualified veteran teachers will retire and less pre-service teachers will gladly join our ranks. This will require that schools like mine hire “emergency hires” to fill the teaching positions creating a less than optimal learning environment for students. You will be crippling K-12 education in Hawaii for yet another many years by this one budget cut. Consider this decision carefully because the cost of the cuts will be shown in the long-range academics for Hawaii’s youth.

Mahalo for your time and I appreciate your efforts to adequately compensate teachers.

Sincerely,

Joyce Haase
P.O. Box 482242
Kaunakakai, HI. 96748
808-354-2221
Joyce.A.Haase@gmail.com



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

No pay cut

Jeanine Coombs-Todd <jeaninerct@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:01 PM

I am a teacher at Kalama IS in Maui. I have a HI prof clear credential in Fine Arts and a Master's degree in Education: Curriculum& Instruction. I have been in Education for over 25 years. I am vested 4 years now in HDOE. If we take a pay cut, I will leave public education. I can make more money working high end retail management or resort work with less frustration. Education should not be used to balance the budget. I took a \$30, 000 pay cut moving to Hawaii and working for HDOE from California over 7 years ago. The system in Hawaii is 20 years behind the educational philosophy and best practices of California. Cutting our pay will only make it worse. Please find a way to keep our salaries intake. The children of Hawaii are already at such a disadvantage. We cannot keep putting them and our Educators last.

Jeanine Coombs-Todd



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

Reject salary cut proposal

Nālani Downing <nalani_downing@anuenue.org>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:02 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: nalani_downing@anuenue.org

Aloha,

I urge you to oppose the Governor's recent idea to cut salaries for our DOE educators. There is already a critical teacher shortage, especially in the Kaiapuni schools. Cutting salaries will result in:

- teachers retiring early. Retirement pay is calculated on average annual pay. Teachers will retire early to avoid a lower salary to be calculated into their retirement pay
- remaining teachers will be incented to leave for higher paying jobs including in the private sector or private schools.
- future potential candidates will not be attracted to low paying teacher positions in the DOE

As residents in Hawaii we have an obligation to support the Hawaiian language and the teaching of it to our keiki and community.

Aloha,

Nalani Downing

Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue

Math Teacher, grades 5-7

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This e-mail is being sent by a student or employee of Kula Kaiapuni 'O Ānuenue.



Testimony Re: 19.62% Salary Reduction Discussed in Covid Rebalancing Framework

C Russo <stine808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:02 PM

Aloha,

My name is Christine Russo and I'm an inclusion science teacher at Campbell High School. I am submitting testimony for the General Business Meeting at 1:30 on May 7, 2020 regarding agenda item V. A. - Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act") K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process.

I'm concerned with the sixth slide in this presentation entitled Covid Rebalancing Framework. One of the budget reductions presented in this slide is directed leave without pay, or supplemental time off without pay, which amounts to a 19.62% salary reduction for teachers and other state employees. While I understand that these figures prepared by Budget and Finance are for discussion purposes only and salary reductions are not yet set in stone, I would like to share the dire implications proposed salary reductions would have on our keiki.

Hawaii already suffers from a severe teacher shortage. If teacher salaries are cut by 19.62%, the teacher shortage will become even more pronounced; our senior teachers close to retirement and those already able to retire will be driven out and our younger teachers who were already barely making will leave the profession and attempt to look for other work or possibly move back home with families on the mainland. The long-term ramifications of this type of pay reduction will be far reaching and will have a lasting impact on Hawaii's already struggling public school system. This generation and future generations of students will be less and less likely to have high-quality educators who provide outstanding educational opportunities to students. Before such pay cuts are considered, the Governor, the Department of Education, and the Board of Education must consider the long-lasting detrimental impact salary reductions will have on our keiki. I urge the BOE and all other stakeholders to take this into account and to look for other solutions to offset a potential budget shortfall.

Mahalo for your time,

Christine Russo



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

Do not cut teachers' salaries

Hari Messer <harimarc@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:03 PM

To Whom It may Concern,

Cutting teacher salaries is a bad idea. Consider that:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Sincerely,

Hari Messer
Math Teacher
Waimea High School
Kauai



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

Proposed teacher cuts

sandra johnson <sjohnson1417@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:04 PM

Dear Superintendent:

I moved to Hawaii in June 2019 with the express purpose of giving Hawaii children the benefit of my expertise as a teacher. I previously retired from my corporate position and recognize the need to give back to children and help them to be successful. My experience here has been very rewarding. I saw significant growth in my students as I gained their aloha and trust.

Now with impending reductions in salary I would not be able to stay and absorb the salary reductions. My rent is double what I was paying, but to live, work, and play on the Garden Isle, was worth the sacrifice, and I made it work.

I will not be able to absorb these salary cuts to preclude working a second job. Therefore, I hope your decision will be in the best interest of the students of Hawaii and you will find alternative measures for reducing costs.

Mahalo
Sandra Johnson
--
Sandra L Johnson



Addressing Funding needs

David Tanaka <tanaks5@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:06 PM

Hi,

To be clear from the get go, I want to point out that I am a public school teacher here in Hawaii, to be as transparent as possible.

I understand that the current situation is a difficult one, not just for the State, but for the whole world. The economic pressures are enormous, and I know that at some point cuts will need to be made in order to keep the state financially stable.

With that said, I have heard that once again the state is attempting to balance the budget on the backs of teachers, which is quite disappointing. I have been teaching since 2007, and so I know all too well what this means. In fact, this was to be the year that the state was finally going to make right what happened to teachers back in the previous recession.

Teachers in Hawaii already do not make a significant salary, especially when taking into account how much schooling many of us have as well as the comparative salaries we could make in other states. As a middle school teacher I have seen first hand the toll that staff shortages take on a school, as well as the detrimental effects of having to hire non-certified teachers to fill teaching roles. I've watched many of my best colleagues decide to move away from Hawaii to teach elsewhere in states that have much better salaries when accounting for the cost of living. In fact, according to this website, <https://www.edsurge.com/news/2017-06-01-graph-where-do-us-teacher-salaries-really-go-the-furthest>, Hawaii comes in dead last (by THOUSANDS of dollars) out of the fifty states when it comes to teachers getting a "living" wage. Just in the last few years our school has lost incredibly effective, young teachers to Alaska, New York, California, Oregon, Montana, Nevada and Colorado. All of these teachers cited the lack of ability to make a living wage teaching here as a contributing factor in their decision to leave.

I have a Master's degree in teaching, and am currently working on my Doctorate. As everyone knows, the cost of higher education is extremely high, and continues to grow. Most of the teachers I work with have a Master's degree. In addition to trying to pay for the astronomical cost of living here (rent, gas, food), many of us are also paying of tens of thousands of dollars in student loan debt. For myself I left school with over 70,000 dollars of debt, and that is not factoring in the loans it will cost me to obtain my doctorate. It is not easy, or cheap to become a teacher. Most of us understand this and make a conscious decision to do so anyway, because we feel a calling to help out others and to support the dreams of the future generation.

Many of my friends on the mainland are home owners. However, trying to buy a house here on a teachers salary is all but impossible. My wife and I are just getting into a position to purchase a house (we are both teachers) and our options are already slim. We teach in upcountry Maui, and most of the houses in our price range are not houses (they're condos) and are located many miles away. In addition, I have personally known teachers who could not afford rent, and have been homeless while they search for places to teach in. TEACHERS, as in more than one. Just in the past year there were two teachers in my school who have had to live out of their cars while trying to make ends meet, hoping for an affordable rental property. What does it say about the way a state values teachers if we cannot even afford to own property in the community we teach in?

There are other options that are available to the state to make up this funding shortage, even without relying on the Federal Government's response. The state governing body could pass laws to ensure that money for projects like the Rail or other infrastructure initiatives is able to be used to fund the people who work for the state (not just teachers). Even better, what about doing something to even the playing field,

and creating a tax on visitors and second homeowners (and "Residents" who spend more time out of state) to subsidize the cost of paying public servants a living wage. The board of education could play a role in lobbying the government to do so. Or, the BOE could look at cutting non personnel budgets, so that the last thing cut are salaries. That may mean that we have to work with less/no supplies, or that the BOE stops printing out "Direct Deposit" checks to have someone go into banks to deposit them (save on ink and paper). I know there is a lot of fat that could be cut before salaries. While i understand these would be extremely difficult decisions, I firmly believe that the LAST place that should be looked at are the livelihoods of actual people. Teachers, police officers, nurses, firefighters, etc. are THE infrastructure that makes a community run. Why is it that every time we face an economic hardship these are the first industries that the state looks to cut?

I am just trying to make a living here in the place that I grew up and call home. I went into teaching to give back to my community, with the hope that I could remain a part of it too. These cuts would make it extremely difficult to continue doing so. I hope you find it in your hearts to try to find solutions that would benefit those of us who serve the public, rather than asking us to do more with less.

Thank you for your consideration.

David Tanaka
Hawaii Public School Teacher



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

No Teacher Pay Cuts

Renee Obrien <msreneeobrien@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:07 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am a special education teacher on Maui. I love my students and my job, but cutting teacher pay will NOT help our students, teachers, and teacher recruitment.

I spent this school year doing the job of 2 full time special education teachers because our school was short 2 special education teachers! This is not acceptable! All students deserve an equitable and quality education. Balancing the state budget on the backs of educators (who already work 2-3 extra jobs) is NOT the way to encourage teachers to stay in their jobs nor does it encourage others to become or apply for teaching jobs.

Our students deserve the very best! Please take the time to use the other resources that are available to balance the state budget. Your educators have been working tirelessly to keep the learning going for our students during these unprecedented times. We have been supporting our families and students throughout this time and will continue to do so while putting our own anxieties, fears, and families on the back burner.

Please help us continue to help our students and their families by providing educators with the confidence that we will not have to endure a pay cut.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Renee O'Brien
Special Education Teacher
Maui

Sent from my iPhone



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

Pay Cuts for Teachers

Holland Henderson <hollandhenderson@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:07 PM

Aloha,

Not only will you doom the economy, you will doom public education by implementing a cut to teachers' pay and instructional time.

Hawai'i students have lost so much instructional time already, what do you think will happen if they lose more next year? They will fall even further behind in college and career readiness and basic proficiency indicators.

Teachers will leave. In droves. No one can survive a 20% pay cut, least of all teachers.

Holland Henderson
Castle High School
Language Arts 11-12



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

Salary adjustments

Susan Agsalda <slagsalda@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:07 PM

My name is Susan Agsalda. I teach at Kipapa Elementary School in the Central District. I have been teaching for over 21 years and I am one of the teachers in the compression bracket.

The senior teacher on our kindergarten grade level, with over 30 years of experience, just informed us that she is retiring at the end of this month due to impending salary adjustments. She was planning to teach for at least 1-2 more years. This will have a huge impact on our grade level, school staff, and teacher shortage. Her expertise and knowledge are irreplaceable.

Two others on our grade level are also contemplating early retirement. We are both stuck in the compression bracket and have over 20 years of teaching experience, and early retirement is an alternative seriously being considered. That will leave many classrooms without a licensed and experienced teacher to educate one of our most precious resources, our children.

Please consider the implications of this proposed action, before making a decision.



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

Teacher Pay Cuts

Jen Sarpi <jensarpi@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:08 PM

Dear Representative,

I am writing this letter to express my concern with the proposed plan to cut teachers' salary by imposing mandatory unpaid leave.

Teachers already go above and beyond to meet the needs of their students. When we have to work 2nd and 3rd jobs to make sure we can pay our basic bills, it takes away from what we are able to do for our students. Also, teachers who can't make ends meet will be forced to leave the profession, leaving our keiki being taught by unqualified teachers.

Please look for ways to solve the budget that do not hurt our children's education.

Thanks,

Jen Sarpi
Student Services Coordinator
Pearl Ridge Elementary School



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

Please don't cut teacher salaries

Alison Hayama <alisonhayama@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:09 PM

My name is Alison Hayama and I am a full time teacher at Ka'ewai Elementary School.

This year I will make 27 years with the DOE. Please don't cut my salary. My family depends on my income and we cannot afford a pay cut.

Currently we are short of qualified teachers. In fact, our school has had two long term substitutes run classrooms with the guidance of senior, experienced teachers.

If my pay is cut, I may be forced to retire and collect social security. The pay cut would impact my students and their education. With my experience and training, I can offer quality education for my students. Please find other resources to keep our salary in tact.

Thank you,

Alison Hayama
Ka'ewai Elementary School
Second grade teacher



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

Teachers' Salaries

Sarah Waite <sarah@friedlotus.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:10 PM

To the Honorable Board of Educators,

Please do not consider pay cuts for teachers as a solution to the state budget issues due to Covid-19.

Many of the most vulnerable students are served by teachers such as myself, a SPED preschool teacher at a title 1 school. I hold one of the most difficult and "least desirable" teaching jobs, as I am charged with teaching general education AND providing all the SPED services and documentation and meetings for some of our youngest and most difficult and complicated children. This first experience with education can completely transform a child - for good or for bad.

I am a certificated teacher, however as it stands, many of my fellow SPED teachers are emergency hires or long term subs. Many of the SPED pre-k, FSC, and SPED resource teachers are not certificated. Many of those of us who do get certified leave these most difficult jobs because there is no pay differential. You just FINALLY addressed this need for pay differentials for SPED teachers, acknowledging all the extra and difficult work that we take on.

If you choose to cut pay, and I assume the differentials, what is to stop exhausted and understaffed teachers such as myself from moving into general education, which has less work, less stress? What is to stop those quality SPED teachers servicing inclusion classrooms to move to Gen Ed? Why should veteran teachers in both Gen Ed And SPED stay on? There are plenty who can retire, change to easier positions. This leaves our most vulnerable and in need populations - SPED and especially preschool and FSC - with long term subs for teachers. This is too sad, not fair, and will lead to lawsuits - these IEPs are legal documents! These students have the legal right to be educated by qualified teachers, and they need this qualified support the most! And yet, they will get the worst end of this salary cut.

Please consider every other alternative. I am genuinely worried about how short staffed I am going to be next year, and worried for the SPED keiki population and what their teachers and staff will look like next year. Cutting salaries will only make things worse, and again - it's the kids that are the hardest to teach and have the most needs that will be affected by this the most.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sarah Waite
SPED Pre-K teacher
Royal School
Honolulu HI
Sent from my iPhone



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Miller, Niko <nmillier@kiheicharter.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:13 PM

Aloha,

My name is Niko and I am the Health and PE teacher at Kihei Charter School. I have been teaching in the DOE system for over 5 years.

One of the biggest issues I have seen that affects the learning of students is the critical teacher shortage in our state and on the island of Maui. This issue is 100% related to pay.

We have so many new teachers that come from the mainland every year realize they can not afford to live on a teacher's salary end up working multiple jobs and leave after a few years. Also, the small number of long term residences can't support their families on a teacher's salary including myself.

We already know and are currently working harder than ever trying to creating virtual learning and will most likely have to continue virtual leaning in some capacity for years into the future.

Reducing teacher's pay will devastate our education system that is already struggling prior to COVID 19. I truly believe if you cut teacher pay you will see a massive wave of teachers quitting.

Please find other ways like decrease admin and higher up positions pay. Reach out the several millionaires/billionaires for donations. Reach out to the hotel owners who made millions off the hard work and low pay of hospitality workers.

There has to be another way.

Warmest Aloha,

Mr. Niko-



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

Teachers Pay Sacrifices

Pat Tupinio <pmtupinio@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:13 PM

Dear Gov. Ige,

Please don't take out the financial deficit on the teachers nor any employee's pay wages. If this is the only way you can make up the shortages incurred to our State then you need to replace your financial advisors. There are many creative ways and proper re-evaluation you can do. Don't cut teachers, we only make \$25,000 - \$55,000 it's very difficult.

Example:

Financial Income verses Expenses: What are the numbers and why aren't they listed?

Cut the Income over \$100,000: Don't hit teachers making \$28,000 - \$55,000 we can't survive.

Prisoners: Why are we paying for their crimes, they should be working to pay their own food, room and board

Property: Why are so many properties left empty and without usage and collecting rent.

Homeless: Why did you allow building of such a terrible, eye hurting complex to handle the homeless

Oceans and Boats: What is the expenses incurred for harbors and storage.

This is only a few:

Thank you for reading this message.

Patricia Tupinio

Leilehua High School

Social Studies



Educator Testimony - No Salary Reductions

SueAnn Richards <sueannrichards@gmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:15 PM

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

Aloha Board Members,

As you know, our school year together was abruptly cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March 25, I have been teaching my first grade students via WebEx during our daily "School Family Morning Meetings". We enjoy participating in interactive story time, math games, science experiments, reading writing assignments to classmates, and our daily dance parties that we wrap up our meeting time with. I have spent the last 6 weeks trying my best to engage a group of 20 first graders on computers. Each day continues to be a new challenge, but I take time to plan unique, interactive enrichment activities for our Virtual meetings.

As an educator of 16 years, I urge you to support additional funding and budgetary options to address the coronavirus crisis and how it has effected educational funding, especially students and educators. More money is needed for the Education Stabilization Fund to help fill state budget gaps so students don't suffer and educators aren't laid off. It was extremely discouraging to learn that Governor Ige has made a devastating decision to implement a 20-percent salary cut for most public employees, including teachers, and 10-percent salary cuts for first responders.

All of these Public and State employees are continuing to work during this pandemic. From teaching our students from home to daily virtual collaboration meetings with colleagues and parents via WebEx and Google, educators are working hard to provide enriching learning experience for students and families stuck at home daily. First responders are putting their lives on the line daily to heal, protect, and serve our community, while potentially putting themselves and their family in danger of contracting this deadly virus.

Steps already taken to address the coronavirus crisis need to be expanded, including payments to workers, paid sick leave, unemployment insurance, cancelling federal student loan debt, and increasing federal support for Medicaid. Unfortunately, these all seem to have come at a major cost, the salary cuts, furloughs and layoffs.

Furthermore, due to the school closures I would assume the Hawaii Department of education and schools are saving a tremendous amount of money with the utilities and consumable supply budget, as well as funds to unemployed casual hires and substitute teachers. It only seems logical that there would be a way to utilize unused funds from current budgets in order to make up for losses rather than take 20-percent of teacher salaries.

It is discouraging to think that after all of our hard work we are going to have money taken from us. Many teachers will have to get a second or third job, many will move back to the mainland, and many will leave the profession completely. We want to provide the education our Keiki deserve without having to work multiple jobs or apply for welfare to support our own families.

Educators should not have to beg for the salary we were promised. Educators should not have to beg for the salary we are working hard for daily. Educators should not have to quit teaching in order to seek jobs that will provide us with the salary we need to pay our skyrocketing housing costs.

I live and teach in Hawaii because I believe in our island. I believe in enhancing and improving our education system. I believe in our ALOHA FOR OUR KAMA'AINA. If you believe in the growth and development of our economy in Hawaii, then you will help support funding for educators, nurses, firefighters, police officers and so many more public and state workers like us.

I urge you to support taking all of these steps—they truly are essential. A tremendous MAHALO for your time and ALOHA, and consideration of the support for our Keiki, the future leaders of Hawaii. We are all in this together.

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With warm aloha,
Ms. SueAnn C. Richards
First Grade Teacher
Grade Level Chairperson
Iroquois Point Elementary School

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With warm aloha,
SueAnn C. Thomas
sueannrichards@gmail.com



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

NO PAY CUTS FOR TEACHERS

Len Ferguson <lenferguson@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:18 PM

My name is Len Ferguson, a Special Education Teacher at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School. I've been at NHIS for 8 years and have witnessed a high turn over rate annually. We also have to rely on many substitute teachers due to the teacher shortage particularly in the field of Special Education. Often there are not enough substitute teachers to fill the vacant positions. If you propose and pass ANY pay cut for teachers you will be exacerbating the problem of teacher shortage and undermining our students chance for academic achievement. Please find another avenue of funding but don't put it on the backs of Hawaii's educators and students. If you could find the reasoning to fund the "train" with a 1/2% increase in GET another 1/2% GET increase would actually go to a good purpose. The families of my Nanakuli community were just barely making do before the Covid event, now they have been jobless, hopefully not homeless and it wouldn't be pono to put a lack of decent education upon them. Please consider your teachers and their keiki before you propose your budget initiatives. Thank you, Len Ferguson

--

Len Ferguson
lenferguson@gmail.com
808.271.1167
808.744.9052



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

COVID Rebalancing Framework

Taryn D <808dobies@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:22 PM

Aloha,

My name is Taryn and I am a Kindergarten teacher at Pu'u Kukui Elementary School on Maui. I am deeply saddened to read what the BOE would like to do to the salaries of educators and other state employees. Reducing my salary by 19.62% burdens my mind as well as my heart. How is this okay? What more, how will this be okay being that my husband is also a teacher? That means that our income will suffer a 39.24% loss. Now, that infuriates me. There MUST be a better alternative.

Everyone is suffering right now. Yet, again the teachers and children must carry on with less. If this plan proceeds, I do not see it fixing the problem, it will create a larger one. Hawai'i already has a teacher shortage, this will increase should this plan proceed. Teachers with spouses who are laid off, may not be able to make ends meet and will have to move.

I watch the news daily, and I have not heard of another state that is thinking to reduce the salaries of their teachers or state employees. There are so many facets to consider. We ask that you thoroughly review and research ALL other options.

Mahalo for your time,
Taryn



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

DO NOT cut Teacher Salaries

Kendra Morita <kenmorita12@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:22 PM

To whom it may concern,

Cutting teacher salaries is a bad idea. Here are a few reasons why:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

My husband and I are both educators. If this goes into effect this will be around a 40% cut to our income and we will need to look at relocating. You will be losing 2 licensed teachers and many more. Our schools are already underfunded. Hawaii is already facing a teacher shortage and our pay is one of the lowest in the nation compared to the cost of living. There's already a teacher shortage at most schools to the point where we need to resort to hiring long term substitute teachers. This will cause many teachers to leave our state.

Here's an article that goes into more detail about our pay that was written by HIDO: <http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/MediaRoom/PressReleases/Pages/Compensation-Study-2020.aspx>

Please consider other options. Whether it's waiting to see about the Federal Reserve or other state stimulus funding, or cutting less than a 20% pay cut or not allowing class raises.

Remember, it's our keiki who will suffer the most from this.

Mahalo,
Kendra Mizunaka



BOE: Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Tube Rider to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/04/2020 02:25 PM

From: "Tube Rider" <tube_rider1@hotmail.com>

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

Cutting teachers salaries will have devastating long term effects for teachers and keiki. Amongst many undesired effects that would be huge at impacting student learning and growth this is one of them:

-Many students will be left with long term subs and unqualified teachers due to many early retirements, and teachers leaving the profession because they cannot afford to live here.

I know for a fact that at our school, we have a shortage of subs and while some are good, they are few and far between. Our school has had many issues due to subs being inadequate from subs acting inappropriately towards students to allowing students to do whatever they want. It ultimately falls on the other teachers to deal with short comings of subs. I am tired to having to do triple the work because a long term sub cannot teach their class and I have to end up being the teacher.

I could go on and on about the negative impacts of cutting teacher salaries but this email would be 10 pages long.

Dane Inouye
Waiakea Intermediate School
Physical Education



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

Please do not consider pay cuts for teachers to balance the budget

Samantha Tomori <samanthatomori@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:27 PM

Aloha,

My name is Samantha Tomori and I am a teacher at Kea`au Elementary School on the Big Island. I work in a hard-to-staff complex and our students suffer from the effects of poverty and trauma already. Do we really want to make it even more difficult for them by providing a poor education through the use of unqualified teachers? Our school just posted two vacant positions for grades 2 and 5 with ZERO applicants. This past year we had emergency hires (unqualified teachers) filling two sped positions. Implementing pay cuts will make this teacher shortage even worse! Seasoned teachers will retire as they'll have absolutely no incentive to continue working. Other teachers will move to states with better pay and lower cost of living. I understand the state department needs to balance its budget, but we should look into cutting non-classroom positions, such as state and district resource positions before we ever look to cut teacher pay.

Thank you for your consideration,
Samantha Tomori
Kea`au Elementary School
Grades K/1



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

Don't rebalance the budget with teacher pay cuts

Odin Hill <odinhill@gmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:29 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hello my name is Odin Hill I am a 30 year teaching veteran with 20 years at Kahuku High School teaching Physics, Chemistry and the like.

Only recently has teacher pay in Hawaii even begun to improve relative to where it should be. The prospect of a salary cut would likely create a vacancy at Kahuku as I would be forced to take an early retirement and look for work in the private sector.

The quality of the students' educational experience would likely suffer by having an unqualified or under-qualified temporary hire. Kahuku is a hard-to-staff site and we have a number of long-term substitute teachers in positions that should be filled with licensed teachers.

Please consider other ways of rebalancing the budget, cutting teacher pay is short-sighted and sends the wrong message.

Regards,
Odin Hill



Budget Testimony - Teacher Pay

Shelby Greene to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 02:29 PM

From: "Shelby Greene" <shelby.greene@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha BoE,

My name is **Shelby Greene**. I moved to Hawaii right out of college and began my career at **Kohala High School**. I started with a Master's degree - which was my first mistake, since it put me a class behind where I would be if I had not completed my Master's degree early and waited until I was hired to complete the credits.

In my five years at Kohala High, I have had anywhere from three to five preps each year and my line has changed every year. While relearning new standards and curricula each year to teach new courses - including hours of training to teach AP Computer Science Principles with no programming background - I have also served as Department Head for 3 years, acted as a class advisor, and now serve as the Google Admin for our school-based student email domain. During this time, I also took a multitude of professional development courses that filled my evenings, weekends and summers. These courses, I'm sure you know, were paid out of pocket. I was spending money we didn't have to invest in my career and my future in Hawaii, hoping that with my next reclassification, we would be able to afford to stay a little longer.

In January 2020, something magical happened in my life. For the first time, with **both** my recent reclassification **and** the hard-to-staff differentials issued in response to the teacher shortage crisis, I was able to pay more than the minimum payments on my credit cards and loans. For the first time in five years of working for the Department of Education, I was able to survive a month on my own without relying on a line of credit for gas and food-stamps for groceries. Five years of work and dedication to finally be able to breathe.

I'm happy to announce that I'm getting married this summer. My fiancé and I plan to try to start a family. For the first time were hopeful that it would be possible for us to stay here and raise our children surrounded by this beautiful culture despite our rent being triple the average mortgage where our parents live. But a 20% pay cut in addition to losing the differentials would put my net pay lower than where I began this journey five years ago. I can't afford to continue to accumulate debt and interest just to survive on my own, let alone to support a family.

My story is not extraordinary. The sad reality is that, much like myself, many teachers across the state have been living paycheck to paycheck, relying on credit and hoping they don't have to uproot their families just to survive these already traumatic times.

I beg you to consider every single possible alternative to save your budget and keep our teachers.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Ms. Shelby R. Greene | B.S. Mathematics, M.S.Ed. Secondary Mathematics Education
Kohala High School | Mathematics Department Chair & Educator
Geometry | AP Calculus AB | AP Computer Science Principles | UH-M075 Intro to College Math
2021 Class Advisor

54-3611 Akoni Pule Highway/Box 279 | Kapa'au, HI 96755 | (808) 889-7117 ext. 239

Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world. Nelson Mandela

Support My Students HERE: <https://www.donorschoose.org/Shelby.Greene>

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

teacher pay

Deborah Clevenger <clevenger.deborah@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:32 PM

Aloha BOD:

We did not have enough teachers before this COVID-19 pandemic began. To reduce teachers' salaries now would collapse our already critical teaching shortage. It would not only harm our families but also our already-depressed economy.

Pay cuts would cause senior teachers to retire early and existing teachers to resign because they would not be able to afford Hawaii's high cost of living. These events would leave students to deal with numerous subs and unqualified teachers to provide their education. Our most precious "resource" is our keiki, our stewards of the future, and if they don't get a good education what will the long-term effect for all of us be?

Mahalo,

Deborah Clevenger,

8th Grade science teacher

Waipahu Intermediate School

--

He leadeth me.



Please DO NOT Reduce Teacher Salaries
Diedre Tome to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 02:36 PM
From: "Diedre Tome" <diedre.tome@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear BOE,

Please do not reduce teacher salaries . . . it would have a devastating impact . . .

- It would have a GREAT impact on families and families that have 2 state workers - making it even more difficult to financially survive here in Hawaii - unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced income
- Many students will go w/o a licensed teacher due to pay cuts
- Senior teachers will be forced into early retirement
- Students will be left w/ long-term subs and unqualified teachers
- Existing educators will leave the teaching profession
- Teachers work so very hard for our keiki - having a reduction in salary sends teachers the wrong message - we work beyond the school day and often use our own personal funds for our students
- Teachers care about our KEIKI and want our state of Hawai'i to be a reputable state that fights for education

Please keep Hawaii's public education and our Keiki close in your hearts and do NOT reduce teacher salaries.

Mahalo!
Diedre Tome
Mililani 'Ike Elem
Grade 1

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

Teachers are essential!

Myles Ibara <thstore29@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:37 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

The state should do whatever it can to balance the budget without hurting teachers again. Borrow from the Federal Reserve or access the rainy day fund. Do not balance the budget on our backs. After Furlough Fridays, it took years for us to even get back to where we were. As our pay slowly increased we were asked to believe that these were raises when in fact we were getting back what we had already earned. If anything, this pandemic highlights just how hard we work everyday to care and educate all of our children. Ask any parent if they don't have a greater appreciation of what we do. HIDOE and the BOE should reject any forced pay cuts on teachers.

Sincerely,
Myles Ibara
Student Services Coordinator
Ma'ema'e School



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

Concerns re budget

Yvonne Mahelona <mahelonay@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:39 PM

Aloha Board of Education Members,

In considering all options for balancing budgets during this pandemic, please do not cut teacher pay. Our keiki deserve a quality education and pay cuts of any kind will be extremely detrimental to ensuring educational equity in Hawai'i. We are already facing a drastic teacher shortage, and cutting teacher pay will exacerbate this problem further. Also, our local economy will suffer more as growing families face hunger and houselessness in light of pay reductions and job loss. Many local families depend on a teacher or state worker's income, and a 20% reduction will be extremely difficult to recover from. Please do not balance the budget on the backs of Hawai'i's public school teachers and children.

Me ke aloha 'Āina,
Yvonne Mahelona
(808) 436-3424
[Mahelonay@icloud.com](mailto:mahelonay@icloud.com)

Sent from my iPhone. Please excuse any typo's.



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

(no subject)

Joelle Sato <joellesato@gmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:39 PM

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

Aloha Board of Education Members,

In considering all options for balancing budgets during this pandemic, please do not cut teacher pay. Our keiki deserve a quality education and pay cuts of any kind will be extremely detrimental to ensuring educational equity in Hawai'i. We are already facing a drastic teacher shortage, and cutting teacher pay will exacerbate this problem further. Also, our local economy will suffer more as growing families face hunger and houselessness in light of pay reductions and job loss. Many local families depend on a teacher or state worker's income, and a 20% reduction will be extremely difficult to recover from. Please do not balance the budget on the backs of Hawai'i's public school teachers and children.

Mahalo,

Joelle Sato



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries

Haley van Noord <alohahaley@yahoo.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:41 PM

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

Please reconsider the decision to balance the budget on the backs of educators.

I have been a teacher in the Hawaii Department of Education for 10 years. I have completed over 60 hours of professional development, earned National Board Certification, and I have mentored new teachers for the past 5 years. Even with the extra pay for these additional "extra curriculars" it is still just barely enough to get by. At the START of the 2019-2020 school year I started clearing my classroom, "just in case." Unfortunately it seems as "just in case" arrived with Covid-19.

When you jeopardize teacher pay, its more than just balancing the budget on the backs of educators because;

1. EVEN MORE students will go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
2. Students will be left with MORE long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.
3. Lastly, the foundation to any community and economy is our intellectual wealth. This would certainly hurt all of us.

In a time where the future of Hawaii's economy can no longer be solely dependent on tourism, why not invest in the future of Hawaii? Our keiki deserve better.

Regards,

Haley van Weemen van Noord, M.S., NBPTS
Lahaina Intermediate School



Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Shianne Watkins to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 02:42 PM

From: "Shianne Watkins" <shianne.watkins@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hi Board of Education,

My name is Shianne Watkins. I am a first year kindergarten teacher at Leihoku Elementary in the Leeward District on Oahu. I am writing to urge you not approve any reductions of teacher's salaries! There are many reasons why this would negatively impact Hawaii's education system, a few are written below:

- With this pay reduction, many experienced teachers will decide to retire early.
- New and qualified teachers will be forced to leave.

I am one of those new teachers. Currently I make less than \$2000 a month. With a reduction in salary, I will make about \$1200 a month. There is no way to live on that! Although I love my job, and my students, I would be forced to move back home to California because I could not cope with Hawaii's high cost of living.

Please do not consider reducing teachers' pay as an option.

Thank you,
Shianne Watkins, Leeward District, Oahu

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

HI BOE Do Not Cut Hawaii Teacher Pay!

Rebecca Arlander <rebeccaarlander@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:43 PM

Aloha,

I am a 10 year veteran teacher in the HIDOE and I urge to NOT to reduce teacher salaries. We are already struggling financially as we are, a 20% cut, ANY cut would devastate us. It would also have a drastic impact on our teacher shortage. Please, please show us that Hawaii values teachers and education by not cutting our pay.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Arlander

7th Grade Social Studies Teacher

Washington Middle School, Honolulu



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

Teacher Pay Cut

Iria- Carmen <iriacarmen808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:45 PM

This is my 11th year working as a public school teacher in Hawai'i. I've experienced living pay check to pay check and having a second or third job to make ends meet. After putting in all that time, a pay cut would put me back to where I was. I would reconsider my job as a teacher if I can not make ends meet. I feel unappreciated as a teacher by the government if they are willing to lower our salaries, which is already so low compared to other states/professions. It's absolutely disappointing.

Having experienced teachers retire and quit teaching will greatly effect all children in Hawai'i. We are trying to build up our education system not bring it down. This is completely absurd and backwards. Please make the right decision, do not enforce pay cuts for teachers!

Carmen Calderon
HTA- Middle School Math



Teacher pay cuts are a bad idea

Cindy to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/04/2020 02:46 PM

From: "Cindy" <cindy.hutler@hotmail.com>

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

To whom it may concern:

Cutting teacher pay is not right for our Hawaii students. Hawaii already has a shortage of qualified teachers, if pay is cut by 20% teachers will LEAVE the profession. What does this mean for our students??? Unqualified teachers or long term subs will be in the classroom teaching our students. If we truly want to prepare our students for the future, we need to provide them a quality education and put their needs above all else. The students of today are quite literally our future, please do the right thing and invest in them!

Thank you,
Cindy Hutler
Kindergarten Teacher
Kihei Elementary School



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

Teachers salaries

kelly wadlegger <kwadlegger@hotmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:47 PM

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

Aloha

I am a teacher at Castle High. I can not afford to stay in Hawaii if the BOE votes to cut our salary. I already work a second job to support my child and scrape together the crazy high rent and food costs.

Our schools are struggling already. Do not do this to us who work very hard to give students a decent education in terrible conditions.

There are other ways to balance the budget then cutting salaries that are less than 60,000 for most.

Thank you

Kelly Wadlegger, MFA, BFA

Sent from my iPhone



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

Teacher Pay Cuts

Kim <kkmart@hotmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:47 PM

I'm saddened to have to start off Teacher Appreciation week with news that my paycheck could soon be decreased by approximately 20%. My one-income supports myself and my two daughters. It's sad that we will be forced to find more ways of cutting back on finances that are already strapped. It is even sadder though, that this state cannot find a way to show my children as well as thousands of others children that they value their education. These children need licensed teachers. This pay cut will force many teachers to leave the state or retire. This will increase the chances of the children of Hawaii being taught by unlicensed subs. Please help give our children the education they deserve! Please do not decrease teacher's pay!
Mahalo

Kim Holokai
Wailuku Elementary
Kindergarten Teacher
Sent from my iPhone



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

Teacher Salaries

Annie Zamber <anniezamber@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:47 PM

I'm urging you to not let teachers take a pay cut. It has taken so many years to increase my pay since I started in 2011. It is now just enough to get by (without a mortgage/no children/no saving) and it wasn't enough to get by without debt and borrowing back in 2011. Hawaii teachers are already paid less than teachers are in almost all 50 states when cost of living is factored in. Next school year is most likely going to be very challenging and making a lot less money isn't going to help teachers develop new ways to teach, and having less time to do this because a second job is needed will not benefit students. If I were to receive a pay cut I would certainly consider looking for employment elsewhere, getting a second job (which will effect my time and energy for teaching), or possibly teaching another state. I am not alone, many teachers would possibly leave their position, get second jobs, or retire early and our students will be in a situation where they will be taught by substitute teachers, non-highly qualified teachers, unlicensed teachers and teachers that have other jobs to worry about and focus on. With schools needing to find new ways to educate and reach students, this is the worst time to have highly qualified experienced teachers working second jobs or to lose many highly qualified experienced teachers capable of this task.

Ann Zamber
Classroom Teacher
Kealakehe High School



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

Regarding the proposal to reduce teacher pay is detrimental to all

jennifer@hawaii.rr.com <jennifer@hawaii.rr.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:50 PM

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

To the Board of Education and Christina Kishimoto

The proposal to possibly cut teacher pay by 20% should not even be a consideration. The students of Hawaii have already missed out on 25% of their education due to school closures in the 2019-2020 school year. During this time, schools have had to work twice as hard creating and implementing distance learning plans for those with and without access to proper technology. We have had to create and implement some form of Social Emotional Learning, Standards-based Learning, social connectedness, Special Education and Section 504 services, accommodations, and modification plans. We do this without brick and mortar resources. We do this on single laptops.

When the new school year starts, we will continue to serve our students whether it is through face-to-face instruction, more distance learning, more classes through Google Meet, or more hard copy packets. We want to continue to teach, reach, and impact the lives of our students.

Additionally, we have recently been told to conduct IEP meetings for every single student with special education services upon return to school. That would be impossible with the proposed DLWOP or STOWOP. The students will have missed entire quarter of school from SY 2019-2020, plus 20% more in SY 2020-2021. The schools are asked to do double work implementing a variety of learning plans and now a 100% of their meetings within the opening of the school year with less workdays and less pay.

Cutting teacher pay should not be a consideration at all.

Thank you,
Jennifer Holm
University Laboratory School
Special Education teacher
Student Services Coordinator
504 Care Coordinator
Kindergarten-Grade 12



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

HIDOE PAYCUTS

Herbert Ishibashi <Herbert.Ishibashi@hotmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:51 PM

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

Aloha,

My name is Herbert Ishibashi. I am a first-year teacher at Chiefess Kapi'olani elementary school on the Big Island. I had just graduated from college last year and am doing everything I can to take care of and support my young family. Please, do not cut the pay of Hawaii's teachers. Doing so will not only hurt us teachers (especially us first-time teachers who are struggling to make it as it is), but it will hurt our learning keiki as well. They will have to deal with unqualified substitute teachers who will be taking the place of teachers who will need to leave or fall into an early retirement.

Please don't cut the pay of Hawaii's teachers. Please choose another way.

Aloha,

Herbert Ishibashi
4th Grade Teacher
Chiefess Kapi'olani Elementary



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

teacher pay

Heidi Miller <hawaiiansun4me@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:55 PM

It always amazes me that the priority of providing good, well qualified teachers to prepare our students for their life as contributing members of society is the first thing considered when revenues are declining. Are our kids, the next generation, expendable? Do the people in power not realize why Hawaii can't attract and keep qualified teachers? Why we have the highest turnover rate in the country? Do we ever look at other government waste? Pet projects? Taxing multi million dollar businesses? What about a lottery? Legalized gambling or marijuana (tourists would partake in these activities too)? Please something besides the dedicated individuals serving our kids.

Heidi Miller



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

teacher pay

Kevin Hoag <volcsand@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:56 PM

Hello,

My name is Kevin Hoag and I am a 7th grade science teacher at Konawaena Middle School on the Big Island.

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my family but the students I serve as well. Cutting teacher salaries is a bad idea.

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Thank you,
Kevin Hoag



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

Reject Teacher Salary Cuts

James <jinamasu@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:56 PM

Dear Board of Education Members,

My name is James Inamasu, a teacher at Kapolei Middle. I currently teach AVID, but will return to math starting next school year at a different school.

Our students deserve better than unqualified substitutes. Our students deserve teachers whose attention can be fully and whole heartedly on them as people. Our students deserve a quality education to support them in achieving their potential, dreams, and success.

Hawaii is failing to support and grow our students given the current budget situation and more will hurt if salary cuts are implemented. If teachers cannot be sure of how they will afford living in Hawaii, their hearts cannot fully be on their students; Maslow's hierarchy of needs is important. Some will leave the profession and Hawaii schools will be more understaffed or more staffed by unqualified individuals. You wouldn't put unqualified people in place of qualified doctors or nurses. Do not contribute to putting the education of our students in the hands of unqualified people.

I urge you to reject any cuts to teacher salaries.

Sincerely,

James Inamasu

Sent from my iPhone



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

Stop Pay Cuts

Nicole Ullian <nicoleandreaullian@gmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:56 PM

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

Aloha,

I am a teacher with 7 years of public school teaching experience. Three years on the mainland and four years in Hawaii. I am highly qualified with both a bachelor and master degree in education.

I moved to Hawaii to teach and have fallen in love with the island that I now call home. The current pay is meager but I am able to pay my bills. Any sort of pay cut would put me in a position to seriously consider moving back to the mainland. I want to stay but any further loss of income may make that impossible.

Keep good teachers like myself in Hawaii. Do not cut our salaries.

Nicole Ullian
Washington Middle School Teacher
7th Grade Math



Please do not reduce teacher pay
Suzanne Cummings to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 02:54 PM
From: "Suzanne Cummings" <suzanne.cummings@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

I'm writing to ask you to please consider other alternatives instead of cutting/reducing teacher pay. I've been a teacher since 2000 and have never felt worse about teaching than now. Hearing that a pay cut may happen during this pandemic is frightening not just for me, my family and co-workers but for the thousands of students in Hawaii. It would be devastating to have good teachers quit teaching because of a pay reduction---ultimately it is the students that suffer and that's not their fault.

Please do not reduce teacher pay. We already give so much for our keiki....

Mahalo,
Suzanne Cummings, M.EdT, NBCT
Academic Coach/Title I Coordinator
Kailua High School
(808) 266-7900

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Do not cut teacher pay

Steven Aquino-Johnson <sw.aquino@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:57 PM

Aloha,

My name is Steven Aquino-Johnson and I am currently a high school special education teacher at Waiialua High and Intermediate on Oahu. I have been at this school for the past three years, and in that short time have seen educators leaving in droves to the mainland or other career paths because of the low pay and high cost of living. I personally have experienced this too, especially because for the last three years I have been classified as an emergency hire, seeking initial classification for SPED mild/moderate. My salary as an emergency hire is ridiculously low. I made \$36,000 my first year and I am now at \$38,000. This is especially low in my eyes because I have had 5-years of experience as a public school teacher abroad and had an MA in TESL before coming to the HIDOE (none of which qualified me for higher initial step/class movement, so I had to start at the bottom).

For my first two years working as a teacher I had to go on welfare and use food stamps so that my family of four would have enough money for food each month. My take home salary after taxes was \$2000 per month. One bi-weekly paycheck was barely enough to cover rent! ...It has been a constant struggle working hard every day to advocate for and ensure that my students' needs were met while ignoring the needs of my very own family. During this Covid-19 pandemic, I and my co-workers have been working even harder, tirelessly, to make sure that our keiki gain valuable instructional benefit even though they cannot come on to our campus.

I have recently finished my SATEP program and I was looking forward to the much needed respite and financial boost from getting a multi-step/class movement from initial licensing; however, if you cut teacher salaries by 20% I will be right back where I started (most likely worse!). I could barely make it as it was with my current salary. I do not see how I would be able to last another year at this rate, especially because I was using student loans and the SPED stipend from the UH program to help pay for living expenses (which SHOULD have been covered through a teacher's salary ALONE!)... I could not imagine what it would have been like if this cut had happened when I was an emergency hire (29,000~30,000, perhaps? ...sickening) ... Do you honestly feel that a full-time teacher, with years of experience should be making poverty-level wages? \$38,000 easily qualified our family for welfare...

If this cut goes through, I am seriously considering leaving the profession and/or following my fellow teachers and moving to the mainland... A lot of my co-workers were already considering it before hearing of the proposed pay cuts, now they have started looking for jobs/positions elsewhere. I honestly do not see how the HIDOE will be able to fill the vacancies left behind by teachers when we already have such a high level of vacancies already (especially in special needs). And I do not see why anyone would want to come on as an e-hire, making 30,000 or less after pay cuts, when I could barely get by with 38,000.

PLEASE do not put our educators and keiki through this unnecessary turmoil. The situation and working conditions were abysmal beforehand, and would become absolutely atrocious if this measure was taken.

~Steven



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

Don't cut teachers' pay

josie harding <josie32@hotmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:58 PM

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

Pay cut has not been a conversation in other states, but only in Hawaii. It is already a hardship to live in this state for teachers because of the high cost of living. If you cut teachers' pay, many of us will be leaving Hawaii and go back to the mainland where we can have decent lives as educators. Teacher shortage will become worst. At the end, it's the keikis who will suffer.



DO NOT CUT OUR PAY

Tate Fong <tatef@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:59 PM

My name is Jason Tate Fong, I work at Aina Haina Elementary and I am a counselor, I work with grades K-5.

I am pleading with you to please DO NOT CUT OUR PAY!

My wife and I are both educators, a 19.62% pay cut EACH would amount to a devastating 39.24% loss of income for our family! We would not have enough money to coverage our mortgage payments, car payments, and other expenses we deal with on an every day basis. This is very scary for us to think we could potentially lose our home and because we are still working, it's not like we could apply for unemployment. being reduced to nearly 60% of our total income CANNOT HAPPEN! You would be sending employees who have been working harder than ever learning and succeeding at distance learning all the while dealing with the stress daily of thinking about losing pay, homes, food on the table, and dealing with raising our own children.

In addition, we have a 2 year old. As we are about to get ready to send him to preschool, a pay cut would mean we could NOT afford preschool, even more so if the pay cut is in place for ore than a year.

For students:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.
- If students need smaller class sizes in order to meet social distancing requirements, this would not be possible if funding was cut to make more classes available.
- Morale would reach an all time low and I'm pretty we would not be able to get many new teachers to work in our schools seeing as we are already some of the lowest paid teachers in the nation.

I urge you to please not cut our pay!

Sincerely,

Jason Tate Fong



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

Do not cut teacher salaries

Nancy De Leeuw <ntdeleeuw@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:59 PM

Please do not cut teacher salaries as a way to balance the budget. For me and many others I am the only one bringing in an income right now. My husband is in the tourist trade and we know it could be the end of the year before he is bringing income in.

If you must cut in education take from the supplies and technology if needed. Take from funds that do not directly impact kids and teachers. If we as educators are stressed about being able to pay our bills we are unable to give the best to our students. It has already been shown the direct affect it will have on the state by reducing our pay. There is so much wasted money in supplies and grants for professional development and the amount contracted for school maintenance. Cut the fat from those areas. There is also a major gap between teacher and administration salary. I feel administration would not feel the same affect and teachers do.

Please consider all of these when making a decision that will impact up for life!!!'n

Nancy DeLeeuw
Teacher
Kahakai Elementary
Kailua-Kona

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)



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

Dear Governor Ige,

Erin Saiki <esaiki@kanoelanies.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:03 PM

A salary reduction of 20% will make it more difficult to eke a living on a teacher's salary. There are teachers that work 2 or 3 jobs just to make ends meet. The state needs qualified teachers that work beyond the 7:45 - 2:00 school day. Each school day, I arrive at school at 6:30 a.m. and continue working until 4:30 p.m. I work hard because I want to ensure my students have a teacher that develops innovative lesson plans, tutors, and provide student feedback of projects, tests and homework. I also work on grading and writing lesson plans. on the weekends. The public does not see what the teacher does when school ends. They do not see us after school in a classroom, Starbucks, or at home working. The teacher's pay already is low compared to other college graduates in different fields. Please reconsider and find another way in which teachers will not be penalized.

Sincerely,
Ms. Erin Saiki
Kanoelani Elementary School



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

Pay cuts for Teachers

Leslie Frasier <lesliefras@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:05 PM

My name is Leslie Frasier. I teach 6th grade Visual Arts at Chiefess Kamakahahei Middle School on the island of Kauai. Throughout my eight years here I have struggled financially, taking on secondary jobs, roommates, any small amount that would help make ends meet. When I moved to Kauai in 2011, there was no contract. After taking a 30% cut in pay from my California salary, I had counted on at least yearly step increases to help but this was not the case. I have taken additional classes to reclassify to raise my pay. I felt hopeful knowing that the recent bill to raise teacher pay to accommodate the lost step increase years was on the table, as it would have raised my salary to what I had been making in 2010. A travesty for an esteemed professional like myself, but a livable more comfortable salary to contend with the high cost of living in Hawaii.

I find it both demoralizing and deplorable that Governor Ige is talking about balancing the state budget on the backs of our keiki and our hard working teachers. We already have a teacher shortage, and this measure would blow this into a full blown problem. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. Governor Ige, I urge you to reconsider this option, and hope that alternatives can be found.

Sincerely,
Leslie Frasier



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

Teacher's Salaries

Joy Wolcott <joywolcott@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:05 PM

Aloha,

I have been a teacher for the HDOE since January 20, 2004. I respectfully request : Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Also, we want to attract teachers to our state and encourage local students to choose teaching in Hawaii as their career path. Education is already suffering with teacher shortages, limited funding, and negativity toward the quality of education we can produce. Please move forward with supporting education! It is wise to teach a man to fish, not just hand him a fish...let's think long-term and be creative about finding alternatives to cutting salaries and furloughs. I bet you had a few great teachers yourself, let's give our youth the same opportunity you had so when they become our new leaders, we are in their capable hands, as well. Please consider what I am asking of you. Let's send a message to our country that Hawaii has integrity!

Thank you,
Joy Wolcott
PE Teacher
Kapaa Elementary School
Kauai



K-12 funding

Michael Kline to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 03:06 PM

From: "Michael Kline" <michael.kline@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

May 4, 2020

Dear Hawai'i Board of Education Members:

I am a Special Education preschool teacher and National Board Certified Teacher at Kilauea School on Kaua'i. I am submitting testimony for your meeting on Thursday, May 7, 2020 at 1:30 pm concerning a nearly 20% salary reduction for teachers across the state.

I know a reduction in teacher pay will not only hurt our students we serve and our families, but our state's economy. More students will go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing teachers leave the profession because of the high cost of living here. Also, if there is a shortage of Special Education teachers and a lack of quality and equitable services for our students with disabilities then our state might be looking at another Felix Consent decree costing millions of dollars. Please do not look to make budget cuts by cutting teacher pay. Please look at other alternatives first. We do not want to have long lasting damage to Hawai'i's public education and keiki.

Sincerely,

Michael Kline
Special Education Preschool Teacher
Kilauea School

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Teacher Pay Cuts

Elizabeth Baclayon <sedgekitty1608@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:06 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

With all due respect, I plead with you not to cut teachers' salaries by 19.62% - 20% or I will literally be forced into bankruptcy and will have to leave Hawaii after teaching for almost 30 years.

My family is already living paycheck to paycheck; my husband is self-employed and cannot work due to Covid-19 restrictions so we are trying to pay the mortgage and survive on my salary alone.

I have devoted 26 years of dedicated teaching to the state of Hawaii, enduring decades of pay cuts, Furloughs, and step freezes - after nearly 30 years I'm barely making more than when I began teaching on Kaua'i in 1994.

Yet, in spite of this I worked a second job to make ends meet, earned a Master's Degree in American History and Government to improve my teaching, and even taught during round two of three horrific cycles of chemotherapy when diagnosed with breast cancer, against my Oncologist's advice, because I needed to pay bills and pay my state health insurance premiums. I am currently paying off thousands of dollars of medical debt and your proposed, destructive pay cuts on top of never fully recovering financially from the devastation to my family from state's pay cuts, step freezes, and Furloughs will be the nail in my family's financial coffin.

Because of my vast experience, credentials, and skills I have been offered numerous teaching positions in multiple states on the mainland but because my husband and children are Native Hawaiian and because I love the keiki of Hawaii whom it has been my privilege, honor, and delight to teach for almost 30 years, I have declined those higher paying offers and chosen to remain on Kaua'i. These proposed pay cuts could be what changes my mind, albeit reluctantly. What are these in demand credentials which I've referenced?

I am a Nationally recognized recipient of the Federally acclaimed James Madison Memorial Foundation Fellowship, having earned through intense scholarship (including a summer institute at Georgetown University in 2014) the title of "Constitutional Scholar." I have letters of commendation from Congresswoman Mazie Hirono, the late Senator Daniel Inouye, and the former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. I've been nominated for state teacher of the year (but I chose not to pursue the honor because it came at the same time I was diagnosed with breast cancer and I had to have a mastectomy then chemotherapy and simply was too ill to follow through with my end of the paperwork).

In addition, ten years ago I created an elective course at my school to address campus bullying, called "Anne Frank, Lessons from the Holocaust" which has proved very successful -- I average 30 students each semester voluntarily enrolling in it - this is remarkable because they could choose from more "fun" electives, like art, or P.E. but my class is always full, and parents often tell me their child couldn't wait to become a 7th grader so they could take this class. Besides this Holocaust Studies elective, I also teach 6 periods of American History and Government, using 21st century skills and technology and student centered hands-on methodology to successfully engage students. I am in excellent standing with EES.

I'm saying these things not to brag but to make you understand that, like thousands of my peers, I have a particular set of skills, talents, passion, dedication, loyalty, and love for my students and the people of Hawaii that deserve to be respected and compensated with a decent living wage, and that are sought after by other schools throughout the Mainland. It's hard enough right now to make ends meet, especially with my husband out of work due to Covid-19, cutting my salary by up to 20% will literally ruin us.

My husband and sons are Native Hawaiian: this is their ancient Aina, but if such pay cuts occur it would be the final straw for us, and Hawaii will lose yet another passionate, loyal, dedicated, talented, highly skilled, Nationally recognized, experienced teacher to the Mainland, where the cost of living is less expensive.

I beg you, don't make it impossible for my Native Hawaiian sons and husband to remain in their rightful Homeland. Please do not destroy teacher salaries.

With Aloha,

Elizabeth Baclayon

8th Grade Social Studies Teacher and also

7th & 8th Grade Elective Teacher, "Anne Frank, Lessons from the Holocaust"



Testimony on 5/7/20 Mtg Agenda: DO NOT REDUCE TEACHER SALARIES

Chablis Paris Mathai <chablisparis@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:11 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am strongly against the proposal for directed leave without pay or supplemental time off without pay for Teachers which would result in a 19.62% pay cut for teachers and most likely an instructional time reduction for students.

As a licensed Social Studies teacher at Kapolei Charter School, the impact of this proposal on my family would be grave. Although I do agree that we all must make sacrifices to help balance the effects of this pandemic, I do not believe that the brunt of it should be shared by teachers and our students. Hawaii teachers are already amongst the lowest paid in our profession in the nation. A 19.62% salary reduction would leave me unable to pay for my monthly bills, including student loans that made it possible for me to complete my degrees and gain licensure to serve my community after an impassioned plea by the state of the need for more qualified teachers. A pay reduction would require me to seek employment in private sectors utilizing my non-teaching degrees that may be able to pay more. I have heard fellow teachers share these same sentiments, and teachers who are eligible to retire consider doing so should these cuts be made. We love our haumana, but there is only so much devaluation of our profession we can take before we have to choose to move on.

Furthermore, a reduction in school days will be highly detrimental to my students. Our current instructional time is not sufficient to meet my students' needs, to bridge their learning gaps that started within our educational system way before they got to high school, and to adequately prepare them for a life beyond. Mandating a 4 day school week will only exacerbate their shortcomings and leave it all but impossible for them to make meaningful gains and have ample readiness to move on to college or a career path.

As a parent of a student in public education, I believe it is unconscionable that my child will not be receiving the quality education she deserves. Fewer qualified teachers means she will likely be receiving instruction from long-term subs and emergency-hires who may not have the knowledge or skills to teach, greatly impacting my child's potential success. We are already facing the unknown of what schools will look like when we return in the fall due to the COVID-19 in the fall, these cuts to available instructional time would only compound the ill-effects.

I ask that you please refuse to cut teacher pay at 19.62%, forcing a smaller amount of instructional time for students, and consider the long term implications of such a move as you look for viable alternatives to balance the budget. I believe cutting teacher pay so drastically, while having short-term benefits of balancing budgets, will be a disastrous move for the retention of high-quality teachers, student success and our economy in the long run.

Chablis Mathai



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

no to teacher pay cuts

Teacher <creader13@hotmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:12 PM

Aloha Board of Education,

I am a long term teacher who relocated to teach in Maui in 2001. I teach Special Education at Princess Nahienaena Elementary School on Maui. I implore you to consider all possible options to balance the budget before cutting teacher pay. It is obvious teachers with long term experience will gladly retire early. It will result in more classrooms with unlicensed teachers. As an experienced educator, I understand that putting unlicensed teachers into classrooms hurt students!

As a parent, I see the importance of keeping the profession professional. I want my children to have experienced teachers leading their classrooms who have received formal training. I feel my own children are already behind mainland peers and I wonder what will happen if we continue to degrade the teaching profession in Hawaii with pay cuts. I hope the BOE respects our profession, and the leaders of our children, by maintaining our previously negotiated salaries.

Thank you for your time,
Carla Hazlet



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

No to teacher pay cuts!

Olivia Malcolm <olivia_malcolm@hsdb.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:13 PM

Aloha,

My name is Olivia Malcolm. I work at Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind as ASL specialist working with K-12 students. It's a tough job to support deaf kids to acquire American Sign Language as their primary language. In some situations, they grow older and they fall behind in their communication, social, emotional, and academic skills. We work hard with deaf students who needs every special accommodations and modifications. We work hard to provide instruction through online. The students are frustrated and unaccustomed to distance learning approach. Some of them still struggle to understand the situation of covid-19 pandemic. We work hard to provide instruction daily and try our best to help them maintain and remember everything we had taught past this year. It's challenging and it's the worst time possible to consider the teacher pay cuts. Please reconsider! Don't cut our teacher salary! We are working hard.

Mahalo for your time,

Olivia



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

No To Pay Cuts - Especially In SPED!

Paul McDonnell <mrmcd@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:15 PM

Dear BOE,

I'm a middle school science teacher at the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind in Honolulu. I am alarmed about the possibility of pay cuts and want to ask that this does not happen at all. Especially to SPED teachers. Things are tough enough as they already are. We have a total of 10 staff members in our Middle School department, and I am the ONLY one who started out the year in Middle School, and am still there. Everybody else has quit, transferred out, or transferred in. Our English middle school teacher abruptly quit 2 weeks ago, saddling me with her IEPs and I'm now forced to remote-teach English as well. I also had to take on her IEP load, and she had conducted NONE of her meetings before she left. So I have had, and am conducting IEP meetings for EVERY SINGLE KID in middle school except for one.

For the first time in my 15+ year teaching career, I am anxiously looking forward to the end of the school year. I'm tired, depressed and beat down by all this, and remote teaching difficult students. Don't make things even more miserable by cutting my pay! That should not be an option to consider at all.

-Paul McDonnell
HSDB



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

Teacher pay cuts

Danica Walsh <hokulani19@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:16 PM

Aloha,

I am a certified Special Education teacher in Maui. I have my Masters in Special Education from UH Manoa. I have been teaching solely in this field since 2011. During this time I have dedicated many hours and energy to providing my students the education and care they deserve. I have spent many many hours of my personal time planning lessons, and writing IEPs after school hours and on the weekends.

This year I was told I would be receiving a \$10k bonus for being a special education teacher. I was ecstatic for finally possibly receiving the income I deserve. Now I am being told not only will that not be happening but I will be receiving a 20% pay cut! This is unthinkable! I can barely support myself and my 2 year old son on the income I receive. I have already been forced to take on two additional jobs (catering and bartending) to make ends meet. Maui has an insane cost of living and I do not have the option to leave. I do have the option to quit teaching and find a career that will pay me what I deserve. I do not want to quit however, as I love my job and my students.. They were "my kids" before I had one of my own. I know there is already a shortage of teachers, especially qualified Special Education teachers. This pay cut will force teachers like myself to walk. There has to be another way to balance the budget. Please do not take it out on us.

Danica Walsh (Gr 1 Special Education Teacher).
Baldwin Kekaulike Complex



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

Proposed Teacher Pay Cut

Ryan Chatfield <ratchat13@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:16 PM

Aloha Board of Education,

My name is Ryan Chatfield and I am the Academy of Health & Sciences lead teacher at Aiea High School. I am writing to implore you not to cut teacher salaries.

I have every intention of staying in Hawaii. My children are receiving a great education in Mililani with my son looking forward to being on track to intern with the NSA during his junior and senior year at Mililani High School.

At Aiea High School I am working to establish the first high school EMT training program in the state that will begin next school year. I have 16 students currently receiving phlebotomy training through a partnership with Clinical Labs and HPH. These students will complete their studies at the end of May and have an opportunity to be hired on by Clinical Labs with starting pay at \$18. This is a program that we plan to continue next year as well.

I am vested and have 8 years in the NYS retirement system. If I return to Central NY, I won't have to pay any of my salary to the union because I have been in the union over 10 years. In most districts, I will make the same or more than I am making now and I can buy a 4 bedroom house for \$200,000.

If my pay is cut, we will have to chip away at our savings to pay for rent (I can't afford to buy a house here) and other basic necessities.

I love this place and I am committed to seeing through the programs that I have started but how can I justify staying here if my pay is cut? I want the opportunities that I have created for my students to become embedded in the program. I want to give my own children the opportunity to take advantage of the educational programs here and graduate with their friends but if it has to come at the expense of our financial security, can I justify staying? That is a question many will ponder if teacher pay cuts occur and all students will suffer from the results.

Mahalo,
Ryan Chatfield



Please don't cut teachers salaries

Kristin Tatemichi to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 03:16 PM

From: "Kristin Tatemichi" <kristin.tatemichi@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom this may concern,

My name is Kristin Tatemichi and I am a third grade teacher at Pauoa Elementary School. I beg you to not cut teachers salaries due to covid 19. This is my sixth year of teaching and this last year I had to move back in to my parents home because I couldn't afford to pay rent on my own, even on a teachers salary. So I'm at home now trying to save money so I can hopefully soon buy my own place. It is already so difficult to live on a teachers salary here in Hawaii where the costs are so high. It was a struggle living paycheck to paycheck. I've had to work a second job the weekends and work at after school programs to make extra money. If these cuts are enforced, I don't think I would want to keep teaching. I wouldn't be able to survive on such a low income. This coming from a single person with no children, I can't even imagine how a teacher with a family will be able to survive. I don't want to make this all about money because I do love teaching our keiki and I am proud to say I am a teacher, but the stress of having to make payments on time and if I'll have enough money for my essential needs is too much to handle on top of the stress of being a teacher. So please do not cut teachers salary. I truly believe you will lose a lot of great teachers in Hawaii and the keiki will suffer.

Sincerely,

Kristin Tatemichi

--

Kristin Tatemichi
3rd Grade Teacher
Pauoa Elementary School
(808) 587-4500 ext. 243

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

Not on my back! Pay cuts??

barrow hutchison <barrow1hutchison@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:19 PM

With the recent increases for hard to staff school and needed SpEd skills, I am JUST about feeling like I can stay and support our keiki. Keiki that love their teachers [you can take that to the bank] and teachers who love their keiki [but not to be in debt] are the core of this state's future.

Do not trespass that love with a decision what will haunt all of us who are concerned with the development of:

Critical thinking

Clear communication

Collaborative skills

Compassion for the other

Creativity and Imagination for the horrendous challenges ahead

and MAYBE THE 3 R's!

CAN substitutes do this?

Barrow Hutchison B.Sc. Ag., B.A. Waldorf Education, M. Ed. Special Education
Kona Pacific Public Charter School
SpEd. - K. to 4th.

Wm. B. Hutchison



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

Pay cuts

Skintwin1 <skintwin1@aol.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:21 PM

Dear Board of Education,
Please do not cut teacher salaries. A potential payout will force teachers to leave.
Without certified teachers, our students will not receive the education to which they deserve. We teachers are already not being paid what we are worth.
Please reconsider cutting the salaries of teachers.

Thank you,
Diane Styles
Special Education Teacher
Maemae Elementary School
Island of Oahu

Sent from my iPad



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

Pay Cut

Kristen Kimura <cielomahina@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:26 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

Although the events of the time are putting a severe strain on the economy, I would humbly ask reconsideration of a pay cut for teachers.

There has never been a time when the public and parents have understood more what service we provide for the keiki of our community.

Based on what I have read, there are other avenues that the governor could consider first.

I feel that even if we were not getting paid, we would still find ways to reach out and care for our children. It's not fair to take advantage of the situation because the job would get done by the teachers regardless of the situation.

Kristen Kimura
Washington Middle School
Language Arts/7th

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony regarding pay cuts
kendra to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 03:21 PM
From: "kendra" <ktakanishi@hawaii.rr.com>
To: <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Dear Board of Education,

I am a teacher in Hawaii and have been for the last 30 years. I am extremely concerned about the teacher pay cuts; therefore, I am writing to you today in regards to the options that will be proposed to you regarding balancing the state budget.

Teachers in Hawaii were already the lowest paid in the nation especially when you consider the cost of living here. We already have a teacher shortage and have many unqualified people in the classroom trying to fill these positions. With talk of cutting teachers pay, many teachers will retire and many will move back to the mainland where they will not be cutting teachers pay; hence, creating more of a teacher shortage. This pay cut may cause me to retire sooner than I had intended. I would have to wait years to "possibly" see my pay increase if there are pay cuts.

Although we are teaching remotely which makes it challenging to teach and reach students, we are doing it. We are working much longer hours since we respond to students and parents needs day and night to make sure our students are provided with learning opportunities at home to help them progress and succeed. We provide resources, activities, feedback, class meetings virtually, etc. to ensure we try to reach our families. We also have to work around different technological issues that families are facing. Some families do not have computers and must have their child work from an iPhone and/or pick up a work packet distributed at school. We are dealing with a variety of different family dynamics and at the same time, trying to make the situation we are in work the best that we possibly can. We are trying harder than ever to help our students and their families by providing academic, social, and emotional support so our students will feel a sense of normalcy.

There are other options such as the rainy day funds (and yes it is absolutely pouring right now) and federal aid. I urge you to look at those funding options and fight for the state and the workers who are trying to maintain some sense of normalcy during this trying time.

In closing, I hope that you will consider other options, rather than pay cuts, and continue to fight for teachers. We deserve to be treated like the professionals

that we are; therefore, should receive proper pay and respect that our profession deserves.

Sincerely,

Kendra Takanishi
Kapa'a Elementary School
1st Grade Teacher

[AVG logo](#)

This email has been checked for viruses by AVG antivirus software.

www.avg.com



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

Testimony as a Teacher

Pua Watson <chanteds@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:24 PM

Aloha no,

My name is Chante Watson and I am an Emergency Hire teaching at a hard to staff school, Nanakuli High and Intermediate teaching 8th grade US history! Please consider rejecting then salary cuts to teachers because we are the frontline workers for the betterment and security of our state! Facing an already high teacher turn over and retention rate, teachers deserve the pay they receive. Many including myself are still going to school to increase in salary to remain here in Hawaii for the students we love! Please consider other options and alternatives as teacher deserve just as much praise for the efforts given to our students daily!

Aloha no,
Chante Watson
Sent from my iPhone



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

Please do not reduce teacher salaries

K Kumashiro <keanekumashiro@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:28 PM

To the Board of Education,

My name is Keane Kumashiro, a public school teacher for the last 26 years. I implore you not to reduce teacher salaries. I know for a fact that doing so would drive some senior teachers into retirement. This comes at a time when we are unable to find enough qualified teachers. That means more students will be left with unqualified teachers. At a hard-to-staff school, teaching a subject that always lacks enough qualified teachers, I know firsthand how hard it is to find enough teachers.

Please support public education!

Thank you,
Keane Kumashiro
Olomana School
Math 7-12



Covid Pay Cuts

Irish Hays to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/04/2020 03:28 PM

From: "Irish Hays" <ihays@kcschawaii.org>

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

Hello,

My name is Irish Hays and I am secondary social studies and English teacher at Kapolei Charter School here on O'ahu.

I am emailing to plea the state to reject the idea of reducing teacher pay by almost 20%. This would be detrimental not only to the thousands of teachers here in the islands but to our students as well. Teachers go into teaching knowing that we will not be the next millionaires, however, taking advantage of the love and dedication that drives teachers is cruel. I and many of my colleagues live paycheck to paycheck to manage life here in Hawai'i. Hawai'i ranks in the top five most expensive places to live year after year and yet Hawaii is ranked as one of the top ten worst places to live as a teacher.

Personally, having a 20% pay cut would mean that each month, my pay would go from 2,800 to 2,200 - this is the equivalent to a car payment for me. I have a brand new baby, he was born during this pandemic. As much as I want to continue to work and be a mother, the potential pay cut presents new challenges. How do I weigh my dedication and love for my students over financial hardship?

Please listen to the teachers of the state when we say that a pay cut would severely limit the teacher retention rate in Hawai'i. Our students will suffer without long-term experienced teachers in place. The state needs to place the priorities of its citizens over the priorities of the state.

Thank you,
Irish Hays



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage.

Kcyoro <kcyoro@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:29 PM

To whom it may concern,

Reducing my teacher pay will not only harm me and my family, but the students I serve as well.

I have been a teacher for 10 years and have gone back and forth many times questioning my pay and the work that I have put in. It is such a big disgrace to know that the State does not value educators and education. Cuts ARE ALWAYS being made first to our education system and the people that work so hard putting our keiki first.

Do you not care about how many students who would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement? How about the all the students that would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary?

It is time to put education first and show that you truly value us as educators. I'm so sick and tired of hearing about having to take paycuts as a teacher! Our keiki can not lose anymore because of your lack of decisions! We should be investing in our keikis, and their futures!

Karen Y.
Grade 2 teacher



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

Reject Salary Cuts for Teachers

JennieLynn Tchan <jjgirl101@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:29 PM

Aloha!

My name is JennieLynn Tchan. I am a former teacher from Keolu Elementary School in 3rd and 4th grades.

I was forced to move from our beloved Oahu to teach in another state because I could not afford to live in Hawaii with my teacher salary as it was. If you support cuts in teachers salaries you effectively support more qualified teachers being forced to leave the islands. This will cause much harm to the education of our keiki. Teacher pay will not help to solve the economic impact of this virus, but will make it much worse for our beloved island communities.

Do everything you can to stop these salary cuts from happening!

Mahalo!

JennieLynn Tchan



RE: NO on Teacher Salary Reductions
Jennifer Sugahara to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 03:31 PM
From: "Jennifer Sugahara" <jennifer.sugahara@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

My name is Jennifer Sugahara and I am a teacher at Admiral Arthur W. Radford High School. I teach the Health Service Pathway and Public and Human Services Pathway for students in grade 9-12.

Reducing teacher pay would devastate our current teacher workforce. We already have a qualified teacher shortage. If you cut our pay, veteran teachers and new teachers alike will leave the teaching profession in droves. Veterans may choose to retire early or opt for teaching internationally/private institutions. New teachers may opt to leave the profession as their reduced salary will not cover the high costs of living in Hawaii. You cannot recruit anyone to become a teacher with this dismal pay. You will then be left with either NO teachers to fill those positions, which means bigger class sizes OR it leaves unqualified emergency hires and/or long-term subs to cover the classes. In the end, the biggest losers are the students. Students deserve a quality education and that cannot be achieved with a loss of qualified teachers.

--

Jennifer Sugahara
Explorations in Medical Services
HOSA Advisor
Admiral Arthur W. Radford High School
4361 Salt Lake Blvd.
Honolulu, HI 96818

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

No DOE paycuts

Lani Watanabe <lani1107@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:33 PM

My name is Lani Watanabe. I'm a middle school math teacher at Washington Middle School. I've been teaching 23 years. Please don't let us go through another paycut. I feel like I'm just making it with my current pay. Thank you for your consideration.
Sent from my iPhone



NO TEACHER PAY CUTS

Surina Shankar to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/04/2020 03:34 PM

From: "Surina Shankar" <sshanka2@hotmail.com>

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

Aloha Hawaii State Board of Education,

As an educator, I already struggle to afford the high cost of living in Hawaii. Do not balance your budget on the backs of teachers and students. Find better solutions.

I have taught at Maui High School as a Special Educator and English Teacher for five years and I am still working just to be able to afford to buy a home. I, like so many educators, will not survive a pay cut. Hawaii already faces dire teaching shortages and most of my peers struggle to make ends meet. Classrooms still go, too often and too long, without qualified teachers. We are failing these students and their families by making Hawaii one of the worst places to teach, due to low pay and high cost of living, in the nation. I strongly urge you to reject teacher salary cuts.

Mahalo,

Surina Shankar
10th Grade English Language Arts Teacher
Maui High School
Maui



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

Teachers' Pay Cut Testimony.

Christina Gobert <cgobert226@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:36 PM

Aloha!

To those reading my name is Christina Gobert and I am a 6th grade teacher at Nimitz Elementary. I just wanted to submit my testimony to defer the pay cuts because as a Hawai'i teacher I barely have the money to afford my current rent. I live in a cheap area, but fear that I will not be able to afford housing here in Hawaii after just receiving my tenure at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. With 1/5 of my paycheck gone I will have to find another state to work in because I won't be able to afford living here, my home for the last 12 years. Please consider all of the teachers who are barely scraping by as it is and how this pay cut will greatly affect the well-being and quality of education here in Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration. Aloha.

Sent from my iPhone



Please do not cut teachers' salaries!

erin noordhoff <huinaluseat4@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: Hawaii State Teachers Association <info@hsta.org>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:37 PM

Aloha,

My name is Erin Williams, at the age of sixty, and I am a thirty-nine-years veteran teacher--eighteen of those years with the HIDOE. If salaries are cut, I will need to leave the profession I so dearly love. I will be forced to go into early retirement; yet, I had hoped to teach for the HIDOE until the age of sixty-seven. I am attaching my Panorama Survey scores and a letter of recommendation recently written by my principal so that you may see the caliber of teaching I provide our students. I have been offered positions at private schools here on O'ahu and throughout the world but have stayed in our public schools because I believe that we are making a difference for our keiki.

Choosing to teach as a Hawai'i public school educator has cost me financially. When I moved permanently to O'ahu in 2002, I left a teaching position at a California public school for which I earned a salary of \$83 K annually; my salary for my teaching position I took that same year at Niu Valley Middle School was \$32 K. Currently, eighteen years later, I make \$70 K--still \$13 k less than what I earned in California. It is demeaning that we barely scratch by on a salary that, even after eighteen years of service, does not match what teachers earn in California, and indeed, does not meet the cost-of-living.

I, like many other teachers here in Hawai'i barely made it through "Furlough Fridays", and those pay cuts negatively affected my pension and my ability to save for retirement.

My family relies on my income, and any pay cuts hurt us deeply. A 19% pay cut will devastate our lives.

This summer my family is relocating to the Big Island, and I will transfer from Kaiser High School, here on O'ahu, to Kealakehe High School in North Kona. When we made the decision to move, the HIDOE was in talks with HSTA to finally increase teacher pay to help meet the cost-of-living. Our hope for this increase factored into our decision to move.

This morning I attended a virtual English department meeting with the teachers at Kealakehe High; one of the teachers announced that she was leaving--she cannot afford to live here. So, now in an area of great need, another teacher is departing and more students will most likely be taught without licensed teachers-- because pay cuts will drive senior teachers like me into early retirement, and young teachers who cannot afford to live here now, will certainly not be able to stay if there are pay cuts. These at-risk students will be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers because new and

existing educators will leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

I humbly ask you to maintain our salaries as they are so that we may serve the keiki of Hawai'i and still afford to live here (barely).

Mahalo nui loa,

Erin M. Williams

International Baccalaureate Educators Network Associate

IB Diploma/Hawai'i & Pacific Literature Instructor

Henry J. Kaiser High School

511 Lunalilo Home Road

Honolulu Hawai'i 96825

ewilliams@kaiserhs.k12.hi.us

808.395.1200 x2279

"What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." ©#dqh#J rrgdø

2 attachments



LOR Erin M Williams (JMew).pdf
143K



hidoe+panorama-results SY2019-2020_Erin Williams.pdf
160K



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Henry J. Kaiser High School
An International Baccalaureate DP, CP and MYP World School
AVID Nationally Certified
511 Lunalilo Home Road
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96825-1705
USA
Ph. (808) 394-1200, Fax (808) 394-1201
www.kaiserhighschoolhawaii.org

December 3, 2019

Rachelle, Glenn and Shawn

MEMO TO: Rachelle Matsumura, Principal, Honoka`a High and Intermediate School
Glenn Gray, Principal, Kealakehe High School
Shawn Suzuki, Principal, Konawaena High School

FROM: *Justin*
Justin S.N. Mew, Principal

SUBJECT: Letter of Recommendation for Erin M. Williams, DOE ID: 10003574

This letter is being written on behalf of Erin M. Williams who will be seeking a teaching position on Hawaii Island, because she and her husband are relocating to Kona. She will participate in TATP I, and, if needed, TATP II.

I write to you without hesitation and with great enthusiasm.

To put it simply, Ms. Williams was on my "Dream Team of Classroom Teachers." In my thirty-nine years as an educator, nineteen of which as a school administrator, Ms. Williams stands out in my top 5%. I have served as her Principal for twelve years, from February 14, 2007 through the present time, spanning two schools: Niu Valley Middle and Kaiser High Schools.

A teacher-leader, Ms. Williams has served as Department Head (English-Language Arts), IB-MYP Coordinator (International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme), and authorized trainer of the IB Educator Network (International Baccalaureate Organization). While a schoolwide effort, Ms. Williams was significant in helping Niu Valley Middle transform and earn its inaugural authorization as an IB World School. She has always been an advisor to me in the IB processes even when I moved to Kaiser High. Ms. Williams accompanied me to the IB World Conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina and even helped me translate from Spanish.

To be clear, however, teaching is her passion and Ms. Williams had returned to the classroom when she moved from Niu Valley Middle School on August 1, 2017 to Kaiser High. As a standard practice, Ms. Williams infused *Hā* into her classes well before the HIDOE established the concept as policy.



Ms. Williams takes pride in her student performance in HSA and the IB Diploma Programme exams. It was not uncommon for Ms. Williams to stop by my office, to give me “play-by-play” updates on student performances with the goal of 100% proficiency. In both the HSA and International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, Ms. Williams’ students scored above the average scores of the other teachers. A significant number of her students scored at or above the World Average.

Students feel as `ohana in her class because she lives it with them. Ms. Williams takes the time to learn about her students on a deeper, personal level. As such, she differentiates and seeks alternatives for all students to succeed. This is not to imply a watered-down curriculum. She holds herself and her students to high standards—Common Core State Standards and International standards.

Of note, one of her classes was developed by Kaiser High, and issued ACCN LCY3010P for the HDOE. It was vetted by UH-Manoa, the University of Oregon, and the University of California system: ELA 3, Emphasis on Hawaiian/Pacific Literature. We wanted to offer an equitable option in Literature, which was formerly focused on US Lit or European Lit. Ms. Williams was the perfect teacher for this new course. As an “IB Teacher,” Ms. Williams had developed her units around the IB-style format.

Ms. Williams rarely refers students to school administration. She makes thoughtful and sound decisions with “students first,” while protecting the school’s integrity and good name. If there is an issue that does not sit right with her, Ms. Williams will confront that issue in a *pono* way, while exuding professionalism.

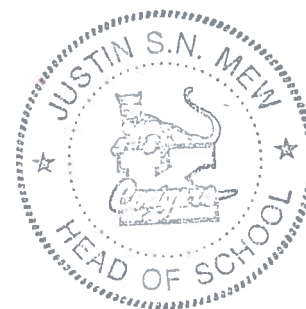
On a personal level, Ms. Williams was my son’s Grade 8 ELA teacher at Niu Valley Middle School, inspired him to love literature, to write well, and to thrive in her Grade 8 Team. When she learned that my son would be leaving Hawai`i for college, she had Nainoa Thompson autograph two of his books and gave it to him. Micah brought it with him to the University of Oregon. The books help him deal with homesickness while cementing his core even if he is identified as “a person of color.” *Na Hopena A`o* statements realized! As her former students do, Micah and I will always remember Ms. Williams as a significant teacher in his lower education years.

Ms. Williams will be missed sorely, and I would rehire her in a heartbeat. She will always be a member of the Kaiser Cougar and Niu Valley Middle `ohana.

I hope this letter is helpful in your decision regarding Ms. Erin M. Williams. If I can provide any additional information please let me know. (Internet email: Justin.Mew@k12.hi.us.)

Thank you for your consideration.

Me ke aloha pumehana.



AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



Kaiser High School

Erin Williams

**Grades 6-12
2019-20**



Report created by
Panorama Education

Summary

Topic Description	Results	Comparison
<p>Classroom Climate</p> <p>Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the classroom.</p>	89%	<p>72% Kaiser High School</p> <p>73% Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani</p> <p>71% Hawaii Department of Education</p>
<p>Classroom Engagement</p> <p>How attentive and invested students are in class.</p>	51%	<p>46% Kaiser High School</p> <p>47% Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani</p> <p>47% Hawaii Department of Education</p>
<p>Classroom Rigorous Expectations</p> <p>How much students feel that a specific teacher holds them to high expectations around effort, understanding, persistence, and performance in class.</p>	89%	<p>69% Kaiser High School</p> <p>71% Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani</p> <p>72% Hawaii Department of Education</p>
<p>Classroom Teacher-Student Relationships</p> <p>How strong the social connection is between teachers and students within and beyond the classroom.</p>	88%	<p>64% Kaiser High School</p> <p>63% Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani</p> <p>64% Hawaii Department of Education</p>
<p>Pedagogical Effectiveness</p> <p>Perceptions of the quality of teaching and amount of learning students experience from a particular teacher.</p>	92%	<p>74% Kaiser High School</p> <p>75% Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani</p> <p>74% Hawaii Department of Education</p>

27 responses

Classroom Climate

Your average

89%

27 responses

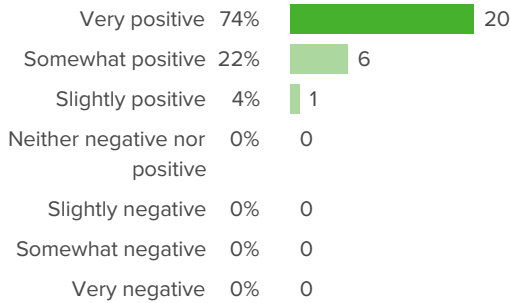
School average: **72%** Kaiser High School

Complex Area average: **73%** Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani

State average: **71%** Hawaii Department of Education

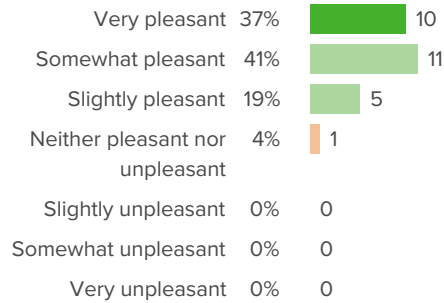
How did people respond?

Q.1: How positive or negative is the energy of this class?



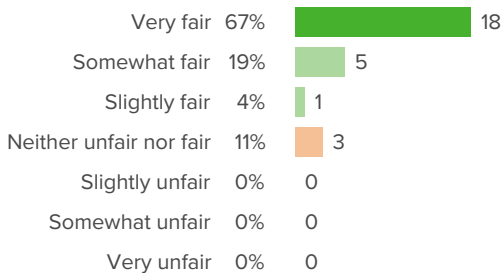
Favorable: **100%**

Q.2: How pleasant or unpleasant is the physical space in this classroom?



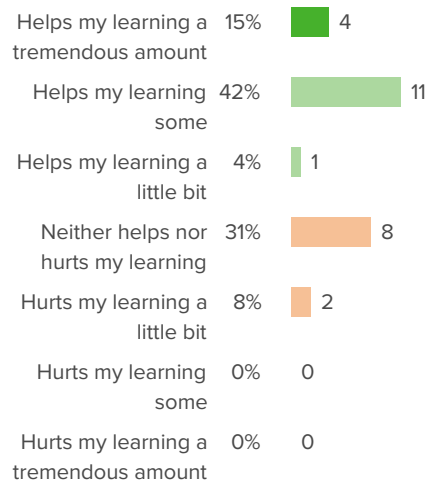
Favorable: **96%**

Q.3: How fair or unfair are the rules for the students in this class?



Favorable: **89%**



Q.4: In this class, how much does the behavior of other students hurt or help your learning?



Favorable: **62%**



Q.5: How often does your teacher seem excited to be teaching your class?

Almost always	77%		20
Frequently	23%		6
Sometimes	0%		0
Once in a while	0%		0
Almost never	0%		0

Favorable: **100%**

Classroom Engagement

Your average

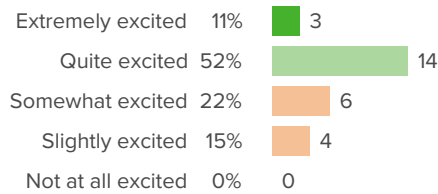
51%

27 responses

School average: **46%** Kaiser High School
Complex Area average: **47%** Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani
State average: **47%** Hawaii Department of Education

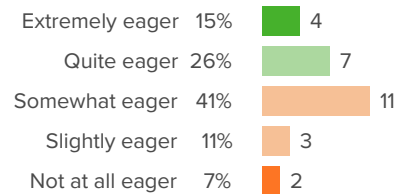
How did people respond?

Q.1: How excited are you about going to this class?



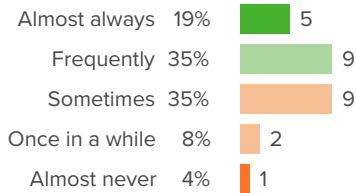
Favorable: **63%**

Q.2: In this class, how eager are you to participate?



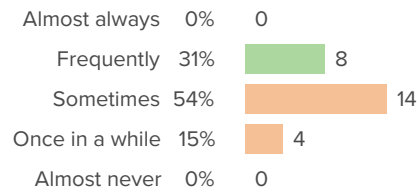
Favorable: **41%**

Q.3: How often do you get so focused on class activities that you lose track of time?



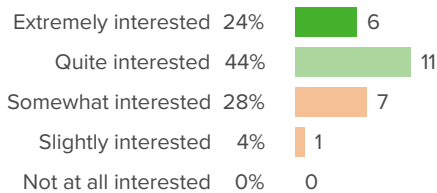
Favorable: **54%**

Q.4: When you are not in class, how often do you talk about ideas from class?



Favorable: **31%**

Q.5: Overall, how interested are you in this class?



Favorable: **68%**

Classroom Rigorous Expectations

Your average

89%

27 responses

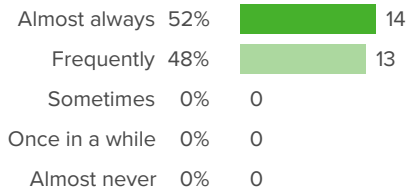
School average: **69%** Kaiser High School

Complex Area average: **71%** Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani

State average: **72%** Hawaii Department of Education

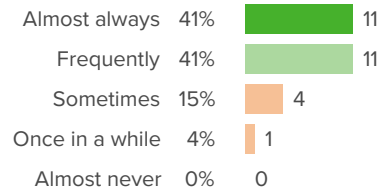
How did people respond?

Q.1: How often does this teacher take time to make sure you understand the material?



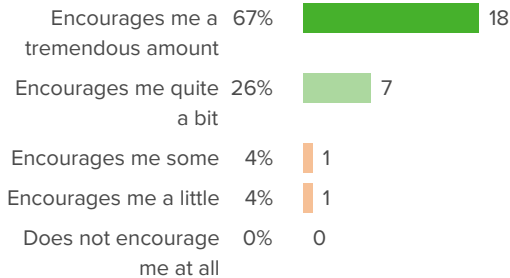
Favorable: **100%**

Q.2: How often does this teacher make you explain your answers?



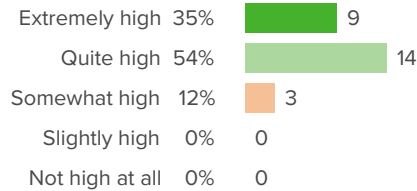
Favorable: **81%**

Q.3: How much does this teacher encourage you to do your best?



Favorable: **93%**

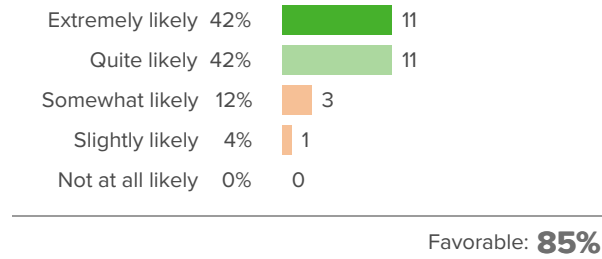
Q.4: Overall, how high are this teacher's expectations of you?



Favorable: **88%**



Q.5: When you feel like giving up on a difficult task, how likely is it that this teacher will make you keep trying?



Classroom Teacher-Student Relationships

Your average

88%

27 responses

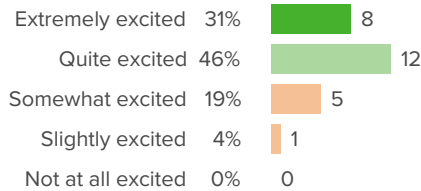
School average: **64%** Kaiser High School

Complex Area average: **63%** Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani

State average: **64%** Hawaii Department of Education

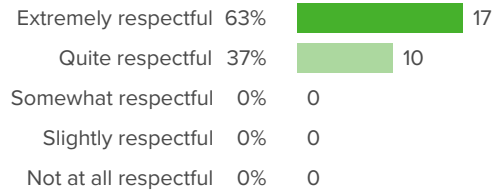
How did people respond?

Q.1: If you came back to visit class three years from now, how excited would this teacher be to see you?



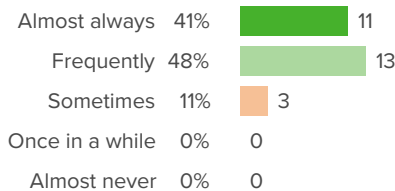
Favorable: **77%**

Q.2: How respectful is this teacher towards you?



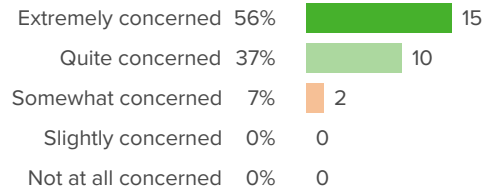
Favorable: **100%**

Q.3: When your teacher asks how you are doing, how often do you feel that your teacher is really interested in your answer?



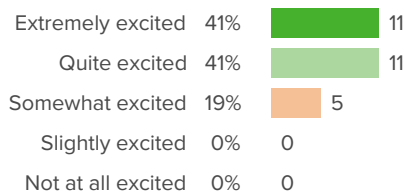
Favorable: **89%**

Q.4: If you walked into class upset, how concerned would your teacher be?



Favorable: **93%**

Q.5: How excited would you be to have this teacher again?



Favorable: **81%**

Pedagogical Effectiveness

Your average

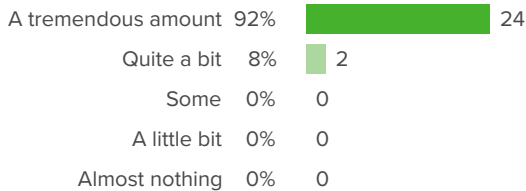
92%

27 responses

School average: **74%** Kaiser High School
 Complex Area average: **75%** Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani
 State average: **74%** Hawaii Department of Education

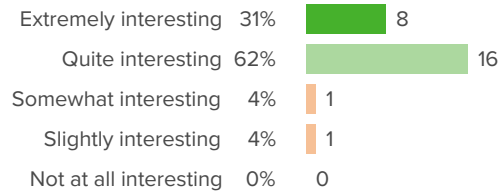
How did people respond?

Q.1: How much does this teacher know about the topic of his/her class?



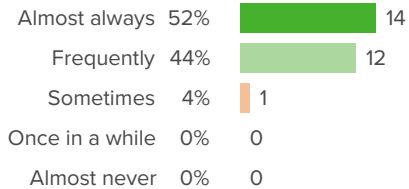
Favorable: **100%**

Q.2: How interesting does this teacher make what you are learning in class?



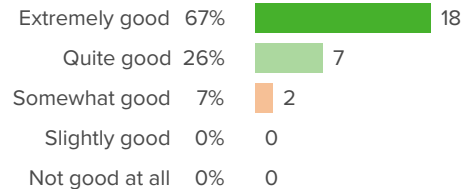
Favorable: **92%**

Q.3: How often does this teacher give you feedback that helps you learn?



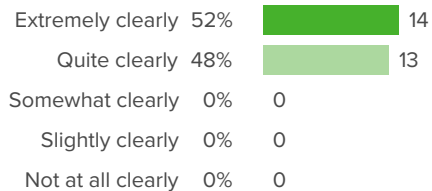
Favorable: **96%**

Q.4: During class, how good is this teacher at making sure students do not get out of control?



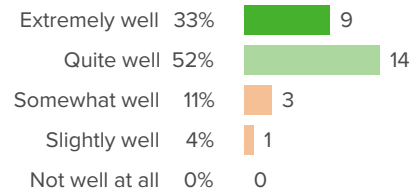
Favorable: **93%**

Q.5: For this class, how clearly does this teacher present the information that you need to learn?



Favorable: **100%**

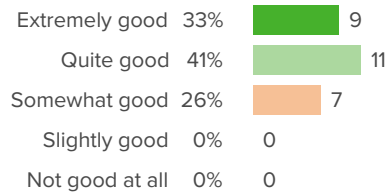
Q.6: How well can this teacher tell whether or not you understand a topic?



Favorable: **85%**

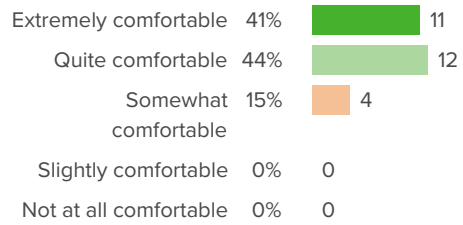


Q.7: How good is this teacher at teaching in the way that you personally learn best?



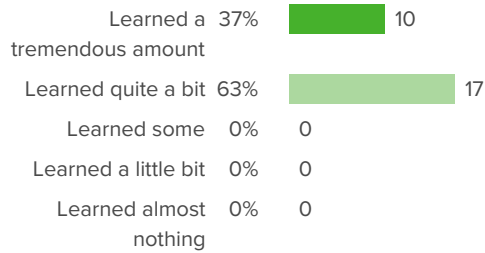
Favorable: **74%**

Q.8: How comfortable are you asking this teacher questions about what you are learning in his/her class?



Favorable: **85%**

Q.9: Overall, how much have you learned from this teacher about this subject?



Favorable: **100%**



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

Do not cut teacher salaries!

THOMAS ROBERTSON <tompatrob@verizon.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:42 PM

I am an 18 year veteran teacher, second year in this state. I did not become a teacher for the pay. I became a teacher to make a difference. Yes I love teaching here. But it is also expensive.

Cutting salary of teachers is not a solution but only a bigger problem. There is already a great teacher shortage In the US and Hawai'i s shortage is high too. By reduced salaries, needed teachers will not only have to leave but worse is no new teachers will want to come here. More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Please think about the ripple effect pay cuts will have for the years to come. This will also effect future generations.

Thank you for your time.

Christine Robertson
Kindergarten Grade Level Chair
Ho'okele Elementary

Sent from my iPhone



19.62% paycut

Philip Eugenio to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 03:44 PM

From: "Philip Eugenio" <philip.eugenio@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

My name is Philip Eugenio with less than 20 years teaching experience. I moved from New York City 4 years ago I have Masters Degree in Education. With all my experiences and education, I am only earning 56,000/year barely enough to make ends meet. We only spend for essentials. My partner has no job and if this pay cut materializes, there is no way we can survive. Please reconsider.

Philip Eugenio
Washington Middle School
Science/Grade 7

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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Sherene Hong <shong@kaaawaschool.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:45 PM

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. If you do you will loose certified teachers and mOre students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Also you will be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

I already have a second job as a restaurant server because I don't make enough to survive in Hawaii which is frustrating. We deserve a raise and only need to work on job! I can make more money serving full time instead of teaching full time AND I won't need to take work home.

Teachers are the ones who create futures for everyone. Appreciate us more please and give us fair pay we actually deserve not cut it down.

Sherene Hong
Ka'a'awa Elementary School
5th grade teacher



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

Teacher Salary

Florence Scott <fmsscott44@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:47 PM

Good afternoon,

My name is Florence Scott and I currently teach 8th grade at Kapa'a Middle School on the island of Kauai. I am urging you to not reduce state worker pay, including teachers. This would be devastating to many families, including my own. This is my 6th year teaching, but only my 1st in Hawaii. My family and I have already restricted our budget in order to live and work in Hawaii, but a 20% pay cut would require both my husband and me to seek additional employment. We have a senior in high school and want to spend this year with her instead of working additional jobs because of a pay cut. And we're lucky. Pay cuts would drive senior teachers to retire and would drive newer teachers out of the profession. There were hundreds of positions left unfilled for the 2019-20 school year; less pay would mean this issue would be compounded. Our students, ultimately, are the ones who will suffer for this, and I know that isn't your goal.

Please find another way to meet the shortfall in which our state currently finds itself; we need our teachers to prepare the next generation of leaders.

--

Respectfully,
Florence Scott



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Gina GonceLokahi <ginagonce@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:48 PM

Aloha,

I am a first grade teacher at Palisades Elementary school. I know times are tough for everyone at the moment and sacrifices are being made both willingly and unwillingly to keep as close to "normal" as possible. Cutting teachers' pay is a sacrifice that will have negative repercussions for long after "normal" life is resumed. I live paycheck to paycheck currently, and I've been taking professional development classes to become a better educator and make more money. I love my job and I want to continue to get better. I even planned on acquiring my master's degree in education. I'm worried however, that that endeavor is pointless. I love Hawaii and I don't plan to leave any time soon. If my career as an educator, which I love too, becomes one that doesn't enable me to live comfortably, I'll be forced to find another avenue of employment. I know I'm not the only one who thinks this way.

By lowering teachers' salaries, good, qualified teachers will leave the profession. Young adults interested in educating and inspiring the next generation will choose their next career option. The quality of education will be reduced. The future problem solver or creative thinker might miss out on inspiration because of a lack of motivation. I hate to admit that money is such a great motivator that it could influence my love of my job and my love for educating. Unfortunately, it is.

If you lower teachers' salaries, you will lose educators and the quality of education will be reduced. Don't do it!

Thank You,

Margaret Gina Gonce



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

Message regarding pay decrease for teachers

Bud <bud@commercialvideosolutions.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:50 PM

- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Bud White
Special Education Teacher
Kamalii Elementary
Kihei HI



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

Please do not cut teacher's salary

Alisha Siliado <asiliado22@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:50 PM

Aloha,

My name is Alisha Siliado and I am a second grade teacher at Eleee Elementary. I urge you to please not cut teacher's salary. As a teacher for 12 years and mother of a Junior, Freshman, and 2nd grader, I have seen the impact teacher pay cuts can have personally and professionally. I experienced furlough, payouts, increased medical premiums in my early teaching years and as a teacher and parent o have seen many local and out of state teachers leave during and after the school year. My children have experienced a loss of a teacher, as well as a long term sub due to financial hardships. Cutting teacher salary, especially during this time of Covid-19 would lead to another hurtful impact to our teaching staff. Our students, my child ire will suffer from losing even more qualified teachers.

Mahalo,
Alisha Siliado



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

Do not balance the budget on the backs of Hawaii's keiki and educators

Marianne B <mpdefrancia@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:56 PM

Salary cuts to teachers will harm Hawaii's keiki and the future of our state.

More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.

Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

My ohana would struggle to afford basic necessities like food, electricity, and rent if these pay cuts are imposed.

Please find other ways to balance the budget in these difficult times. Please keep fighting to ensure that the coronavirus crisis does not result in lasting damage to Hawaii's public education and our keiki.

Mahalo,
Marianne Belmoro
Grade 1 Teacher
Fern Elementary School

Sent from my iPhone



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

State employee pay cuts

patricia joaquin <trisha_joaquin@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 3:54 PM

Aloha,

My name is Patricia Lukzen and I am a special education teacher. I work out of the North Hawaii SPED Regional office and provide support to 10 schools in my area. I work closely with teachers, students and families. I have been a teacher on the Big Island for over 10 years and in that time I experienced strikes, furloughs and now distance learning. In every situation, student needs were at the forefront of teacher priorities. As a state, I believe that educator needs should be a priority as they directly affect our students. Cut in pay for educators will force many teachers to retire, move or change profession. This will leave our schools with inexperienced teachers (with not enough mentors), long term subs and vacant positions. As an educator I strongly stand against teacher pay cuts. As a mother of multiple students in the public education system, I beg of you to put my children's education on your priority list and not set them up for failure. If we want a successful future, we need to have successful students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony Pay Cut

Vanessa Lariosa to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 03:58 PM

From: "Vanessa Lariosa" <vanessa.lariosa@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Hawaii Board of Education,

My name is Vanessa Lariosa and I am a school counselor. I currently work at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School as the Class of 2021 counselor. I have been a school counselor for 8 years and continue to see an improvement with my students as the state continues to keep our educators as priority in helping our future leaders of tomorrow. I am writing to help you understand how beneficial it is to keep the educator's salary up as Educators represent Majority of Hawaii's population.

It felt like the BOE knew that Educators were an important aspect in the community, until we got word that we may be receiving a pay cut. If the BOE continues to cut Educator's pay, the state will see an increase of students taught by teachers who are not licensed and more classes being taught by unqualified long-term subs. We are already in need of Licensed Teachers who are highly qualified. More pay cuts will definitely increase our need for Licensed Teachers. Who wants to be an educator, when our Sanitation Engineers, also known as Garbage Collectors, get paid more than our first time educators? I'm not saying that a Garbage collector is an easy job; I'm trying to help you understand that us educators paid for our education to be an educator and spent thousands of dollars to receive our bachelor's degree, and as a School Counselor, I had to get my master's degree. With this being said, it feels like we are not looked at as IMPORTANT.

Please reconsider cutting Educators' pay. Personally, if I receive a pay cut, this would leave me with a net pay only enough to pay for my mortgage per month. As a mother, medical and dental care is highly important, so I also pay almost \$1300 a month for this. Currently, I already receive a net pay that will allow me to pay for mortgage and \$100 worth of necessities a month. If it wasn't for my husband, I could not make it on my own. Thus, this recent raise that I received for working at NHIS has made it a little easier to pay for necessities. Mind you, I worked my way up to a class 7 on our pay scale. I could only imagine how much someone who is at a class 3 only with kids is struggling financially; if I can barely make it right now with a class 7 pay.

In conclusion, I really hope that you reconsider cutting educator's pay. Many of us are already struggling to make ends meet with the pay that we currently receive. Any pay cut will drastically affect the education of our future leaders and our economy. There are other ways of providing funds during this crisis. I would hate for our education system and economy to get worse because of our Hawaii Board Of Education cutting our educators' pay.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Lariosa
High School Counselor c/o 2021
Nanakuli High and Intermediate School
89-980 Nanakuli Avenue
Waianae, HI 96792
808-305-7600
vanessa.lariosa@hawks.k12.hi.us

URL for site <https://goo.gl/rP6LhK>

“Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.”

— **Malcolm X**

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Testimony

Nicholas Allen <nick.allen808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:00 PM

To Whom it Concerns,

Hello, my name is Nicholas Allen and I teach special education at Mililani Middle School. I teach in the FSC setting and service students from 6-8th grade with emotional and behavioral disabilities. I'm going on seven years of service.

I count myself as one of the lucky few who has a 12-month position and a rank 7 classification. The increased pay has provided me with an extra layer of security, especially living in Hawaii which has one of the highest costs of living in the nation. However, a majority of our teachers are not so lucky. A starting teacher makes around \$48k-\$50k. A nearly 20% pay cut would mean a starting teacher would make a mere \$38k gross. Many of these teachers are single college graduates who are just starting to build a life for themselves, and \$38k is certainly not enough to survive in Hawaii especially if they don't have family or a significant other to lean on.

Let's not forget our experienced and veteran teachers who all carry the burden of our debilitated school system on their shoulders. If we cut teacher pay, I assure you that our veterans will retire and we will see a worsening of our teacher shortage. This will leave our classrooms filled with substitutes and unqualified adults. I can guarantee that little to no learning takes place with substitutes and non-credentialed adults. We all know it.

We teach for the love of it, but at the end of the day we also need to pay bills and have a life. At \$38k, I see no reason to stay in the teaching profession and I wouldn't blame anyone for leaving. In fact, I'm considering leaving the profession as well because of the loss of the special education differential and looming pay cuts. Who is going to commit to a university degree to earn less money than a bartender, construction worker, or any entry level office/administrative position in the private sector? That's madness.

We have some dark times ahead if these pay cuts become a reality. After teaching for seven years, I'm truly grateful that I don't have any children of my own because what I see happening in the public school system terrifies me. We can all agree that the system is flawed at best, and broken at worst. Let's not add to this misery by taking away what little compensation our teachers already receive.

Please do the right thing.

-- Nicholas Allen



I just started to be 🙌

Kim Camacho <islandgirl96761@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:01 PM

Aloha all,

A friend of mine and I were just talking that it was a shame that when crisis comes about the first pay to cut is the teachers.

Teachers should be the very last pay that you cut. The number one requirement for my job that I have learned over the years is that I maintain a healthy happy spirit. When I am healthy and happy I can project all that goodness onto my students which in turn makes them happy and healthy and wanting to strive for more education.

Only this year since we got our recent pay increase have I been able to pay my bills and still have money left over to eat. In the seven years I have lived here I have not been able to both pay my bills and eat healthy food. Because the cost-of-living is so high, not here but in a lot of places, I have to choose Housing over nutrition. If you cut our pay I will no longer be able to afford vegetables. Between you and I, over the past few months, I have really come to like vegetables, but they are expensive.

In addition, the children that I am teaching today are going to be your leaders for tomorrow. If there is one person I would want to make sure is happy healthy and well taken care of it would be the care provider who has them for six hours a day five days a week +.

I know that I am a teacher, but before I can teach anyone I have to make sure all of their needs are cared for every day 30 hours a week plus. We should be embracing the elementary population, We should be providing them with more support than any body else on the earth. They are going to be our leaders for tomorrow and right now they are in their fundamental years. If you do not nurture and carefully tend to a seed you will not yield a healthy crop.

The better care you take of their fundamental years, the more productive people they will become as they transition into adulthood. The ultimate goal is to raise small children into becoming positive community members, people who are willing, able and wanting to work, People who will love and care and nurture and support their children, and people who will become our leaders and we want our leaders to take us in a positive direction. We don't want our leaders to cut essential programs like schools. We need to roll model for them today and showed them that they are the most important for our future.

Aloha, Kim



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

Testimony

Madison Semones <msemones@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:01 PM

Madison Mitchell
Aliamanu Middle School
2nd year social studies teacher

Reducing teachers pay will be disastrous for new teachers. The pay is already so low it is hard to manage paying high Oahu rents, student loans, and other necessary bills such as health insurance. If pay is cut, myself and many other new teachers will be forced off the island we love in order to provide for our basic needs.

Madison



Cannot cut teacher salary!

Heather Carll <hcarll2476@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:03 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

My husband and I are both dedicated, hardworking, and trustworthy educators who have served Hawaii's keiki for over 15 years on the island of Oahu. Barely surviving furloughs, living with roommates until we were both in our 40s to save money to FINALLY purchase a home - this would be the final nail in the coffin leading to our ultimate need to leave Oahu. My husband already works a second job (in addition to being a full time teacher), in order to give us a small cushion each month in order to be able to afford our bills. Be assured, our living standards are far from extravagant. The bills we pay barely cover the basic necessities for our small family of three.

My husband and I bring a combined total of over 40 years of experience in education. We possess the experience and professionalism that is desperately needed in our classrooms. Hawaii cannot afford to lose teachers like us. It's hard enough seeing colleagues in other states making close to twice what we make while enjoying a lower cost of living - but we always said that with hard work, it will pay off. I'm not sure I believe this anymore. We have sacrificed so much, and we have lived in such frugality that I don't know where we could possibly cut corners to not lose everything we have worked so hard for if our salaries should be cut. Bottom line? We don't feel valued and our sacrifices are not appreciated.

Please, I beg that those of you on the BOE fight hard to protect us. Our teachers are already responsible for so much. We fight every day of our professional lives for what is right when serving our children. When will Hawaii show teachers that they are valued? We cannot expect teachers to carry the burden of balancing the budget. We are already carrying too much.

Sincerely,
Heather Carll
Special Education District Resource Teacher
Windward District/Kailua-Kalaheo



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

Teachers Salary

Troy Freitas <troyfreitas@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:05 PM

There are a few teachers I know who have left the profession or left the islands due to the high cost of leaving and teacher pay. It is a great thing working with the state and the benefits due to a group of 13,000 employees, but can I do better somewhere else? I have been teaching for 21 years and wonder where I should work for my remaining 9 or 10 years. If the step program to increase pay was implemented which was a consideration, I would feel my time was well worth spent all these years. Instead of a raise, we get a deduction. It really makes you think about a new profession. Please do your best to support our teachers. I understand their needs to be cut, but let's keep teacher salary, in the worst case, the same.

Sincerely,
Troy Freitas
Sent from my iPhone



Testimony for May 7 meeting

Kerry Foltz <kmcfoltz@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:08 PM

Hi,

As a part of HSTA, I'm sending testimony in regards to the meeting to reduce teacher pay. I'm a science teacher at Maui High School. I've been working endlessly on PD classes so I can afford to stay here in Maui. Currently, I'm unable to afford most rentals here for myself and my newborn son (2 months old) as everything is over 1200 a month. The only thing I have been able to afford under teachers salary is a shared home where I do not even have a guaranteed parking spot and often park on the street. On top of this, student loan bills for me approach almost 300 per month. I am barely making it by here.

I have taught in Maui now since 2015. I absolutely love the kids and my school, and working within the DOE. A reduction in pay will cause me to have to move. I already am living paycheck to paycheck. I know I am a solid teacher too because I care so much about my students, provide extra tutoring help/work through lunch, and stay after school most days until 4 with our science club, grading, and lesson prep. I have helped coach sports, was advisor for the key club at our school, and now am working on AP certification. Teachers like myself may leave HI which already has a teacher shortage. We deserve to be able to survive here and our children deserve better. It's not fair to reduce pay for already some of the lowest paid professionals with multiple degrees and student loans they must pay back. The future of HI depends on the keiki right now and their upbringing. They need solid teachers who work hard for them. By reducing our pay you will lose qualified individuals and the education system will suffer.

These are my thoughts and I hope that you will reconsider reducing teacher salary during these challenging times for everyone. It is not fair to the children and to the profession.

Sincerely,
Kerry Foltz

Sent from my iPhone



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

Budget cuts on the backs of teacher

Kathleen McDonough <kamcdono@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:10 PM

Hi BOE,

I'm writing to urge you to consider other ways to meet education budgets besides cutting teacher wages. I am not making enough to live in Hawaii as it is and with the pandemic my outside income to help make up for the usual monthly shortfall Pre Covid has also been eliminated. I do not own property due to never being able to afford a down payment and mortgage. Cutting teachers pay will cause me to consider moving to a more affordable area outside of Hawaii. I do have family roots here but that is not enough to afford staying here. I am a sped teacher with the DOE for 10+ years. The big question is: how do you expect us to teach our students when we are worried about paying rent, food, and expenses?

Thanks,
Kate McDonough

Sent from my iPhone



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

teacher pay

Darci Singlehurst <darci.singlehurst@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:11 PM

Aloha,

I am writing to ask you not to cut teacher's pay. When the decision was made to close schools, DOE teachers 'bent over backwards' to adapt and create a learning environment that could continue during the COVID stay-at-home period.

It was at this exact point in time, the State government decided to warn all HSTA members to expect a 20% pay cut for the next 2 years. This was such a hurtful 'slap in the face' coming on the heels of all of us working so hard to provide a continuum of learning for our students. For some reason, other State worker unions (Fire/Police/EMS) only rated a 10% cut in pay warning. Why is HSTA targeted for the brunt of the cut?

And now, the next solution is to have unpaid leave for teachers? Following school closures this Spring, you think families will be happy about a 4 day school week? Do you recall the fiasco of Furlough Fridays? We are already some of the lowest paid teachers in the country. Slashing our pay now will cause students to be in classrooms with unlicensed, ill-prepared teachers and long-term sub situations. I can assure you this is not what the citizens of the State of Hawaii want for their keiki. I plead with you, do not balance the budget on the backs of teachers and Hawaii's keiki.

Thank you,

Darci Singlehurst, M.Ed., NBCT
Windward District
D/HH Itinerant Resource Teacher



BOE: Meeting on May 7, 2020-against possible pay cuts for 2020 - 2012 School Year
Cindy Wong to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/04/2020 04:13 PM
From: "Cindy Wong" <cw_hi@hotmail.com>
To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Dear Board of Education Members,

Please do not allow our state government to balance the budget on the backs of our teachers. During this challenging time, DOE teachers have gone above and beyond to take care of our students. Learning new technology, reaching out to families, some who did not wish to respond after multiple attempts using as many means as possible at our disposal, changing plans with every new update and still managing to take care of our own lives, it is teachers who are keeping our students on track!

Every new social ill, problem, challenge is dumped on teachers to fix. We are tired and at our wits end. We always step up, even when there are so many who disrespect us and fail to see how hard we try to be teachers, counselors, psychologists, mediators, role models, parents and more. We deserve to be paid more than professional athletes, more than CEOs, more than whatever amount we are already being paid. Please do not take any more of our pay away.

As a 30-year veteran, I am set to retire, so any pay cut would not affect me personally. However, for the sake of our teachers in the trenches, please do the right thing and find another source to balance the budget.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Cindy Wong
Washington Middle School
Student Activities Coordinator
Japanese Teacher



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

Testimony against teacher pay cuts

laurenbunt <lab1992@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:14 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Lauren Bunt. I teach 2nd grade at Kahala Elementary. I'm writing to urge you not to cut teacher pay. In personal discussions with other teachers I have already been told by TWO, young, highly qualified teachers that if their pay gets cut they will leave the DOE. THIS cannot happen. Our workforce cannot weaken!

Please reconsider.

Mahalo,
Lauren Bunt



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

Teacher Salary Cuts

Pexa, Micah <micah.pexa@kalakauamiddle.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:17 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

Cutting teacher salaries to help with the financial crisis is a awful idea. You will be taking the lowest paid teachers in the nation (when accounting for cost of living expenses in Hawaii) and cutting their pay even further. This will certainly drove away more teachers from a state that already has a huge shortage. Please be more creative than this. There are other options if you truly care to explore them.

Micah Pexa
Kalakaua Middle School
EL Instructor grades 6, 7, 8

--

Micah Pexa
Kalakaua Middle School
EL Department- Classroom M101B
Classroom: (808) 305-4595
Cell phone: (808)747-4601

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

(no subject)

Kristine <kristine.ocir@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:22 PM

DO NOT CUT OR REDUCE TEACHER SALARY PLEASE. We are already struggling enough as it is trying to make ends meet for my family. My husband is out of work for as long as the stay home order is in effect and I am the only means of income to provide for him and our child. Reducing my pay forces me to conclude that our governor truly does not care for its teachers and I would be better off teaching in another state that puts its teachers as a priority.

--

Kindest Regards,
Kristine D. Rico
Fern Elementary School
School Counselor
W: (808) 305-5420
C: (808) 679-9191



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

Teacher Salary Cuts

Cheryl Uchima <cherbear66@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:23 PM

To The Members of the Board of Education,

My name is Cheryl Idemoto, and I am a third grade teacher at Kapolei Elementary School. My husband and I are both teachers. I understand that our state, country, and world are currently in a health and economic crisis. School budgets will be cut, and we all must work together to make do with less. However, I urge you to reconsider cutting teacher salaries as we have already been struggling as it is. In my family my husband and I have already made the personal decision to have only one child because we simply cannot afford more than that--I also know that with our current salary, I have been trying my best to help Hawaii's economy by making donations, supporting small businesses, and supporting the restaurant industry. We will no longer be able to do that on a smaller salary. Furthermore, there are many teachers at both of our schools who are nearing retirement. This salary reduction will most certainly cause hundreds of teachers in the state to see retirement as the better alternative, which would leave Hawaii with an even greater teacher shortage.

Please consider the ripple effects of salary reductions.

Respectfully,

Cheryl Idemoto
Third Grade Teacher
Kapolei Elementary School
Leeward District



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

Cut paperwork not pay

STEPHENIE BLAKEMORE <stephenieblakemore@sbcglobal.net>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:23
PM

Reply-To: "kndlve22@gmail.com" <kndlve22@gmail.com>

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

Aloha

Please join the public school teachers in Hawaii and ask that the governor reject the notion of a 20% paycut for state employees.

A paycut for the state employees will only further slow the economic recovery in our state from the financial devastation that has compounded the impact of the Coronavirus 19 on our lives in Hawaii.

Teachers will be working harder than ever next year to get our schools and keiki back on track towards improving our public schools and meeting the high standards we have put in place for students to strive for while learning in Hawaii's public schools. .

Now more than ever our public schools need to be there for our keiki. School teachers are the backbone of this system and we need your support to make our public schools exemplary places of learning. We cannot do that with furloughs and salary cuts in place.

Together we grow. Please stand with Hawaii's public school teachers and help the governor find a better way to address Hawaii's economic woes.

[Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



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

May 7, 2020 testimony

Jennifer Jo <jennifermelindajo@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:24 PM

To the Honorable State of Hawaii Board of Education Members:

My name is Jennifer Jo, and I am a Special Education teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary School in Hilo. I humbly ask that you find alternatives to cutting teachers salaries by 20%. I am a new teacher who took out student loans to obtain my license in Special Education. This potential pay cut would have dire consequences on my family's already tight budget. Also, during my weekly calls to parents the one consistent message I am getting is that the kids miss school. Please do not deprive our Keiki of the opportunity to go to school and learn.

Thank you,

Jennifer Jo

Sent from my iPhone



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

Budget. Cuts to DOE

Rhonda Hess-Sabaratnam <rhondahesssabaratnam@yahoo.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at
4:26 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

I worked for 16 years at Pahoia High and Intermediate School working in predominately fully self-contained classrooms. We held school even while community was ripped apart by lava. For 16 years, I was waiting for the raise I just got which finally meant that someone appreciated our hard work. I've thought of changing careers, many times or moving out of state. But I didn't because the keiki are my life.. I have a double BA a Masters of Education, (all UHH) and two credits left for EdD in Educational Leadership putting myself in debt by over 200k. I have 11 kids all grown all went to PHIS. I never asked for cash welfare in my life because I pay my way. Please consider leaving our pay the way it is and take it from the road work that never seems to end on Pahoia Keaau highway when Road was already paid off in 2016, yet they keep working. I pay out of my pocket for these students, often leaving my own children second, I am pleading with you. We are one of the lowest paid teachers in United States, every other state pays sped more than gen ed, and with the cost of food what are we supposed to do along with rebuilding in light of lava, please hear this from my heart. My heart is here right now with these kids in my classroom. Mahalo

Thank you

Sincerely
Rhonda Hess-Sabaratnam

Sent from my iPad



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

How salary cuts will impact my family

Kerry Gudmunson <kjgudmunson@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:28 PM

Aloha

I am the Curriculum Coordinator at Lokelani Intermediate School on Maui. I am a tenured teacher.

My husband is a certified substitute teacher, who, due to the teacher shortage, has taught "long term" (full time) in different subjects for the last 5 years.

We have already decided that if there is a salary reduction, we will need to relocate to the mainland, as we will not be able to afford to stay on Maui.

Please look for other options to balance the budget.

Kerry Gudmunson
Curriculum Coordinator
Lokelani Intermediate School



Testimony

Rebecca Giallongo to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 04:30 PM

From: "Rebecca Giallongo" <rebecca.giallongo@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

I have been teaching for 20 years. Things come and go. When money goes, in what ever form, teachers never get it back. If the money goes now, so will teachers. Teachers can barely afford to live as it is in this state or any other, especially those with one income households. This is no surprise to you or anyone. Cut someone's pay who makes more than public servants. Figure it out. Cutting pay will not help the economy. It's the opposite of stimulus to threee economy...to cut pay of someone actually making money. Where will that money go, the money taken from us? Not where it should, I'm sure. Some things don't need to be done right now. They can wait until back to normal. Those funds need to remain in teachers' and other essential workers' pockets so they can be used to buy and keep money flowing. They don't need to be paid to anyone else or used for projects. Leave teacher pay alone... unless you're giving us and other essential workers a raise...

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No Reduce in Teacher Salary

Sandy Chun <sandrachun12@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:30 PM

Hello,

My name is Sandy Chun. I am a 4th grade teacher at Hahaione Elementary School. I am finishing up my third year as a teacher. I really do not think reducing teacher salary will help in any way. We are already not being paid what we should. Numbers are always jumping around of how much we pay, coming from government, yet most teachers don't even make what is announced to the community. If a teacher is being paid that amount, they had to work so hard to get there! They either had to go to graduate school and/or take Professional Development classes on top of teaching.

If teacher's salary gets reduced, you will see more teachers leaving this profession. In my past three years, I have come in contact with many teachers who leave because of the pay. They find another job that pays them better. Sometimes it's not even in the educational field. Teachers get praised and appreciated by the community and people. But that's not enough to keep teachers, we need to get paid.

Imagine if a great teacher leaves and the principal has to hire an emergency hire who is not get certified to teach. Imagine how that affects the children. Reducing pay for teachers not only affects the teachers themselves, but it affects the children. The children who are expected to run our world in the future. A teacher salary reduction is not an option and should not even be talked about. To me, you are saying, "Teachers are not important. Teachers mean nothing." You are not only hurting our pay, but you hurt our feelings. Teachers has feelings too. So I really want you to think about what you are telling the community about teachers and the profession, especially if you reduce salary.

Sandra Chun



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

Teacher pay

Cecilia Woodbury <lily.woodbury@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:32 PM

Hawaii's keiki need certificated teachers in the classroom. Pay cuts will cause more of a teacher shortage than we already have. Teachers will retire early or have to move due to Hawaii's high cost of living. Teachers are already leaving because of the uncertainty of their future salaries.
Sent from my iPhone



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

BOE Testimony Letter

Ali Tracey <alianne.tracey@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:36 PM

Aloha,

My name is Alianne Tracey and I am a teacher at the Hawaii School for the Deaf. I have been teaching there for 7 years now. We have been fighting to have a stable teaching force and it has been a challenge. Each year, new teachers come and go. The main reason is the high cost of living and low teaching pay. With the pay cut, I can't begin to imagine how it would hurt teachers and kids even more. If this happens, it would extremely hurt our teaching force and our children's future. They would receive teachers who aren't high qualified and they deserve the very best. Please, reject the pay cuts for teachers and state workers. There is always another way.

Mahalo for reading my letter,

Ali



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

No pay cuts for DOE Teachers!!

Nancy Miller <nmliller005@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:37 PM

Hello,

We all understand the financial devastation to our economy from the Corona Virus pandemic, but as a teacher in the Hawaii Department of Education, why does the State of Hawaii budget have to be balanced on the backs of teachers?!!! Hawaii teachers are one of the lowest paid in the United States and with the cost of living being so high, it's a wonder that any of us still live here! Many of us are "seniors" in the teaching profession and if we are forced to take a 20 percent payout, it may be time to retire. Please look at other alternatives to balancing the State budget. DOE teachers never received any of the promised funding, from the last time there was a budget shortfall.....aka Furlough Fridays! Given a 20 percent pay cut, I will never be able to get back to what I am currently making, at a 3 percent increase per year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Aloha,
Mrs. Nancy Miller
Enchanted Lake Elementary School
Kindergarten Teacher



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

teacher pay cuts

Ellen Farnsworth <ellenfarn80011@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:37 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a teacher at Kealakehe Intermediate School on the Big Island of Hawaii. I implore you to not make salary cuts for teachers. This would substantially impact not only my life but the lives of all teachers in Hawaii. I would be forced to move back to the mainland as I would not be able to afford to live here anymore. I have been a teacher for almost 20 years 16 on the mainland and 4 here in Hawaii. I would like to stay here and pass on my experience and expertise not only to my colleagues but to our keiki as well, but that would be impossible if my pay were cut. I know that my situation is the same as many of our wonderful teachers here in Hawaii, and our keiki would suffer if you cut teacher's pay. Please think of alternative ways to balance the budget.

Sincerely
Ellen Farnsworth



Pay cut

Betty Kanai to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 04:39 PM

From: "Betty Kanai" <betty.kanai@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Do you want me to retire? I have 18 years with the DOE and love teaching. But, if you choose to cut our pay, I will definitely retire as it will affect the amount I get for my retirement. I don't think I deserve to be "punished" in this fashion, as I spend countless hours of my own time and spend a lot of my own money to make sure the children are taught correctly. I don't mind doing this as I love my kids and love working with them and want only the best for them. If you choose to cut my pay, you will leave me with no option but to retire. In essence, you are telling me you no longer need me or want me, and I take that as a slap in the face for dedicating myself to this job in the way that I do. I know this sounds harsh, but it's the truth and the truth needs to be heard.

Betty Kanai
Ewa Beach Elementary School
Kindergarten Teacher

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proposed 19.62% pay reduction for Teachers
Darin Ujimori to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 04:57 PM
From: "Darin Ujimori" <darin.ujimori@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in protest to proposed cuts of up to 19.62% in the pay of Public School Teachers in the State of Hawaii. This would clearly have negative impacts on our state as you would be severely reducing the spending power of one of the largest sectors of employees in our state. Please also remember, that we teachers have been working through these stay at home orders. In fact, I started work on my distance learning plan during spring break when I should have been enjoying the free time. I continue to put in eight hour days (normally 10 to 12 hours before the stay at home orders), and still do work on the weekends (like normal).

I truly believe that these proposed cuts if implemented could have such a severe impact on Teachers that those that can retire immediately, and those that are close to retirement may opt to do so as soon as possible. Newer teachers will more than likely leave as well, as their change of career options are easier to accomplish because of their younger age. This leaves those of us that are in the middle of our Teaching career. However, I firmly believe that many of us may just choose to quit Teaching and change careers as well in spite of the difficulties it may cause.

I have been teaching in the DOE for 23 years. I have seen and endured the strike in the early 2000's, the payroll lag (which has never been restored even though it was promised it would be), and the infamous "Furlough Fridays". I will have to "pay" for the strike when I finally retire, the payroll lag is just inconvenient, but I have not recovered financially from the furloughs. If these pay cuts are implemented, even at a reduced percentage, I'm not sure my family can endure it, and I may have to quit and change careers, or perhaps find a third job (I already work two, and am unemployed from one due to the Pandemic).

My wife and I are both DOE Teachers and we have two children, both in public school, and currently live with my wife's parents, both of whom are long retired. We already live paycheck to paycheck and often barely make ends meet. Reducing our pay by 19.62% essentially means reducing our household income by twice that percentage. How would we continue to be able to pay for the mortgage, not to mention for the basic necessities.

The way I see it, doing this is essentially wagering our future, by taking from the present. We are already at an alarming deficit with regards to our Teacher shortage (fueled by an already low morale). Very few will want to continue to teach if we continue to be underfunded, then have to face what amounts to a 20% cut in pay, against wages that when adjusted for our cost of living are among the worst in America. I love teaching, but how can I continue to love it if it can't pay the bills.

Please, please, please do not do this to us, our schools, and most importantly, do not do this to our Keiki. It will be bad enough as it is, do not compound the situation by taking it out on our education system.

Sincerely,
Darin Ujimori
Washington Middle School
Band Director, Gr. 6-8

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Opposition to Teacher Salary Cuts

Natalia Kotula <nataliaannakotula@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:58 PM

To whom this may concern,

This email is regarding the proposed salary cuts for teachers in the breathtakingly high and unimaginable amount of 20%.

That this proposal is even being considered shows a lack of care for Hawaii's teachers and further promotes the standard, normalized lack of respect teachers receive. We are already struggling with unliveable wages.

I am a 7th grade teacher at Aliamanu Middle School. I have taught there for 3 years. Prior to this, I was a high school teacher in Chicago for 3 years. To this date, my salary here is still significantly lower than it was in Chicago and even without budget cuts, it would still take me approximately 2-3 more years to earn as much as I did as a new teacher in Chicago. To ignore the fact that Hawaii's teachers are grossly underpaid by even recommending such cuts just shows how far from reality Hawaii's political leaders sit.

Corey Rosenlee has been vocal about how this would impact teachers, particularly those new to the profession and those who would simply retire. To be clear, I am not a new teacher making the least amount in this state. I am closer to making "average" salary. These proposed cuts would affect me and my family so greatly that we would likely have to evacuate the island. I am already planning what this may look like for my family in case the cuts are approved. I am currently 9 months pregnant, in the middle of a pandemic, facing an unsustainable financial situation, thousands of miles from any friends or family who may be able to provide assistance. Think of the number of transplant teachers, such as myself, here in Hawaii. They will be facing the same situation of potentially having to escape the islands.

This situation is horrifying. And I mean that in every sense of the word. This would create a secondary crisis for the state. Your brand new, stable, and seasoned teachers will leave. I know this. My colleagues have expressed it to me.

If these cuts are put in place, instead of facing the possibility of schools remaining closed come August due to COVID-19 concerns, schools will be faced with a different issue: not enough personnel, let alone qualified teachers, to supervise the amount of students in a classroom.

I plead with you to consider alternatives. Please let your teachers stay here and let us do what we love. Please do not create more chaos and uncertainty for the future of our keiki, whom I hear from every day, unsure about how to deal with devastation and anxiety over this pandemic. For the education community and students, school is a second home and second family. But in the face of these proposed cuts, teachers will have to make the choice to prioritize their own homes and families. No one will look upon these decisions as acts of selfishness, as so many teachers are accused of in other times of strife, negotiations, strikes, etc. This moment will highlight the fragility and brink of survival that teachers live on every single day.

Thank you for reading this. I hope my personal story will provide some guidance in your actions.

Regards,
Natalia Kotula



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

Loyalty to My Teaching Career and Students

Deborah Yasuda <yasudadebby@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: Chelsea Yasuda <yasudachelsea@gmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:02 PM

Dear Board of Education and Political Leaders,

Most of my adult life has been given to teaching. I can remember only bringing home \$500 a month in 1980, but I wanted to be a teacher since the 2nd grade and would not give up my dream. On the day of my UH College graduation, a news reporter interviewed me and asked me why I would want a degree in education even if there were so few job openings that year. My reply was positive and clear, "I want to educate students and make a difference in their lives."

Before getting married, I worked 3 other jobs besides being a part time teacher and I went to UH Manoa after work and during the summers to further my education.

It took me over 25 years of teaching to make \$50,000 annually. How sad! I was the strike leader for our school in 2001, because I wanted to support future teachers like my daughters, my friends, and my colleagues. I am happy to say that my younger daughter received her Professional Degree in Education and continues to teach until this day. Even my oldest grand daughter whose 7 said that she wants to be a teacher, as well. They are my legacy.

My late husband and I made many sacrifices and worked multiple jobs to keep our home and raise our children.

I worked another part time job after the normal school day until I lost my husband in 2015. I broke my Achilles' tendon at work in 2014, watched my husband's deterioration, and I still returned to my job after his passing 😞.

Of course, I now regret staying at school until 6pm or later every day but it was part of my job and I knew I needed to always do the best for my students. After my husband was gone, my neighbors told me that my husband would be working in the yard until I returned home every night. I remember how proud he was of me when I was Windward District Teacher of the Year in 2011. It was such a great honor, but I now regret all the extra hours I could've spent with him and my children.

Please, please don't take away teachers' pay.

I, personally, have never had much of a raise for years since I have my Master's Degree and am high on the pay scale. If my pay is reduced by 20%, I will most likely retire and will no longer make a difference.

With sincere aloha,
Deborah Yasuda Pang

Sent from my iPhone



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

Please reconsider reducing teacher salaries

Andrea Epple <andrea_epple@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:02 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

I have been living and teaching in Hawaii for 13 years, but if teachers are asked to take a 20% pay cut, I will need to either leave the state or look for employment in another field. I know many other teachers who are in the same position as I am, and if the 20% pay cut is approved, Hawaii's teacher shortage will increase dramatically. It is not fair to ask our students, many of whom have already lost a quarter of year's education due to limited access to technology, to re-enter school with long-term substitutes or teachers who are not fully-qualified. Now more than ever, we need to be investing in education and in our keiki. Leaving students to return to understaffed schools and classrooms taught by long-term substitutes is not in anyone's best interest.

Thank you for considering other means by which to balance the budget.
Kind Regards,
Andrea Epple
Wheeler Elementary School



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

DO NOT CUT TEACHER SALARIES

Caroline Flynn <carolineflynn20@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:05 PM

Aloha,

My name is Caroline Flynn and I am a first-grade teacher at Kamalii Elementary School on the island of Maui. I am also a parent to a very bright and curious 5-year old who is very excited to be entering Kindergarten in the next school year.

Over the past few months, teachers have worked extremely hard to reach all of their students at this very difficult time, and as we return to our jobs in the new school year we will have many new challenges to face but we are adaptable, we are professional and we will put 100% and more into teaching our students how to be intelligent and responsible members of society.

The next school year will already be a challenge for parents, teachers, and students, cutting salaries in addition to all of the changes will almost certainly drive many excellent teachers out of the profession. I have been teaching for 16 years, I love being a teacher and really hope to continue teaching for years to come however the cost of living in Hawaii is very high and I find myself often worrying that we may not be able to make it here due to financials. If my salary is cut I will be forced to rethink my career choice, my students will more than likely get an unqualified teacher in their classroom as a long term substitute and that is just so unfair.

Don't make our keiki, parents and teachers suffer but cutting teacher salaries, find another way to pay your bills!

Ms. Flynn



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

Don't Balance the Budget on the backs of Keiki!

Toni/Steve Reynolds <stonireynolds@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:07 PM

As an elementary teacher in Kailua-Kona, I see first-hand the multiple challenges we face in keeping qualified, experienced teachers in our community. Every year our school (with approximately 60 teachers) sees an overturn of 10-14 teachers. Many return to jobs on the mainland, or find work in other fields. They tell us they simply cannot afford to live here in Hawaii on a teachers' salary. Those of us who do remain have deep roots, (and perhaps second jobs or additional income?) It's an enormous burden on any school to absorb 10-20% new staff each year; training and helping new teachers get "up to date" takes extra time and training, and funding. Sadly, often once teachers are trained, many end up leaving before the school year ends.

This revolving door syndrome needs to stop. Please do not consider balancing our budget crisis on the backs of our keiki and teachers. Cutting state workers' salaries- especially teachers- will have severe long-lasting impacts. We cannot afford to go backwards, after making strides these past few years (in teacher recruitment and retention.) We still have a long way to go in meeting the teacher deficit crisis. Please do not exasperate it by using furloughs to help make up budget deficits.

I implore you to explore alternative means for financing our budget shortfall. Please **DO NOT** cut our state workers' and teachers salaries.



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

Do Note Reduce Teacher Salary

Adreanna Clark <adreannapankow@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:08 PM

Aloha,

My name is Adreanna Clark. I am a teacher at Kekaha Elementary School on Kaua'i. I am aware of the difficulty facing us regarding our budget. I would like to make very clear that any cuts to teacher salary would result in even LESS qualified teachers for our keiki. We already have several positions at our school that are filled by year-long substitutes because we have such a hard time finding qualified staff. We cannot afford to lose a single teacher at our school. Our kids deserve a highly qualified teacher every single year of their K-12 career. Anything else is unacceptable. I know several of our teachers are talking about changing careers due to the time and emotional demands of our school population. A decrease in pay for our incredibly difficult work would be a slap in the face, and would assuredly cause us to lose staff. I am aware of MANY schools in a similar position. We deserve better.

Mahalo For Your Time and Consideration,
Adreanna Clark

--

As ye have faith so shall your powers and blessings be. This is the balance -- this is the balance -- this is the balance.



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

Fund education

Raquel <kahuahana@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:14 PM

Please do not cut teacher pay. I urge you to find other ways to revise the state budget.

Raquel Werk
Maui - Kahului Elementary
Grade 5 Teacher



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

Salary Cut Options

Randi Hayashida <randikh@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:08 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to ask that other options be looked into that do not include salary cut for teachers. This salary cut would create difficult financial hardships for my family and me that would result in negative consequences that would only add to the economic troubles our state is experiencing. My children would like to continue their education beyond high school and attend college here in Hawaii. If this salary cut would occur, I am afraid that a college education would no longer be an option due to a lack of financial means.

Salary cuts for teachers would also impact our students. Many senior teachers would be more inclined to retire early while at the same time pushing potential teachers into other careers because of these cuts.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Randi Hayashida
Student Activities Coordinator
AVID Coordinator
Konawaena High School



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

Testimony to spare Hawaii's educators

Liz Noetzel <lizziecakes@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:17 PM

Aloha,

I suspect that if I write the many paragraphs that I would like to as the English teacher that I am, I will lose my audience- so I will try to keep this short. I have taught for the Hawaii DOE since 1993. I have dedicated my life to our island's keiki. I believe in what I do, but I do not know that I can continue to do this if I am forced to take a 20% pay cut. It is a simple math problem- the bills, the mortgage, the cost of living in Hawaii- life on the mainland where my husband's family is would be inviting if it were to come to that. But I have been here for so long, since I was two years old- and I have given my heart and soul to the Department of Education, and while I understand that we are in a challenging time, I believe as HSTA has indicated, there are alternatives to funding that do not include forcing teachers to carry the burden of this crisis.

I teach 7th grade English Language Arts at Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School on the Big Island. I would like nothing more than to continue to be proud to be a public school teacher here in the state, and to not have to look for a job elsewhere.

If you cut teacher salaries by 20%, do you think teachers will continue to give 100% to this crazy new way of learning if this becomes our new normal? Who will suffer?...The kids, that is just a sad reality. Just our state's scores should tell you that if anything, our students need more and better teachers, not fewer and more disillusioned teachers. Do the right thing, please- do not take away from teachers when the entire country is finally appreciating us for the very first time. There are alternatives. Utilize them.

With appreciation,
Liz Noetzel



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

Budget cut 20-21

Heather Sheridan <mommyx100@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:23 PM

This letter is written to discuss the idea of another budget cut. My family and I barely survived the last furlough in 2009. I am a special education teacher certified K-12 and have taught on Maui for 18 years now.

This furlough would destroy most licensed teachers like myself. This state can not afford to loose licensed teachers such as myself. If our thoughts are not considered, our state and our children will suffer from consequences such as hiring unqualified teachers and/or long term substitute teachers.

Sincerely,

Heather Sheridan
Pu'u Kukui Elementary School
3rd Grade Special Education teacher
Wailuku, HI.



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

Teachers Pay

Candace Sandstrom <candacesandstrom@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:27 PM

Aloha,

This message is to state the concern I have as a teacher in Hawaii and the talks of pay cuts. I am currently a high school teacher and have been teaching for the past 11 years. I love my profession and I love the kids I teach. Hawaii is the most expensive place to live in the US. Teachers are already not making enough to support themselves and their families while living here. If there are pay cuts to teachers we will not survive. The cost of living is just too high to survive on a teacher salary then to add pay cuts on top of that. If pay cuts happen teachers have no choice but to go another way. If this happens we will never get ahead in education, our children will never get what they deserve, our families won't be getting what they need.

I Implore you to look at other options. Cutting a teacher's salary is never the best option. Look at the news today and see what others are saying about Teachers. Teachers are our heroes. They do so much more than just teach, we should be giving them raises and praise. We need teachers and we need to support them. A teachers pay cut it should never be the option!

Sincerely,

Candace Sandstrom

Sent from my iPhone



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

Don't cut teacher pay

Sharon Inouye <sharonminouye@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:27 PM

Dear BOE,

Please do not cut teacher salaries by up to 20%. This will make an economic recovery even harder and longer if we have an even greater teacher shortage with senior teachers such as myself going into early retirement. There will be more people on the pension system earlier instead of working which will hurt the state budget even more. Then how well and quickly will our students recover with even fewer qualified teachers? More households will have to cut back and will not spend as much on our state's economic recovery.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Sharon M. Inouye

Moanalua Middle School Educator



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

Please Do Not Cut Teachers' Salaries

Richard Stange <richardstng83@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:28 PM

To Hawaii BOE,

My name is Richard Stange. I am a seventh grade English Language Arts teacher at Mililani Middle School. I am a first year teacher. I absolutely love what I do. Nothing makes me happier than teaching my kids every day, even if I have to do so from home right now.

I am urging you to please not allow teachers' salaries to be cut. Cutting teachers' salaries would devastate the Hawaii DOE in the long run. I have spoken to experienced and highly skilled colleagues who would retire and leave the field. I have also spoken to education majors from UH Manoa who claim that they would change their major if this were to happen. I'm not so sure that I (a licensed teacher) could afford to remain in Hawaii if my salary was to be cut. Please consider the fact that we have nearly one thousand classrooms (half are special education classrooms) without highly qualified teachers. Our teacher shortage in Hawaii would grow at an exponential rate if teacher salaries, which are already low, to be cut.

Thank you for considering my concern.

Sincerely,
Richard Stange



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

Please Support My Educator Colleagues

Evette Tampos <evettetampos64@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:29 PM

Aloha kākou e Hawai'i Board of Education!

My name is Evette Tampos. I am a 27 year veteran teacher/school counselor at Pāhoā Elementary School on the Big Island of Hawai'i. In my career as a HIDOE educator, I've endured numerous workplace tribulations such as a payroll lag, a strike, furlough Fridays, and the trauma of the 2012 & 2018 volcano disasters that effected my school's community. During all these hardships, I persevered and remained onipa`a (steadfast, firm, resolute) and dutiful to my students and my calling as a public school educator.

On behalf of myself and my colleagues, I send you a big Mahalo for your support earlier this school year as you, Superintendent Kishimoto & Gov. Ige took a stand to increase Hawai'i public school teacher pay and having a hopeful plan for our collective futures. This encouraged many of my 25+ year colleagues to remain onipa`a so as to continue our lifework vocation as professional career educators.

We would appreciate your continued support by avoiding any pay cuts to befall myself and my colleagues. Back in late April, Gov. Ige, proposed a 20% pay cut for me and my colleagues and then soon thereafter publicly stated that he was looking into alternatives, such as borrowing from the Federal Reserve and awaiting for more state stimulus funding from Congress. Please exhaust all other possibilities before imposing any pay cuts on the backs of public school teachers and our students.

Pay cuts would devastate our already critical teacher shortage! More students would go without licensed teacher because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement (some of whom I mentioned earlier); leaving students with less experienced teachers or worse> long-term subs or unqualified teachers.

I've seen adversity throughout my career as a Hawai'i educator and none so severe as the COVID crisis that we are all currently trying to escape together.

My resilient 6th grade students of Pāhoā El. will have lived through three major disruptions to their education as a preschooler and in their 4th grade year.

I fear that their first year of intermediate/middle school and their eventual high school matriculation will be further damaged if they are not able to have quality educators in their secondary education. Please know that your decision today will effect the collective tomorrows of a generation of keiki that have already suffered immense trauma. Please guarantee them a quality public education by providing their teachers a decent living wage free of pay cuts.

Mahalo,
Evette Tampos
Pahoa Elementary School Counselor
27 year Hawaii public school educator
Proud HSTA Member and School & State Level Leader



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

Balancing the Budget by Reducing Teacher's Salaries

Marlene Blackwell <mebdlt@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:30 PM

I was on the fence about retiring this year - worrying about how my retirement might affect my school. I am the Student Services Coordinator at Waikele Elementary School and I have a lot of unfinished business that I do not want to leave unfinished. When I heard you on television talking about reducing teacher's salaries, that pushed me right over the edge. I have filed my paperwork with the Employee Retirement System. I am out on July 1st.

Marlene Blackwell



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

Appreciate your teachers

Dr. Phaedra Robinson <drphaedra@me.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:30 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: info@hsta.org

Aloha I am writing to plead with you not to cut teacher salaries. Please support us this years on teacher appreciation week, for all that we have rallied to do on a moments notice. We have been there for our students regardless of what the future held or what the benefit to us would be. Our salary increases have been celebrated since January, and we were hopeful for continued support in this direction to support public school teachers.

Amidst this crisis we look to you, as the nation does to see if you will prioritize your pledge to support to public schools with increased funding for your teachers. We have been there for our students and their families throughout this when many of us are already struggling emotionally and financially.

To cut the funding now to public teachers will devastate us as we morale is currently at an all time low with the Herculean task that we have been charged with. We have risen to the occasion in our emergency remote teaching with little direction or training on distance learning. We are the ones who have kept things going since the end of March, not the administration in the DOE, but YOUR TEACHERS. We deserve more money, or at least the same amount of money we've been promised, not cuts.

Please support us as we have supported our students and communities selflessly, working harder than we have all year to maintain some sense of normalcy in these uncertain times.

Please do the right thing and support YOUR Hawaii public school teachers,

With appreciation,

Phaedra Elisabeth Robinson, Ph.D.
Teacher, Hokulani School
Honolulu, HI



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

Teacher pay

Rick Enright <etcm13@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:30 PM

Why is it every time there is a budget shortage the first thing you want to do is penalize the students, cutting teacher pay will greatly impact the keiki of our state. We already have one of the worst education systems in the nation and now your plan is to ensure that it will only get worse. You need to be fighting for our students which means no paycuts or cuts to funding of the school. COVID 19 is not the issue, the issue has always been the leadership of the state or lack of leadership which is more accurate failure to diversify the economy, trying to sustain a budget by relying on once source of income is the dumbest think in the world. Why don't you hold them accountable!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



Please Reject Teacher Salary Cut Options

Mary Dolan <medolanme@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:32 PM

To the Honorable Members of the Hawai'i Board of Education,

The financial fight with our Governor that teachers are enduring at this time shouldn't be happening and I am writing this letter to kindly ask that you deny the request to make any type of cut to teachers' salaries.

As this last month has gone by I often hear how parents struggle to teach their children at home, stating that it is hard to do, impossible to keep their children's attention, and way to time consuming. One would think that both parents and our State leadership would be appreciating and acknowledging the hard work of professional teachers. I read that the Kama'aina Kids program was charging \$55/per day/per child for parents to leave their children in the daycare program. Could you imagine if teachers received \$55/per day for each child in their classroom! We are certainly not babysitters, yet our years of education, training, and expertise seem to be greatly unappreciated by the very State in which we work.

Instead of being applauded for the hard work that we continue to provide, we are now being told that it is our job to sacrifice because our Governor cannot balance the budget. I am so angry and personally insulted to fathom that this is our responsibility. The State's budget should never be teachers' responsibility. I am a single woman who has my disabled son living with me, and a 20% pay cut could force me to move from Hawaii. I have lived here 30 years; been teaching for the DOE for 15 years after having put myself through Chaminade University while working as a part time teacher for an additional 7 years. With a Master's Degree, I am now a Student Services Coordinator (SSC) which is a teaching position. I'm finally able to make my monthly financial obligations, including paying off my student loan. I would like to see the Governor living on my current teacher's paycheck with a 20% cut!!

Please fight the fight for us teachers and find other alternatives to assist the Governor with balancing the budget. With this substantial budget cut, many teachers will be forced to consider other options to be able to afford the high cost of living in Hawai'i. A substantial budget cut will also considerably damage the moral of teachers, and will only validate that education is not important in our State. I certainly appreciate your strong leadership and I am very grateful and appreciative for your consideration to deny any type of budget cut to the hard-working teachers of Hawaii.

Sincerely,
Mary Dolan
Student Services Coordinator
Enchanted Lake Elementary School
Kailua, HI

Sent from my iPad
Sent from my iPad



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

No salary reductions!

jkupihea@yahoo.com <jkupihea@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:34 PM

Do not reduce teacher's salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Students would be left with long term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawai'i's already high cost of living on a reduced salary.

I've been a teacher here in Hawaii for 17 years. If these proposed reductions come to fruition, I'd have to leave home in search of better opportunities for myself and my family.

Jonnell Kupihea
Aina Haina Elementary School
Special Education Preschool



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

Qualified Teachers

Wendy Ahlo <itshulawen@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:36 PM

I am a kindergarten teacher at Ka'imiloa Elementary School. I have more than 30 years of service. If our pay is cut, will I retire? More than likely not, but that decision is not set in stone. I am sure there will be veteran teachers who will retire because of this pay cut. Where will that leave our keiki? With substitute teachers who are not highly qualified and some who are there just for the pay, yes they do exist. Can you imagine the test scores? I am asking for you to reconsider cutting teachers' and other essential workers' pay.

Thank you,
Wendy Ahlo

Wen
Sent from my iPhone



testimony

Mara Saltzman to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/04/2020 05:36 PM

From: "Mara Saltzman" <artistmarasaltz@hotmail.com>

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

May 4, 2020

Dear Board of Education Leaders:

I am a special education teacher at the public charter school The Volcano School of Arts & Sciences. I am writing to you today to plea for your support. Please do not agree to a big pay cut for teachers.

As you know, teachers have been struggling for years with poor salaries in compensation for the huge jobs that they do. The cost of living in the state is rising drastically. The demands of the classroom are becoming increasingly more complex, particularly during this time of remote learning, that many of us teachers fear that even more classroom positions will be filled by unqualified substitutes. Filling classrooms with unqualified substitutes has been an increasing problem in recent years and the problem will only be worsened if you agree to cut our salaries.

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Sincerely,

Mara Saltzman

Special Education Teacher

The Volcano School of Arts & Sciences

artistmarasaltz@hotmail.com



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

Discussion on Funding for the 2020-2021 School Year

Noelle Gerst <kngerst@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:37 PM

To whom it may concern:

As you begin discussions on funding for the 2020-2021 school year, I urge you to take into consideration our students who will suffer greatly from drastic pay cuts to school budgets and employees salaries. I am sure that you have had an outpouring of concern for teachers retiring early and leaving the state. I would fall into the latter category if I were to lose twenty percent of my salary. This is the time to consider delegating more funds to schools (not salaries) and not less. Our students are falling further behind and need and deserve the best teachers and resources available to not only catch them up but to accelerate their growth and potential. I ask that you have patience and wait to see what the federal government offers in assistance. I also understand that in these economic circumstances, decisions are not made lightly, but if ever there was a time to pull from our states rainy day fund it is now. Either way this decision does not need to be made rashly or even remotely quickly. There are two to three months to determine the most well researched and beneficial plan. I thank you for your time and consideration in reading this email.

Mahalo,
Noelle Hale
Ho'okena Elementary School
noelle@hookena.k12.hi.us



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries

A <mrstanaka@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:43 PM

Dear Board of Education,

My husband and I are both educators. I am a special education preschool teacher working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing at Lehua Elementary in the Leeward District. My husband, Darren Tanaka, is a librarian at Kailua Elementary in the Windward District.

Reducing teacher pay will financially drain my family and negatively impact the statewide teacher shortage. Finding qualified substitutes especially in specialty areas will be difficult if senior teachers take early retirement. Do not reduce teachers' salaries.

Thank you,

Allison Tanaka



reduction in salary proposal

Woody and Aviva <plaut.hawaii@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:45 PM

To whom it may concern,

It is not evidence of clear or forward thinking to consider a reduction in pay for teachers.

Let us remind ourselves that:

- 1 When factoring COLA, Hawaii teachers are the at the bottom of the pay scale nationwide, when compared to the other states
2. We continue to run a teacher shortage which, if my figures are correct at the end of last school year, ran 10-12%
3. Reducing salaries will drive some of our older teachers into retirement, thereby adding to the teacher shortage
4. We have a large "Rainy Day Fund" which is there for exactly this kind of need
5. Immediately before the pandemic, we were in negotiations to address the above issues especially the inappropriate lack of regular pay increases for older, more experienced teachers. Therefore such a move on the part of the government disproportionately affects our veteran teachers, the ones who have worked for years with a lack of proportional pay increases to match years of service. Needless to say, this unfairly takes advantage of those who are the backbone of our whole DOE.

Respectfully submitted,

Woody Plaut, B.A., M.S., M.L.S., NBCT
Hawaii Teacher Standards Board, Licensed Teacher Leader
Library Media Specialist
Konawaena Middle School
Kealahou, HI 96750
808-323-4566 xt 238 (library)

"What a school thinks about its library IS a measure of what it feels about education."

Harold Howe II, (1918-2002), former U.S. Commissioner of Education
Professor Emeritus of the Harvard Graduate School of Education



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

Reject Salary Cut Options

CT <couhby@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:46 PM

Dear Board of Education,

Aloha! My name is Coby Thornton and I am a fourth grade inclusion teacher at Kipapa Elementary School. I have taught for twelve years and I have spent ten of those years at a Title One school. I have survived dark teacher pay cuts and furloughs and I have seen many talented and dedicated teachers leave the profession because they just couldn't afford to live in Hawaii on a teacher's salary.

Over the years, I have witnessed the mass exodus of highly qualified teachers leave holes in Hawaii's schools that are being filled with unqualified teachers and long-term substitutes. I have even seen Special Education departments devoid of highly qualified Special Education teachers!

Our education system is designed to annually pass our students from highly qualified teacher to highly qualified teacher so that their minds can be properly matured and their talents can be properly nurtured. Teachers work together to educate our children the same way King Kamehameha's warriors worked together to move heavy rocks in a human chain hundreds of years ago. However, a chain is only as strong as it's weakest link. Hawaii's schools have thousands of gaps in our human chains and the universities in Hawaii cannot train and graduate enough highly qualified teachers to fill those gaps before more teachers leave their positions.

It is imperative that we work towards retaining our highly qualified teachers as our universities work to train and graduate new ones to fill in those gaps. Hawaii has put education on the back burner for decades and it is time that we invest in our children because they are the future of our state. If our children are not properly educated, the beauty and peace of our state will not stand the test of time. Thank you for your time in reading this.

Sincerely,
Coby Thornton M.Ed.

To the Hawaii Board of Education:

In 2013, I was a new college graduate out of New York and at that time, the job market was not kind. I was truly thankful to be able to begin a career in education. Education was the only field I could imagine myself in, consequently I dedicated years to the study of education and will spend years paying it off. I have no regrets because it is common knowledge that teachers do not teach for the money, but for the love of working with students to make life-long connections.

The Hawaii Department of Education required second year teachers to participate in a program called "Kahua." If you are not familiar with it, teachers are provided a mentor and supported with culturally-relevant ideals. From Kahua, the values that resonated with me were "*malama*," or to take care of and protect, and "*laulima*," meaning cooperation or many hands.

I am now finishing up my seventh year as a special education teacher at Kapunahala Elementary School. It is the only school I have known as a professional and I feel blessed to have been offered this placement. I have had the privilege of receiving guidance from two incredible principals and work alongside inspiring men and women. The commonality among all the staff is how hard everyone works to connect with the "whole-child." That means that we do not see those we educate as just a student, but as "our kid."

One of the most important parts of being a teacher is creating an environment that is conducive to learning. Without a supportive and nurturing environment, students will struggle to learn and teachers will struggle to teach. This is where the "whole-child," comes into play. Within our classrooms, teachers show *malama* and serve as a constant for our children because some might not have that sense of love and ohana at home. The school staff works together, *laulima*, to make sure that child is supported outside the classroom as well, because raising a child takes a village.

The impact of COVID-19 has brought personal and professional challenges to everyone. Last week, I felt for every success with distance instruction, I was rewarded with three more obstacles. In the midst of teachers working harder and longer than ever, we were threatened with losing 20% of our salary, which is already the lowest in the country when you factor in the cost of living. I felt low, defeated and alone in my work. This financial turn of events will force me to have to leave the island. I already make too little to afford the "affordable housing." What kind of example does that show *my kids*? Work hard, go to college, struggle, or in this case, fail. Nevertheless, I am a professional; I do not have time to worry about myself because I am again consumed with worrying how to provide for "*my kids*."

Ultimately, it is disheartening to put so much into a career that expects so much, yet does not show the *malama* or *laulima* it preaches in return. Teachers are the ones who create an ohana in the school, but we cannot afford to build or support our own. As someone who is "flown, not grown," I have come to learn, appreciate, and embrace these core ideals of Hawaii.

When it comes time to make a decision about teacher salaries, I ask that you show *malama* and *laulima* for those who do so much to support *our* keiki.

With Respect & Aloha,

Chelsea Unger
Grade 5 Special Education Teacher
Kapunahala Elementary School
Kaneohe, Hi



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

Pay cuts

Dale Olive <scienceguyme@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:50 PM

Aloha,

My name is Dale Olive and I've been a secondary science teacher in the DOE for the last 34 years. I am against any cuts in salary for teachers. I can retire at any time as I hit my 30 years at age 55. If you decide to cut salary, teachers like me will look closely at immediately retiring as it means we've hit our high three already and with a pension and a job at Target we can make more than we would if our pay is cut 20%. It would make no sense to hang on. There is already a teacher shortage so good luck trying to fill all the spots created by such an action. Imagine all the shortages in Math and Science teachers we already have in the DOE. Forcing top experienced teachers out with an action like this is not very smart. We are the ones training the younger teachers and passing on our knowledge and experience. The void would be felt for years to come. I've built a very exciting engineering program here at Waiakea High and my sudden departure would mean an end to it. I'd feel no loyalty to a system that didn't value my contributions. I'd suggest looking at travel, training, administrative costs and more in the budget before you look at cutting salaries.

Thank you for your attention,

Dale Olive
Physics/Engineering Teacher/Robotics advisor
Waiakea High School



Teacher pay cut

Mary Giles <mary.giles@alumni.stmarys-ca.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:52 PM

To whom this may concern:

I'm writing as a former Hawaii public school teacher and student graduate of the Hawaii public school system. My first hand experience in the Hawaii public school system is what I would like to share with the hope that a more informed decision would be made regarding teacher pay.

As a student going through the Hawaii school system I felt I was never valued, challenged or important. I struggled to learn and grow at school because I didn't feel safe, supported or cared for. It wasn't until I went to college out of state that I was able to attend a school that valued me, challenged me and made me feel important. It was a blessing for me as I went on to get a masters degree but it was also a shame to realize how horrible my schooling in Hawaii really was.

After receiving my teaching credential as well as my masters in teaching, I thought I could return home and make a difference. In hindsight I can't believe how naive I was! Being on the teaching side made all the problems that plighted my childhood education that much more apparent. The Hawaii public school system is completely broken and from my experience it boils down to this important fact: Hawaii public school are not valued, not challenged and apparently not important.

I left after two years of giving my life as a teacher to my school, my students, my community because I realized my work, my passion isn't value, challenged or important to this community. But it is to me! Teaching is my life's work and I'm now teaching in a state, at a school, in a community that shares my sentiments for this important work!

If Hawaii's students, teachers and schools don't start getting the support they deserve the system will be broken beyond repair!

If Hawaii teachers loose 20% let alone any of their pitiful income, expect the disgraceful system called the HAWAII DOE to become even more disgraceful.

On behalf of my students, family, friends, and fellow educators, please surprise me by not making cuts to education. Instead find the means to value education, challenge education, and make education important in Hawaii.

God speed,

P òu|#D qq# l hVÁ
Vsdurz #D fdghp |#5ug#T wgh#WhdEkhuÁ
Sport & Recreation Management BS
MST Credential & Master of Education
mary.giles@alumni.stmarys-ca.edu



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

Reducing Teacher Pay

Laurie Madani <laurievmadani@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:53 PM

Aloha:

I am a 3rd grade teacher at Kaunakakai Elementary School on Molokai. If my pay is reduced I will have to seriously consider moving. I do not want to do this, but due to the cost of living I will be forced. I have lived on Molokai for 25 plus years and raised my 3 daughters here alone as a single mom, been a substitute teacher going back 18 years, PTT for many years, PCNC on my resume, and official full time tenured teacher for the past going on 8 years. My life is here, but the reality is I need to be able to pay my bills.

Thank you for fighting for our teachers! As is, we already have way too many full time subs and a high population of students in need. Our students need us.

Please invest in our students, they are the future of Hawaii.

Thank you for listening,

Laurie Madani

(3rd grade teacher/Kaunakakai Elementary School Molokai)



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

Please Do Not Cut Teachers' Salaries

Gabriela Lo Coco <gabylococo@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:59 PM

Aloha,

I know these are tough times for everyone. But please do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. I am a teacher and a parent of children in elementary school. This will hurt my whole family, as well as those of many others. Above all, it will hurt our keiki's future.

Sincerely,

Maria Hector

Teacher

Waikoloa Elementary

Email your message to testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov,

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad



Testimony for BOE meeting this Friday

Myles De Coito <mylesdecoito@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:04 PM

Aloha,

I pray this email finds you well. My name is Myles De Coito. I teach at Laupahoehoe Community Public Charter School. I am the coordinator for the school's virtual learning program. I work with students K-12.

As I write this, my life is a rushing wind of three forces... DAILY (SUN-SAT):

- Schooling my three children at home: ages 5 (Pre-4), 7 (Gd 1), and 11 (Gd 5).
- Working with my LCPCS students and families as well as our admin and my fellow faculty.
- Developing business strategies to implement ASAP in the event that my pay is cut.

The third pillar does come with a certain amount of tension. Cuts to teacher salaries would be devastating to our existing cadre of dedicated faculty and would further imperil the teaching shortage we already have.

A cut to my salary would, of course, negatively impact our family. The quality of instruction and services delivered by myself and my fellow teachers will also be impacted as many of us would necessarily need to diversify income with side jobs and businesses.

In times of deficit, it is considered economically sound to invest in infrastructure-- even if it means going into debt. It is so that there is a stimulus in the economy. Invest in the infrastructure of education. Invest in teachers.

Mahalo,

--

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

Please Do Not Devastate the Already Low Salaries of Teachers

Jacqueline Jensen <jacquelinelorraine@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:07 PM

Hello,

My name is Jacqueline Jensen and I am a 3/4 teacher at Voyager Public Charter School. I've been with Voyager for five years, where I've taught kindergarten as well.

I am writing to express my deep concern about the possibility of reducing teacher salaries. My fellow teachers and I continue to work full time and we have been integral in allaying fears and holding space for the most vulnerable keiki in the state. Our pay is already painfully low. I have taught summer school the past two years in order to be able to live here. When adjusted for cost of living, Hawai'i ranks number 50 for teacher pay. I have 11 years of experience teaching, a degree from UC Berkeley, and a Master of Education, but I am reconsidering my work in public education and perhaps even my residency in Hawai'i in light of these potential reductions.

Furthermore, whenever education funding is cut and teachers do not feel valued, all of society pays in the form of prison costs down the road, increases in crime, and a social brain drain. Please send teachers and children the message that they are valued and do not hurt our pay.

Regards,

Jacqueline Jensen



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

Do not reduce our pay

Renee Murphy <pricessnay@hotmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:14 PM

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

Reducing teachers' pay will be directly harmful to students, there teachers, and the teachers' families We already have a very low salary which requires many teachers to have more than one job. If you reduce our pay even more, you will not be able to keep the teachers that you have or any new teachers coming in. More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Please think about Hawaii's teachers and our ability to live here.

Mahalo,

Renee Llanes

Sent from my iPhone



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

Please don't cut teacher pay

Winter Leuteneker <cleuteneke@aol.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:14 PM

To whom it may concern;

I have teaching in Special Education for 20 years and was so happy to finally have a pay raise with our contract & then the sped differential added! I have worked very hard over the years & have always wondered why we, the teachers, pay are always the answer to budget cuts? We work so hard & get paid so little already! Cutting our pay will only worsen the situation. Many teachers won't be able to afford living here. Teachers are having to learn so much during this crisis & are going above and beyond to help our students. Cutting pay will make teachers lose their hope and trust with the leaders & drive people away. Our special education population will suffer greatly with substitute teachers not qualified to work with high needs children & just create many law suits, which could cost the budget even more. If you want teachers to keep their devotion of helping please keep the budget fair & don't take from the teachers. My name is Winter Leuteneker & I work at Kalama intermediate in Makawao, Maui as a Special Educator.

Sent from my iPhone



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

Please do not cut teacher pay!

Joanne Rosen <buddyhoku@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:19 PM

Dear Governor Ige,

I beg you to please not cut teachers' pay. I am a 33 year veteran teacher in the DOE, and I was planning to work another two years. But if our pay is cut, I would have no incentive to stay and will most probably retire immediately. I am not burnt out yet and want to continue the important work that I do in the school, but it won't be prudent for my retirement planning.

I am not at what's considered a hard to fill school, but yet we have openings that are filled with long term substitutes. There are just not enough teachers to hire to begin with, and a pay cut would make it even harder to attract teachers to the profession. As it is, we are losing a few teachers who are from the mainland when this school year is over. A pay cut would cause even more young teachers to leave for the mainland.

Teachers are working super hard, long hours while trying to implement distance learning. Many are doing this while also homeschooling their own children. However there are some school personnel who are at home and not working (due to no fault of their own) yet they are receiving their full pay. If you feel there's a need to cut state workers' pay, I would strongly suggest that you have those employees identified and cut their pay first. Do not cut the pay of employees and teachers who are still working full-time and often overtime. That would be like a slap in the face to everyone who has stepped up and are working extra hard to do the best we can for our keiki at this already difficult time.

Thank you for taking all of this into consideration.

Sincerely,
Joanne Rosen

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony for Hawaii State Board of Education May 7 Meeting

Lisa Espiritu <llespiritu79@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:24 PM

Aloha,

My name is Lisa Espiritu and I am a 5th grade teacher at Nimitz Elementary School. I have taught in the Hawaii DOE for 9 years and have struggled to make ends meet the whole time. Currently, my family of 5 lives in a small 2 bedroom apartment. Our son, who is about to enter high school shares a room with his sisters, age 7 and 9. We have worked hard and saved to be able to finally look into buying a home so that our kids can have the space they need. If the Board of Education goes through with the suggested Directed Leave Without Pay or Supplemental Time Off Without Pay, our dream of finally living in a space that can fit our family is dead. We all understand there must be budget cuts to deal with the loss of revenue the state has incurred. However, it is so disheartening to think that anybody could consider giving a 19.62% salary reduction to one group of people. We pour our hearts into our careers, and yet we can't even afford to live here. If this goes through, my family will have to look into moving elsewhere. Not only will we look into this option because of the loss of pay, but also the loss of education opportunities for our children. If teachers are given directed leave that means our children will have less time in the classroom as well. I beg you to please not do this to the teachers and keiki of Hawaii. We both deserve better!

Sincerely,
Lisa Espiritu



Refrain from pay cuts for teachers

Lauren Higa <laurenhiga30@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:26 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is, Lauren Higa, a grade 5 teachers from Waiakeawaena Elementary School in Hilo. I have been teaching since 2003 and am in that demographic where the pay raises that were possibly coming to us this school could have made a tremendous impact in my life. I had been patiently waiting, gone through furlough fridays, multiple curriculum changes, multiple administrative changes, and much more because that's what teachers do. We know that one day people will understand that teachers are important, not just for their own children but also for the growth of society.

I was blessed with attending Punahou School and we had always been taught this saying, "to whom much is given, much is expected". I was given the resources and privileges that the private school provided me. When I teach, that saying is what I always go to and remember the teachers that I had. However, the lack of funding and resources over the years to our public school educators has shown that when not much has been given, more is to be expected. We get told try to stretch out as much as you can, reuse old materials, be innovative but figure out on your own how to do that without costing the state any more money, figure out how to improve test scores and student growth without giving any PD courses for free or of any substance pertaining to classes we teach or can't travel because there is no money (especially for those on the neighbor islands).

Every year, we are given \$500 for both first and second semesters, sometimes less. Did you know that HALF my purchase orders go to buying INK! The other half is buying limited materials to start the school or bulk resources I may need for teaching. Usually at the max I can purchase 10 items, because shipping is also included in the costs, and shipping sometimes can cost more when going to the neighbor islands. Of the 17 years I have been teaching, I have spent over \$1,000. every year of my own money to buy supplies, rewards, resources, etc for my students.. I have spent over \$17,000.00 of my own money to provide the best possible learning environment for my students to excel in and provide things for them that they do not have.

I am lucky, I have a spouse that makes almost triple what I make. However, I know that my fellow teachers do not have that luxury. This pay cut would significantly affect those that are have two parents or a single parent household that work in the DOE. Living on the neighbor island also comes with additional costs that residents of Oahu do not have to worry about. Electricity is higher, food and gas are more expensive, and health care is lacking. 4 years ago my daughter had to go to specialist in Oahu because she had tumor, we had three specialist to see, multiple MRI's, and a surgery. None of this could be done in Hilo and we had to pay quite a bit after insurance. I also had medical problems this year that needed to be done in Oahu. With a pay cut, many people, that aren't as fortunate as my family, would struggle. If anything should happen to them or a family member that needed to travel to Oahu, many may not be able to afford it or they would have to figure out different ways to pay their bills.

Before the pandemic I was working on weekends and every night, planning or correcting work. I was building relationships with parents by sending out messages during the night, calling to talk about their child and how to help. Like so many others, I came into school on the weekends to try to get a head and plan. Most schools have been also asked to plan parent nights and open houses, which are after school hours. We plan on our own, not during school time cause we are teaching. May Day and extra-curricular, teachers do all of that. Every year we plan and come up with the dances for the students to perform. PTA nights are encouraged to facilitate strong community relationships with staff. All of this is done outside of school.

After the pandemic, I've been answering messages from parents from 6:00am to 9:00pm. We have been planning a whole new way for students to learn and making sure that it aligns to standards. I have virtual meetings with students to check-in and play games with. Is the work for teachers harder, definitely. Have we had to do it on our own without any help or guidance from those above us, yes. Are we spending hours online seeking information and resources for ourselves and parents, yes. Have we stopped working, no.

Teachers are working a ridiculous amount of hours more than ever before. We do it cause we always say, "It's for the kids" or "the kids would lose out".

Teachers have been taken for granted, too many years we have watched those above us get pay raises. Yet, we make do with the limited funds we have because we are resourceful, but we shouldn't have to. DOE and BOE all have said that they respect teachers and want to make sure that we keep them. A lesson I always stress to my students, "Actions speak louder than words". Whatever the choice you make, just know your actions will speak louder than words. You owe it to the teachers to do the right thing.

Sincerely,
Lauren Higa



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

Proposed Paycuts

Mireille Ellsworth <ellsworthhsta@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:29 PM

My name is Mireille Ellsworth, and I have taught at Waiakea High School in Hilo for 16 years. Being a teacher here during Furlough Fridays, DLWOP, and a battle with breast cancer set me back financially so that I am over \$50,000 in debt and pay credit card interest rates to buy food and gas. If there are any pay cuts, I will regrettably have to leave Hawai'i. Even doing private tutoring in Los Angeles would pay more than this.

Actually, now that I have taught myself how to do distance learning, I might be able to teach students online and live anywhere in the world! I hear families in China pay well.

I teach juniors in high school this year, and when I learn of their educational experiences during younger grade levels, I find out that many of them had long term substitutes and emergency hire teachers. It is no surprise that their skills are so low.

As a professional educator, I cannot stay in a state that ignores the importance of education. If these islands want to evolve into a sustainable economy, you will need an educated populace.

Good luck with that if you plan to cut teacher pay.

Mireille Ellsworth,
Classroom Teacher,
Waiakea High School,
Hilo

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony for May 7th BOE Meeting

Caroline Freudig <carolinefreudig@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:29 PM

Aloha BOE members,

I write today to implore you to not reduce teachers' salaries as part of re-balancing the state's general fund budget. HSTA has been collaboratively working with both the DOE & the Governor to work towards increases for teachers via differentials and step adjustments. This was moving in the right direction and teachers receiving the differentials were stating how that extra income was making a difference for them and their finances.

Understandably, COVID-19 has shifted the path for future differentials and adjustments. That being said, there is no way that reducing teacher salaries will benefit the students. The cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage resulting in more students receiving their instruction from unlicensed or substitute teachers. It would also create gaps in equity where more students of low income status would once again see a high teacher turnover rate.

As a first grade teacher on the island of Kaua'i at Kalaheo Elementary School, I am one of the lucky ones that does not need to work a second job because my spouse's salary combined with mine provides us with an affordable living wage. However, several of my colleagues do work a 2nd job to make ends meet. Reducing their salaries would basically render them unable to continue to live here where the salary and the cost of living don't align. I already know of one colleague leaving Hawai'i due to the projected pay cuts because they can make so much more teaching in another state.

We need to re-balance our state's general fund budget by other means. If cuts are needed for the Department of Education, let's cut out the non-essentials such as state-wide testing & outside providers. Those cuts could create millions of dollars funneled back where needed such as teacher salaries.

Respectfully,
Caroline Freudig
First Grade Teacher, Kalaheo Elementary School, Kaua'i
HSTA Kaua'i Chapter President



Testimony

Christine Lally-Gealon <christine_lally@hotmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:29 PM

Aloha!

My name is Christine Lally-Gealon and I am a School Counselor at Keonepoko Elementary in Pāhoa on the Big Island. This is my 15th year at Keonepoko and regardless of the high turnover of staff every year I continue to stay because I love the community, families, and keiki in our community.

Please let me start by thanking you for supporting HSTA's efforts to increase teacher pay. It is important for the students in Hawaii and especially so for my students in Puna to have quality teachers. I understand that COVID-19 was unexpected and the economy is taking a hit. However, I humbly ask that the BOE take into consideration other means of making up the fiscal deficit before considering pay cuts for state employees.

I have stuck with the DOE though Furlough Fridays and years with no pay increases. I stuck around through two volcanic eruptions. I was a part of the staff that relocated from Keonepoko Elementary to portable buildings built in the parking lot of Kea'au High School. Our students had to be escorted to the stadium bathrooms, we bought rain boots to walk to the cafeteria in the rain, and our students played in an open field with no play equipment. I have stuck it out in a hard to staff school for all 15 years of my career. I have stuck through it all and my plan was to retire from Keonepoko and from the community I love.

With that said, a 20% pay cut makes it difficult to stick with the DOE. And like myself, I know it will be difficulty for many educators that already struggle financially. We cannot afford to push veteran educators into retirement and have new & returning teachers leave Hawaii. My school already faces turnover every year and long term substitutes teaching our students. I ask that you consider how your decisions today will affect the future learning of our students.

Thank you,
Christine Lally-Gealon
School Counselor
Keonepoko Elementary

Sent from my iPhone



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

Teacher Pay Cuts

Samantha Funes <obe1s@aol.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:32 PM

Dear Board of Education,

Thank you for listening to the concerns regarding how pay cuts to our teachers would greatly harm our keiki. I have been a teacher in elementary education for over 30 years here where I am born and raised. I now serve as a mentor teacher in my complex area (poverty stricken). Over the years I have seen and experienced what happens when classrooms of our children are left to substitute teachers. Sadly, many stories are horrible. Students being given worksheets, time fillers, and being watched over like babysitters do by those who are sometimes emotionally unstable themselves. But if that's the only person willing to take the job then we all just look the other way and pretend we don't see it. Well I see it and it's not right. We already have a difficult time keeping qualified dedicated teachers. How can we let our keiki suffer more in their education when they have already lost so much. My heart is heavy thinking about their future and reading skills. Catching up will be a challenge. Replacing experienced educated teachers with substitutes because of shortages due to this detrimental plan of pay cuts is a wrong choice. What do you choose for those who don't get to speak for themselves...a well run engaged classroom where all keiki are served and learning or a mess of haphazard chaos? Thank you for listening to our requests for equity for our children to all have GREAT teachers.

Sincerely,

Samantha Funes

Sent from my iPhone



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

Special Education teacher also grade level chair doing two jobs at school because another teacher left after Christmas.

Marlene Reeves <marlene.reeves@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:35 PM

Marlene Reeves first grade special education teacher and grade level chair for special education at Kealakehe El. Kailua Kona, HI

Where do I begin. I have been Grade level Chair for sped now for four years and every year someone has left or one was out for medical reasons. Every year I am doing two jobs but only getting paid for one salary. Sure I make a 100.00 extra but if I worked by the hour the DOE would be broke. Not only do I do my job as a first grade special education teacher writing IEP's, progress reports and supporting my students but then I have to leave my class and work with other students and then I go home and I have to write IEP's or do progress reports for up-to 8 eight other students. This year I'm doing four extra students besides my own. Do I want to do grade level chair next year, No, does anybody at my school want my job, No. I don't know what they're going to do next year if there is a cut in pay there are going to be so many teachers that don't return or don't want to come to Hawaii what is the DOE going to do? Also what kind of education will our students receive if we have four days of school. I am just so sad that the governor thinks so little of our Kiki in our teachers it just makes me so sad and I'll be retiring next year. Marlene Reeves
Sent from my iPhone



34 hour DLWOP/STOWOP for Teachers

Neil Tamabayashi to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 06:40 PM

From: "Neil Tamabayashi" <neil.tamabayashi@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Neil Tamabayashi, an eighth grade Social Studies teacher at George Washington Middle School, who has been an educator for over 23 years. I am writing to you in opposition to the proposal that teachers will be required to have a 34 hour per month DLWOP/STOWOP to help budgetary shortfalls due to the Coronavirus pandemic. I fully understand the burden that this outbreak has put on both our country and state, and am empathetic to the financial plight that all of us are facing.

However, I also know the financial hardships that teachers have faced throughout my tenure as a teacher. When I started teaching in 1993, beginning teacher salaries were averaging \$24,000 per year. Since 1993, teachers went over 10 years with no renegotiated contract and no raise in salary. Only within the past 10 years have the teachers begun to see a moderate increase in our salaries to help us survive the high cost of living in Hawaii. I don't know of many professions that are NOT compensated for the work they do beyond the normal hours of operation. Teachers give of themselves constantly both financially in purchasing supplies with our own money and our time beyond the school day to help our students to not only be successful academically, but also provide emotional support for our students that they may not get outside of school as well. Our caring for our students does not stop when the school bell rings to end the school day.

I hope that you will NOT choose to require what amounts to almost a 20% reduction in pay for teachers. When this pandemic forced us into drastic measures, teachers continued to reach out to educate and provide support for our students in ways that are outside the box. What other professions have done the same with the limited resources and time to prepare to help their clientele with the success that teachers have during this unprecedented time? Teachers have always had to "bite the bullet" and take whatever was minimally offered because we always said, we are in it for our students and not the money. How much more will teachers be asked to personally sacrifice? I am asking you to help show appreciation for the sacrifice we have made throughout the years and find new and creative ways to make up for the budget shortfall without having to reduce teacher pay much like how teachers have done to continue to educate and support our students.

Thank you for taking the time to read my thoughts on this matter. I hope you choose to show your support for the teachers of Hawaii and NOT recommend these pay cuts. I wish you & your families the best during these troubled times.

Mahalo,
Neil Tamabayashi

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Reconsiderations of Draft COVID Re-Balancing Framework

Diane Foulks <dffoulks@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:52 PM

After reviewing Governor Ige's Draft COVID Re-Balancing Framework, I cried. I am an elective teacher at Waimea Canyon Middle School on Kauai and my husband is a science and health services teacher at Waimea High School.

Our schools are Title I schools with predominantly Native Hawaiian students. We have many single parents, and many of our parents work more than two jobs. My husband recently talked to a single mother with three children. The only Internet they had was through the data services on her cell phone. Can you image those three students trying to do distance learning using one mobile phone? The mother was so overwhelmed with gratitude, greatly appreciating my husband's reaching out to support her and her children with their education.

We live in in the same community as our schools. We are part of this community. And, we believe we are blessed to be a blessing to our schools and community. We shop the local grocery stores. We eat in or order take-out from the local restaurants. We donate to local charities, our local food bank, our local church, our students' fundraisers, you name it. My husband surfs with the locals, buying his surfboards from a shaper that lives a couple streets over. The woman that cuts my hair is the grandparent of one of my students. Our favorite shops are run by people who grew up on our island. We support our community. A few days ago, my husband just had to have a Loco Moco from a local restaurant. When he went to pick it up, he noted that the staff were almost in tears with gratitude that we supported them during this pandemic. Today, I had just contacted the local car dealership because I was considering a new car purchase almost a year earlier than originally planned. I wanted to take advantage of some of the special offers and discounts currently offered.

Now, after reviewing this Draft with the proposed salary reduction, all of that may change. My husband and I feel blessed in that we still have our salaries and believe we can help rebuild our local economy and support our local communities and families. But if this Draft becomes reality, I will not be able to afford that car payment after all. We will not be able to buy those Loco Mocos and support our restaurants. We will not be make those donations, and may in fact need to ask for assistance ourselves. We will have to cut back on our purchases. We may even need additional jobs like many of our colleagues. However, there will not be those second jobs available. We will not be able to support the rebuilding of the local economy.

Furthermore, my school has a high turnover rate of teachers. We lost six classroom teachers (of about 30) by the end of the first semester. We have had four long-term substitute teachers cover at least three semesters each for their classes. Next year, we are already slated to lose four to five teachers. This has tremendous impact on our community. We already have a more difficult time finding and keeping qualified teachers. A salary reduction will increase the difficulty. We already have a shortage of substitute teachers. A shortage of teachers plus a shortage of substitutes equals what? It certainly isn't an education for our future generation.

My students are afraid. They are overwhelmed. They are anxious. They want the comfort of continuity. They want the safety and security provided at school. And they cry when they lose a teacher. Our keiki deserve qualified and committed teachers, especially to help them transition to a new normal when they return to school. Retaining salaries for teachers will ensure that qualified teachers will still be there. Retaining salaries for teachers will ensure that Hawaii will be in a better position to attract qualified teachers to teach in Hawaii. Retaining salaries for teachers will also help our community rebuild.

Investing in Hawaii's teachers is investing not only in our keiki's future but also our current communities and economies. All will provide measurable and immeasurable dividends for Hawaii. It is my hope and

prayer that all considerations to reduce salaries for teachers is stopped and does not go beyond this draft.
Retain the current salaries and retain our teachers.

Mahalo,

Diane Foulks



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

Teacher Pay Cuts

Tracy Brojakowski8 <tmbdolphin@hotmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 7:06 PM

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

To : Board of Education ; State of Hawaii

My name is Tracy Brojakowski, I am in my 21st year of teaching Special Education at Lahainaluna High School. When I first started my teaching career at Lahainaluna in 1999 we had initiated a strike to get the attention of the State due to the poor teaching terms and conditions. We have been through furloughs , not having a suitable contract due to State lack of commitment to education throughout the past two decades. On top of all this we are considered one of the lowest-paid teaching communities in the United States, when figuring the cost of living.

Personally I have worked two jobs to pay back my student loans and continue to survive on the current teacher salary. I lost my second job in the service industry due to the COVID-19 outbreak and it leaves me in a desperate situation.

Teachers are considered essential workers during this pandemic.I have worked from home setting up digital classrooms, correspondence with my students and their families, taking part in on-going communication all day & night with other staff members to meet students' needs. This is a critical time for most families that do not have a support system. We as educators are there for these families to give them strength and hope during these difficult times.

It would be an atrocity to take this life raft down when needed the most. Please back us up and support all State employees.

Thank you,
Tracy Brojakowski



Pay Cuts for teachers

Jamie Psak to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 07:14 PM

From: "Jamie Psak" <jamie.psak@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern,

I am sad to think that you are even considering cutting our pay again. In my 26 year career, we had a strike, furlough Fridays and now this?

We are working even harder during the distance learning then we do on a face to face basis. We are putting wonderful lessons out there to people who will not even be held accountable for doing or not doing the work. We have to defend ourselves if we feel a student is not proficient and be accused of being unfair. It is time that you start treating us as the professionals we are. Many teachers have much higher education then many other professions yet we make substantially lower pay. You wonder why you can't keep teachers, well this is a great example of why.

You want the youth of Hawaii to have the best future? Well it starts at school and you won't be filling teacher positions if you can't pay us enough to pay for our homes and food. We already spend our own money for air conditioners, carpet, cleaning supplies, and school supplies for our students. I invite any or all of you to come to work with me for a day and see how it is to be a teacher. Don't cut our pay, if you value what we do.

Jamie Psak

Health Educator Driver's Education Teacher

Henry J. Kaiser High School 9th/10Grade

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

Testimony regarding teacher pay cuts- May 7 2020-BOE

Tai Baird <bair6939@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 7:20 PM

Aloha, my name is Tai Baird, and I am a second grade general education teacher currently employed at Pa'ia Elementary school on the island of Maui. We are a school that has two programs one of immersion, and the other English. While I have taught at this school and in other schools on the island of Maui, I have had to make the decision to go back into special education due to the attractive differential offered. If a decision is made to reduce teacher salary, it will affect me, along with my family drastically. I help support my nephew in another state, along with my father currently living with me, who is living off of his social security right now due to the effects of Covid-19 unemployment issues. This reduce in pay will not benefit my financial situation; rather it will greatly harm my ability to continue to allow me to be a truly effective teacher. Please do not reduce teacher salaries. Our students, our keiki, our children, my children, will suffer tremendously. Please reconsider all the testimony received on this issue and why it will be very detrimental to this educational system. Thank you and I appreciate your taking the time to read my testimony. Mahalo nui loa, Tai Mahealani Baird , Second grade Pa'ia Elementary School, general education- transferring to Kahului Elementary School, Special Education



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

Do not reduce teachers pay!!!

Lei Cunningham <honumom@aol.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 7:20 PM

I am writing in opposition to Governor Ige's proposed pay cut for teachers.

My name is Lei Cunningham. I am a 29 year veteran of the Hawaii Department of Education. I currently teach a remedial reading class for students at S. W. King Intermediate School in Kaneohe.

I could have retired 4 year ago, but I love my job!!! I love teaching kids to read,... giving them another tool to success in life.

The distance learning has pushed me to overextend myself, my time, my abilities,... and busting my b--- to get my kids to do work that I provided for them. And then to hear that the governor of Hawaii wants teachers to take a pay cut because there is a money shortage?!!! We're still working!!! Why should we get a pay cut? Is education not important to the State of Hawaii? Invest in the future,... invest in a quality education. Teachers could make better money elsewhere. Do you want to lose your educators, and increase the teacher shortage?

A pay cut for teachers is sure to have teachers retire early, relocate to another state, or just change professions.

Think about your decisions before you make a mistake.

Thank you,
Lei Cunningham
45-229 Wena Street
Kaneohe, Hawaii. P
96744
(808)542-5571

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony for teachers

Brianna Wianecki <briannawianecki@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 7:21 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm a highly qualified teacher originally from Maui. I moved back home last year after teaching internationally for 9 years wanting to settle down and give back to my community. I am single and living alone on my teaching salary which only recognizes 6 of my 15 years experience. It is definitely a struggle to live off my current salary especially since I just started a Masters In Ed. program early this year. I'm worried about how I will be able to support myself in the coming year and tempted to move overseas again if the budget cuts include cuts to teachers salaries. My professional experience and the strong relationships I've built in my school and community are at risk. I understand budget cuts may be necessary but I humbly ask you to look elsewhere to help share the burden with educators and our students.

Brianna Wianecki
Waihee Elementary School
Grade 3 Teacher



Seeking alternative means vs. Pay Cuts
Leanne Teves to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 07:26 PM
From: "Leanne Teves" <leanneteves@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha!

I am writing to ask that alternative means be sought in regards to funding teachers salaries in lieu of pay cuts. Acknowledging that we are in the midst of unprecedented times financially as a state, resulting in budget short falls in many areas. Cutting the salaries of teachers would contribute to keeping the shortage momentum going or increasing in numbers.

On the front lines serving my twentieth-year at Iroquois Point Elementary I can testify to the concerning impact filling positions with long term substitutes or transient staff has upon student learning. Filling vacant positions in this manner appears to have correlations with the teacher shortage. Some of the transient staff do devote a great deal of time and work hard in their positions. However, most are not trained and require additional time of veteran teachers to provide on the job training. The training results in time away from the classroom to attend numerous training sessions that take place during the school day. This is only one of many ways student instruction is interrupted due to filling the many open positions due to the shortage with transient staff.

I have experienced loss in pay and pay cuts during my twenty years of service with the Department of Education. Prior to becoming a Student Services Coordinator in 2003 I served as a special education teacher at Iroquois Point Elementary. Going through pay loss during the strike of 2001 and then furlough Fridays in 2009 and on, had a devastating impact on us all. My family included. I hope and pray we will not face another round of pay cuts.

I continue to serve in this capacity due to my love for the children, especially enjoy helping families maneuver through, what can be a very complicated process in accessing special education and related services. This task as a Student Services Coordinator, I find very rewarding. I look forward continuing to serving the people of the state of Hawaii in this capacity for several more years. I hope to continue to receive the same financial benefits with pay and in the future increases as well.

Thank you for your time in reading this email.
Have a good evening.

-- Sincerely,

Leanne Natsuyo Teves

`A`ohe loa i ka hana a ke aloha – Distance is ignored by love.



Teacher Salary Adjustment

Brian White <alohabiology@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 7:28 PM

Aloha,

My name is Brian W., a first-year Science and ELL teacher at Wahiawa Middle School and a graduate of the University of Hawaii: West Oahu education program. I just wanted to share how decreases to teacher salaries will impact my family. I, like many college graduates my age, have finished college with a sizable student loan debt. While the UH system is relatively affordable, the cost of living in Hawaii, especially as a parent to a proud Ka'ala Jr. Mule, is not. I had to borrow money to afford groceries and rent throughout college, which included over 400 hours unpaid student teaching at Mililani Middle School as well as time at Waianae High and Ewa Makai.

I tell my story because as a 1st year teacher who went to college at a local preparation program I am not likely to leave the profession. Teaching our local kids is my career and I love it dearly. What these pay cuts WILL do is impact my ability to ever pay down my debt in a reasonable time, which means I will likely never be able to own a home to pass on to my son, a Wahiawa boy born and raised. It will decrease my ability to help pay my wife's tuition to earn her degree in psychology and substance abuse counseling. If that happens then we will have even more loan debt.

Please consider the immediate and lasting consequences of salary cuts. Many new educators like me may financially be unable to recover because of the impacts on our ability to manage school debt. Many of our veteran teachers will be eyeing early retirement. The program at UH West is small as it is, but I speak from experience that the best new teachers for our Leeward and Central kids are coming out of that program. One of my former professors said she is good at recruiting students but with a 20% pay cut "nobody is that good." We will be looking at even more shortages on in our areas that need teachers most.

I hope this sheds light on how these proposed cuts will effect my family.

-Brian W.



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

Testify

Michelle Heaviside <michellemybell3333@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 7:32 PM

I am a special education English teacher at King Intermediate. I am also a mother of an autistic child. I am working harder than I ever have to educate my students and parents and to also educate my child. I am also my child's one on one right now. If my pay was to be cut I could not do my job properly, as well as I need to because I would need to get another job to make ends meet. Paying for childcare would also be hard, teaching as a job and parent, having to get another job and having to pay for child care so I could work another job. I don't know what I would do if my pay was cut. I work hard, very hard and I care about my students and parents. I would hate to quit teaching because I could not afford to hold down my household. Please consider how pay cuts will negatively affect education in Hawaii as a whole.

Sincerely

M

Murphy

Sent from my iPhone



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

Balancing the Budget

Lorena Wong <3chinitos@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 7:33 PM

NAME: LORENA WONG

SCHOOL: MOANALUA H.S.

SUBJECT: SPANISH

The teacher shortage crisis in HI already negatively affects our population with scores lagging on National Tests against the nation. I understand we need to balance the budget, due to COVID-19. However, cutting benefits in Education is not the solution. Sure, it may help the budget, but education in HI will continue to get worse since:

- teachers will retire rather than work for less money
- teachers from the mainland ALREADY cannot afford to live here. Why would they move here for even less pay?
- DOE would be forced to hire more LONG TERM SUBS the are not qualified to teach, thus, deepening the learning curve causing the students to score even lower on National Exams

Create the cutbacks from other areas:

- stevedores whom are uneducated getting paid more than principals
- Governor, Mayors, Senators and local representatives taking a reduction in pay

Surely there are other areas to gain access to monies rather than education.

Lorena Wong
3chinitos@gmail.com
(808)639-1841



Stop teacher pay cuts

Melanie Dalager <melaniedalager@yahoo.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 7:34 PM

Reply-To: "melaniedalager@yahoo.com" <melaniedalager@yahoo.com>

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

Melanie Harmon
Lokelani intermediate School (Maui)
7th and 8th grade Math teacher and special Ed teacher
K-12, math, sped certified
Master in Ed and Psych
(Teaching since 1999)

Gordon Harmon
Kihei Elementary
3rd grade
(Teaching since 2005)

10yr old son
Kihei Elementary
Going into 5th grade

This email is to let you know how a salary salary cut would not only affect our family but the children of Maui. Because both my husband and I are teachers the salary cut will be a cut to our overall household income. We moved here two years ago and so we are not being paid for all our education and experience and are barely making it. My husband has been working a bartending job 4 nights a week for the past year to help supplement our income. A cut in our salary would result in us leaving the island. Maui would be losing 2 teachers and a student.

Over the past 2 years working at Lokelani, I have seen such a disservice to our students due to positions not been filled. One of my 8th graders last year told me he had a long term sub in ELA, all 3 years he was there. By the time he left, his writing looked like something my 3rd grader would have done. This year, for some of our 6th graders, the only certified teacher they had in their core classes was a math teacher. If the teacher cuts go through, it will only solidify my perception that the Hawaii Dept of Ed. DOES NOT have the children's education as a priority!

I am just 1 family that would be greatly impacted by any kind of teacher cuts. But there are many others.

There are 2 other teachers at Lokelani who are husband and wife, 1 teaching math the other teaching science, with a 2nd grader at Kihei elementary. They will also be leaving island if cuts are out in place. That would be 3 certified teachers in hard to fill positions, leaving 1 school.

Think about that when you are looking for funds.

Thank you
Melanie Harmon

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



DOE Teacher Budget

Carole Hasan to: Hawaii BOE 05/04/2020 07:37 PM

Sent by: "Carole Hasan" <20262954@k12.hi.us>

From: "Carole Hasan" <carole.hasan@k12.hi.us>

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

Aloha BOE members,

Please kokua and do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage.

Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my Ohana, but the students I serve as well. Cutting teacher salaries is a bad idea because:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

My husband and I moved to Hawaii 2 years ago to serve as experienced educators from Kentucky (over 40 years as special education teachers, school counselor, and professor training new special education teachers). It was a very expensive and arduous move. We wanted to help serve the keikis in Hawaii and to help fill the terrible teaching shortage Hawaii faces.

It would be a devastating hardship to take such a drastic cut in pay. We would be unable to make our mortgage payments and forced to relocate back to the mainland.

We see the effects on our students when they do not have qualified math, science, social studies, ELA, or SpEd teachers to count on to teach them the academic content they need to be successful adults in their chosen careers.

Mahalo for reading and considering my thoughts,
Carole Hasan
7th Grade Math SpEd Teacher
Konawaena Middle School

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

Teachers salary

Pamela Kim Harris <pamelakimharris@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 7:40 PM

I am a certified special education teacher and guidance counselor. I can barely afford to make a reduced payment on my student loans and pay rent. In fact I only began as a result of our recent raise-still lower than the national level. When I am struggling to make ends meets, my students are affected as well. This will only increase the shortage of qualified teachers.



Opposing Pay Cuts for State Employees

mary to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/04/2020 07:41 PM

From: "mary" <mcmartinson@hotmail.com>

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

Aloha,

For the past fifteen years I have been a Counselor under Bargaining Unit 5 affiliated with the HSTA. I am writing in opposition to the proposed 19.62% pay cut for state employees.

This email is only in part due to the pay decrease that will affect myself, my family, and my years of service. I am also well aware furloughs impact retirement due to days of service being effected, whether this has been included in what is being shared on the news or in press releases. So far when I share this with other HSTA members they only know this if they already worked in this state during the last pay cut solution to save the economy of Hawai'i.

When Furlough Fridays were the norm, students and families had an extremely difficult time. Families that required support for education or safe adults to talk with did not have that 5 school days a week. Students that needed the meals provided had less to eat overall because they did not have access to breakfast and lunch. Parents and guardians spoke openly about the difficulties faced needing to find arrangements for their children for a day home due to no school while they struggled to make ends meet and be at work, and the meals cut from their children needed to then come from their family budget. If meals were not a current issue, why are there so many programs and efforts to ensure students are being fed while we are on long-term stay at home orders? We know our keiki are hungry. That will not change.

Currently, there is quite a bit of new data coming out in news forums and the CDC referencing concerns for the mental health of children and youth, and hospitals are reporting increasing concerns with evidence of child abuse and domestic violence. Not all home lives are safe and healthy. The number of contact days in school, routine procedures, and check ins for students in need is important. Parents and guardians are sharing also they hear of resources available through newsletters provided by schools, school counselors and social workers and other staff. Beyond education, schools are a source of information and referrals for help. Families need more help now more than ever, not less.

Furlough Fridays are also referenced as being a reason so many students are behind academically as a long term impact from that process years ago. This 4th quarter, only enrichment has been allowed with distance learning. Concerns of students falling further behind is high, and therefore the idea of having even less contact time in classrooms next year to provide essential educational opportunities is ridiculous! How will we support the keiki in what they are already not receiving when we are able to return to our campuses by having less time to teach, and guarantee-less highly qualified educators to do so statewide?!

Other states are sharing intentions to support schools with added funding, not taking monies away from schools or their staff. When I have shared this potential in Hawai'i, people who are educators in Washington and Oregon are shocked it is even a possibility!

The lack of step increases were finally on the upward incline after the decision to adjust pay years ago was made. BU5 members were even to receive a raise next fall. The high cost of living combined with the low pay and rare to non-existent pay increases is the reason Hawai'i cannot keep schools filled with highly qualified personnel, whether they be current residents, those considering returning, or those considering relocating to this state. To cut the pay of public education will further exacerbate this issue. The need to pay Special Educators and hard to staff schools a differential this year was in an effort to address retention issues. The fall of 2019-2020 as a school year began with an effort to address the poor pay for educators that has been a chronic challenge, worsened the last time it was decided to furlough state employees as the best option available. And now, due to the horrible circumstances we are all facing worldwide, rather than waiting to learn other options or to have concrete information about aid being provided to the state from the federal government, conversations are moving forward about cutting state employee pay.

The pay cut will be a challenge for my family. Beyond that-and more importantly-I urge those with decision making power in this situation to consider those who will have less access to the educational and health/wellness resources made available by having school staff available 5 days a week. Please consider how many educators will need to relocate away from Hawai'i due to being "priced out of Hawai'i." Please think of the longterm effects of this decision, which not only would have negative impacts but also-zero information has come out about how long this will continue. A month? A quarter? The 2020-2021 year? I pray that this reduction in public education does not take place. Not for me, but for all of the faces of the keiki I have had the pleasure to know in any small way for that past 15 years, as well as those I've yet to meet.

Mahalo nui loa for your time, I beg you to support the keiki of Hawai'i

Mary Martinson
K-12 Counselor
Kanu o ka `Āina NCPCS



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

Salary Reduction

Jen Joaquin <jen_joaquin@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 7:51 PM

Aloha,

I am urging you to not cut the salaries of educators. We already struggle to fill positions with qualified teachers and this will make it worse. Senior teachers will be forced to retire. Having certified experienced teachers on staff is critical to running a conducive environment for all stakeholders. The children benefit and senior teachers like myself often mentor new teachers and help them through their first few years. Without certified teachers in the classrooms, the entire school climate is affected. The kids lose out, and the other teachers like myself have to hold the school up wherever and whenever we can while also managing our own classes. This will also be a blow to our effort in urging the next generation, and college kids to choose a career in education. A pay cut would be devastating to the department and communities. Please don't don't do it.

Jennifer Joaquin
Grade 7
S.W. King Intermediate
23 years with the DOE



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Daniella G <dgriffay@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:00 PM

Aloha Board of Education,

I am writing to you to say do not cut teachers' pay. I am currently finishing up my master's degree in education and currently work as an emergency hire. If you cut teachers pay 20% I will be making less as my first year as a certified teacher then I do now as an uncertified emergency hire teacher. I have 2 masters degree one in education and one in my content area Biology. I currently teach high school special education science at Radford High School. This is a hard to fill position and if you cut my pay 20% then I will without a doubt leave the state and go teach special education in another state. At my current pay, I break even with the cost of my living, I am saving nothing. I had planned for this and budgeted in. I have also planned for my pay next year based on the current pay schedule. I can not continue to live in Hawaii on a pay decrease of 20%. I will go to a state that appreciates teachers more. I am not the only one that will leave because of this pay cut and Hawaii can't afford to lose more teachers.

Mahalo,
Daniella Griffay, Teacher
Radford High School
[4361 Salt Lake Blvd.](#)
[Honolulu, Hawaii 96818](#)
Phone: (808) 421-4200 Fax: (808) 421-4210
Email: daniella.griffay@k12.hi.us



Written Testimony for May 7, 2020 - COVID Presentation

Logan Okita <lokintahsta@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:02 PM

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

My name is Logan Okita and I am a first grade teacher at Nimitz Elementary School. I began my career 14 years ago as an emergency hire to fill a position vacated by a teacher on an extended maternity leave. In the years since, I have earned my Master's degree, achieved National Board Certification, and taught five different grades between two different schools. I love what I do in my classroom each day. I have enjoy watching my students grow from the youngsters in my classroom to young men and women who contribute to their communities.

When I reflect on my career, I often smile and remember the students and the experiences. The light in their eyes when they realize that they are reading on their own, STEM projects to fix a problem, and exciting stories about reuniting with a deployed parent. I reflect on my career with a different lens when we discuss salaries and compensation because I think of the years of Furlough Fridays and Directed Leave Without Pay. I think of how hard I worked to move myself to Class VII on the salary schedule during a time when we were not receiving raises. I think about the investments in my future that I was finally going to be ready to make if the Superintendent's modernization project went through and our next contract continued the trend of step increases and raises. When I reflect on this time in my career, I do not want it to be filled with memories of salary reductions or furloughs. I want it to be filled with memories of reading to my students on Webex, reading their journal entries on Seesaw, and learning new skills that I did not imagine needing to use to teach first graders.

The 19.62% salary reduction mentioned in the COVID Re-Balancing Framework would be detrimental to public education in Hawaii. Our teacher shortage would likely increase as those who are able to retire do and others leave the state or the profession. The mention of it has already hurt morale as we struggle to adjust to teaching from home during this pandemic. Please consider all of the other options before resorting to salary reductions.

Sincerely,
Logan Okita, MEd, NBCT



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

teacher salary deduction

dafisherman22@yahoo.com <dafisherman22@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:10 PM

Dear Board of Education Members,

My name is Scott Takakura, Student Services Coordinator at Maui Waena Intermediate. This is the first time that I am writing a letter but feel that it is an important decision that you all will be making that will impact peoples lives and families. I have been an educator for 25 years, and have been through the strike and furlough fridays, however, times are different with this pandemic, as everyone is affected.

I am currently the only one receiving a pay check, as my wife is unemployed and as of today has still not received a check. We are just getting by with all the bills, mortgage and food for the household. A 20% payout will have a drastic effect on our financial situation and we would need to seek assistance from our maui food bank or local non profits. This will happen to a lot of teachers and state employees that are "just getting by" and not needing assistance from our community resources. A 20% payout will equal to many more struggling families, and more people relying on the food bank and community resources than we currently have now. If there are federal funds or other options, please consider, as the decision will definitely impact families. I appreciate all of you taking the time to read my letter, as all of you will be making a hard decision in the near future.

Thank you, Scott Takakura

TESTIMONY Regarding Proposed Salary Cuts for Teachers

Board Members of the Hawaii Department of Education,

My name is Benjamin Duke. I am a High School Math and Writing teacher at West Hawaii Explorations Academy PCS on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony in opposition to any salary cuts to teachers.

If cuts are made to teacher salaries more students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

I have been teaching for the past 20 years (the last 14 in Hawaii) and see the value of our public education in the growth and transformation of the students I have worked with. It has been a struggle to make it work in Hawaii, especially now that I have a family with two children. Now that my children are getting older, I have to begin thinking about the cost of their higher education. It has been nearly impossible for me to put away any money over the years and I think teachers should be fairly compensated for their important role we play. Protecting teacher salaries will keep our most qualified public school teachers, librarians, and counselors here in the state working with our most valuable resource- our keiki.

Mahalo,

Benjamin Duke

West Hawaii Explorations Academy PCS

Hawaii Island



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

Teacher pay cut

Krisdee V. <krisdeevangieson@live.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:20 PM

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

It's frustrating to think teacher pay cuts are even an option. As a middle school special education teacher my colleagues and I have been working around the clock during this pandemic. School closures have not faltered my unwavering dedication to my students but it comes at the expense of my own children. I spend hours accommodating my students needs that I barely have time to accommodate my children's needs. If teachers salaries are cut I will leave the field of education which means there will be one less qualified special education teacher for our high need students who need us the most.

Disheartened Special Education Teacher

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)



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

19.62% salary reduction for teachers

John Van Ornum <johnster57@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:21 PM

Dear Board of Education:

I am sure you are aware that the Hawaii State Department of Education is short over 1,000 certified teachers across the state. With this proposed salary reduction teachers such as myself with 25 or more years of experience can retire, collect retirement, and work at another job site to supplement our income. I have an earned EdD, and can surely find some online work from a university. You will lose certified, experienced teachers, and there will be no one to take our positions. We have three long term substitute teachers at our school, and while they are trying their best, they don't have the experience or training to manage students, parents, and administrator demands. The colleges and universities are not producing enough teachers to meet the demand, and with a 20% pay cut who would want to go into teaching?

Please consider your decision carefully. If you cut teachers pay the school system may never recover to an acceptable level.

John Van Ornum EdD

Molokai High School, 25 year veteran teacher

Grades 9-12 Health, Health Core, Clinical Health, Weight Training, and HOSA club

Advisor for 15 years (for the past 12 years we have placed top three finishers in several events in HOSA (health occupations students of America) Hawaii state competition. Several of my students have gone on to be nurses, radiologists, doctors, and hospital administrators.



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

Teacher Pay Cuts

banyan regina <banyanr@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:25 PM

Dear Esteemed Members of the Board of Education,

I have been a highly qualified teacher in French language arts for nearly thirty years and can retire at any time; however, I enjoy teaching so much that I would like to continue for at least another three years. But, should my pay be cut, I would more than likely retire. Another teacher at my school has voiced the same opinion. There may be others.

We veterans have worked years to receive the salary that we now have. To take a 19% cut in pay would seriously undermine morale and cause us to retire sooner than we anticipated; thus, adding to the teacher shortage.

Please support teachers and vote against pay cuts.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Charlene Hosokawa
Moanalua High School
Language Arts (Grades 9-12) and French Levels 3 & 4 teacher



Say NO to pay reduction

Stephen Duncan to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 08:29 PM

From: "Stephen Duncan" <stephen.duncan@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

-I am a 23 yr. veteran of the Dept.of Education.

-Currently, I am a teacher at Nanakuli High School and teach adults with Developmental Disabilities in an FSC-CBI Program of instruction w/ an emphasis in Independent Life Skills.

-In my 23 yrs. of teaching, I have "walked the line" during our last formal strike at Roosevelt High School, and endured Furlough Friday's while at Niu Valley Middle School. I bear witness to the effects of "compression", and the ever increasing responsibilities to those we are charged with educating. I have worked alongside teacher's who were specifically recruited and contracted to teach here, as a result of the long-standing problem of retaining educator's who often leave the field; the profession, for higher paying positions locally and on the mainland.

-The Nanakuli Community, and the Waianae Coast in general has been hit hard by rampant homelessness and suffers from many social issues that are oftentimes quite daunting, and now the COVID-19 pandemic has only added to what were already very trying times for its residents.

-Given these "trying times" for everyone, I believe exploring in depth, other options as a means to fund public education would be in the best interest of all, as opposed to the drastic deep cuts to education that are proposed.

Respectfully,

Stephen Duncan

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

Reducing Teacher Salary

Glenn Yoshida <glennyoshida@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:32 PM

Dear Members of the Board:

I can think of no more expedient way to lower the quality of education for the children of Hawaii than by reducing the remuneration to public school teachers.
The reduction in pay would greatly encourage prospective teachers to look elsewhere for a decent living wage.

Sincerely,
Glenn Yoshida
Secondary Teacher
Pearl City High School



Position: NO to teacher salary reductions

Katrina Souza <souzakatrina1@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:33 PM

Position: NO to teacher salary reductions

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

I strongly encourage you to reject the state Office of Budget and Finance's Re-Balancing Framework suggestion to reduce teacher salaries by 19.62%.

I fear for the future of public education at the end of this financial crisis. We are already in a teacher shortage. For years, I have personally witnessed the devastating effects of having long-term subs and emergency hires at the high school level. One year, I had a special education student who only had two highly qualified teachers out of seven. That is an embarrassment. As my school's English Department Chair, I have seen young, energetic, and qualified teachers from the mainland stay here for a few years and then move back because they got tired of working two jobs just to pay for basic living expenses. And this was all at our current pay level. If our pay is cut, even more of these young teachers, who are the future of our profession, will have absolutely no financial means or reason to stay in Hawaii, especially since their second jobs often were in the food service or retail industries, which have been decimated.

Additionally, this steep pay cut is more than I suffered under Furlough Fridays. As a single mother of two school-aged children, I will not financially survive this cut. I have a master's degree in education and have been teaching in the public school system for 16 years. I will fall into the donut hole of making too much to qualify for any type of public assistance, but make too little to pay my mortgage and feed my children.

I work hard to provide my students with a quality education. All kids deserve to have qualified and passionate teachers - not just the kids of those who can afford private school education. However, if these pay cuts become a reality, our public school students will be saddled with people who are not qualified and are simply there to gather a paycheck because the DOE will be so desperate to fill thousands of vacancies. Our students deserve better than that!

Sincerely,
Katrina Souza



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

Teacher salary concern

Cindie McAnish <ohikiguys@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:40 PM

Aloha,

I am a veteran special education teacher with over 20 years of teaching in the Puna District. We've had our share of challenges to face as a community in the past, however, this COVID-19 situation is unlike any we've faced before. As much as I want to continue to work for the children of Hawai'i, I would definitely consider retirement, over a pay cut. If I leave, who will take my place? Our keiki deserve highly qualified teachers in all classrooms, especially in our hard to fill schools and special education classes. Please consider other options to solve this economic crisis at hand.

Aloha,

Cynthia McAnish
Department Head, Special Education
Kea'au High School



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

Teacher Salary Testimony

Ian Nagao <ian_nagao@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:39 PM

May 4, 2020

To whom it may concern:

My name is Ian Nagao and I am a high school science teacher at Keaau High School. I truly believe that cutting teacher salaries is a bad idea. Living in Hawaii is tough as it is and I for one have been living paycheck to paycheck for a while now. While I understand Hawaii's economic downfall due to the COVID-19 pandemic, implementing a pay reduction will definitely not only impact me negatively but others as well. I am already struggling as it is with the high cost of living in Hawaii. More so, I believe the students will also suffer as more students would go without licensed, experienced teachers who have either left the profession due to a reduced salary or driven into early retirement. Our students do not deserve long term substitute teachers or unqualified teachers. I have seen how this negatively affects students first hand, especially out here in rural Puna where I teach. Please reconsider the teacher pay reduction.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Mr. Ian Nagao
Keaau High School Ulupono Science Teacher



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

Please support Hawaii's teachers

rara1dutch@aol.com <rara1dutch@aol.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:46 PM

Reply-To: rara1dutch@aol.com

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

Aloha,

I write this letter with a heavy heart. I'm a first grade teacher. This will be my 23rd teaching 1st grade with 1 year in kindergarten. I have seen many changes during these years but nothing like this. I started teaching during a time when we had no step movement for over 5 years. New teachers were starting at the same step though I had 7 years experience. We've taken pay cuts and have never got them back, given longer school years and haven't gotten paid for it. Been given furloughs that turned into DLWOP's .It has taken years and years to get percentage raises and it is stressful to think that now we may see a 20% cut when it took years and years to just get this far. I arrive at school at 6 every morning and leave about 2:30 but my work goes home with me. During these times of distance learning it feels like it never ends. I'm emailing parents during the day, evening and night. It is already a financial hardship on many families and this will just make it harder. This proposal will not end after the lockdown is eased. This proposal will make he hardship even longer. I truly believe that we as a state need to look closer at the importance of supporting our teachers. We need to support all of our teachers. Not only SPED and hard to fill spots. This cut will only create more openings in our profession which will be filled with teachers who will probably not stay very long. It is concerning how our profession is viewed and treated. I love my job. I love the children but am truly hurt by the way our state chooses to treat our profession. Please take another look and help our teachers survive.

Mahalo for your time,

Laurie Tam



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

Teacher pay cuts

Cassandra Armstrong <cjarm69@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:49 PM

To whom it concerns,

We teacher cannot afford a pay cut! This pay cut would cost a lot of teachers to become homeless who has only known Hawaii as their homeland, because housing is way too expensive. It would cause a lot of other teachers to go back to the state they came from, because the cost of living especially finding a place to live is extremely hard! Especially, for those living in rural areas far from towns that have more available types of housing. Some of us are living in shacks or somewhat converted garages that are not considered as a home. Then there are teachers who would retire early, so they don't lose money for their retirement. How can these teachers help the economy here if they can't spend money that they are not getting? What about our keiki? How about state tests to compare to scores with other states? If all these teachers leave who will teach our keiki to show them how to respect, be a good citizen, and prosper to great functioning adults in our communities?

Cassie Armstrong
Kohala Elementary
Pre-Kindergarten



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

Do not reduce teacher salaries

Milette Hoopai <milettehoopai@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:49 PM

To whom it may concern,

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. My name is Milette Ho'opai I teach health at Honoka'a High and Intermediate School. I am blessed to work with amazing students who deserve to be educated by teachers who are compassionate, highly qualified and the best in the field. For the past 7 years or more Honoka'a High and Intermediate School has resorted to hiring long term subs to fill teaching positions. Our students pay the ultimate price in not receiving the quality education they deserve because of this. Reducing teacher pay will not only cause a significant hardship for my family it will also have a devastating effect on the students I/we serve. More students will go without licensed teachers because pay cuts will drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students will be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. Many of my colleagues plan to leave the profession if this pay cut goes through. Our children and teachers deserve BETTER!!

Milette Ho'opai



Teachers' Salaries

Patricia (MM) and Keith Ishihara <pkstonefield@ymail.com>
Reply-To: "Patricia (MM) and Keith Ishihara" <pkstonefield@ymail.com>
To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:04 PM

Aloha!

We would like to submit testimony regarding teachers' salaries.

Our stance is that reducing teachers' salaries would harm the students more than help them. We already have difficulty attracting teachers, so reduced pay (about 20%) would drive them away including current teachers. Students already have difficulty as it is, but with substitute and unqualified teachers (including long-term), learning would be difficult especially if said teachers were not qualified or experienced in those content areas. Please look to other options. We need to keep our current and qualified teachers here in Hawaii to help our keiki, especially since we will be relying heavily on teachers' expertise to build student learning that was lost during the school closures.

Mahalo,

Keith Ishihara
7-8th Grade Mathematics Teacher
Waipahu Intermediate School

Patricia Ishihara
HIDOE Mathematics Resource Teacher
Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design (OCID)

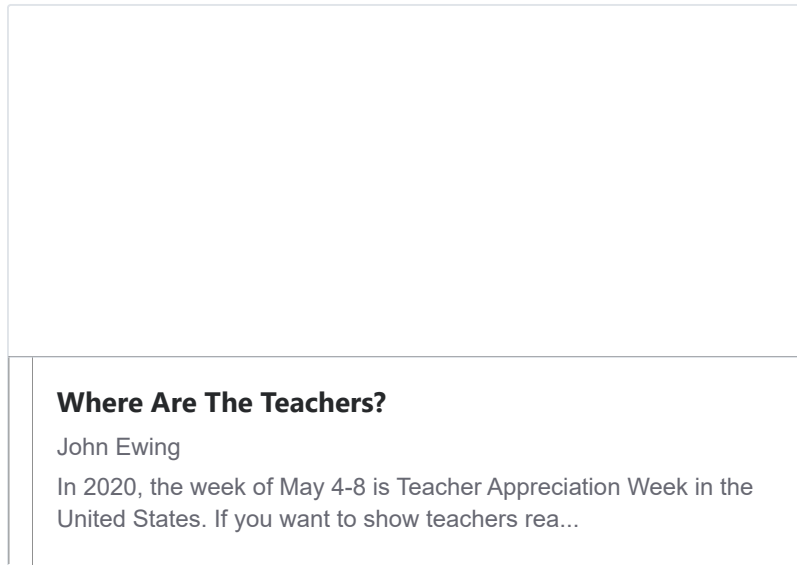


Teachers' Salaries

Patricia (MM) and Keith Ishihara <pkstonefield@ymail.com>
Reply-To: "Patricia (MM) and Keith Ishihara" <pkstonefield@ymail.com>
To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:56 PM

We would like to add a link to this Forbes article: [Where Are The Teachers?](#)



The last seven paragraphs (especially the third to last) say it the best:

"Education suffers when we don't value teacher expertise, but the worst consequence is something more lasting: The teaching profession becomes less attractive. The best eventually leave, fewer of the best enter, and over time teacher expertise declines, creating a downward spiral."

"Respect isn't merely the way you treat people—respect is the way you value their expertise."

And how is this tied to salaries? You will attract the best and keep the best who have that expertise and deserve all the respect they work so hard for. Although they don't do this for the pay, the way of life is that their salaries are what is going to keep workers working.

Thank you for your time.

Keith & Patricia Ishihara



Not again, still recovering from Furloughs. No pay cuts.

Kailani <kailani.ross@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 8:58 PM

Aloha BOE,

I am still gaining stability and overcoming the devastating effects of teacher Furloughs in the very recent past. We have yet to regain pre-Furlough pay cuts when the economy recovered, as we were promised. I, and my colleagues, are very dedicated professionals. We have filled in the gaps for shortages of substitutes and qualified teachers, we stay in this profession even as others leave for better paying jobs (Realtors) and we could easily do as well. We live simply so we can afford to stay as others move away because the cost of living is too high. We see the struggles of teacher shortages at our school. Students lack a full education as substitutes change weekly or daily, lacking consistence or any kind of curriculum at all; not to mention the behavioral challenges this causes our frustrated and bored students. Many times multiple classes end up under the watch of one substitute in the cafeteria, because there are not even enough substitutes for all of the classes that are missing teachers.

These are the other reasons that are union points out and I agree with:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

We always have and always will continue working for our communities families and children, we deserve to be paid for the services we are providing and the work we are doing.

P dkdr/

Jessica Kailani Ross

Aloha kekahi i kekahi



re: a pay cut will force me to move to the mainland
Tiffany Tawata to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 09:10 PM
From: "Tiffany Tawata" <tiffany.tawata@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

My name is Tiffany Tawata and I am a third grade teacher at Pearl Ridge Elementary. I have been teaching for 17 years and have always had a second job or "side gig" to help me pay my bills each month. I am a single mom of an 11 year old and have been living paycheck to paycheck for as long as I can remember. If our pay is cut, I will no longer be able to afford living here. I will be forced to move to the mainland away from my family and my daughter's father to find a job in an area where the cost of living isn't so high. I would hate to leave, but it would be easier to move than continue to struggle or fall even further into debt with the credit card balances I am still trying to pay off.

Please look into other options to help re-balance our economy. We're all in this together. Cutting our pay will hurt our keiki in the long run. New teachers will leave and seasoned teachers will leave or retire early. We are all in this together! There has got to be another way.

Thank you for your time!

All the best,
Tiffany Tawata

Grade 3 teacher
Pearl Ridge Elementary
808.305.9300

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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

AUTUMN CRANWELL <autumnbombs@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 9:12 PM

Aloha, I am Autumn Cranwell from Kahakai Elementary. I have been a teacher in Hawaii for 14 years. Also, I have been a mentor for half these years with a focus on retaining teachers. Please do not reduce our salaries. That would mean a \$15000 loss in pay for me. That's immense! How can I pay my mortgage, my car, food for my family and my parents with that much of a loss. I would be considered poverty. You will lose veteran teachers like me, new teachers, and those wanting to be hired. We simply cannot live in Hawai'i with that low of pay. We cannot recruit new or highly qualified teachers with that sort of pay. Our children will suffer because of this. They will not have enough teachers or highly qualified teachers and the impact will be tremendous on their growth, or lack there of. I am a parent as well. Why would I choose to keep my own kids in low performing schools. Please rethink what you are doing to your people, and especially to our children. Do not reduce teacher's salaries!

Sent from my iPad



Teachers salary reduction proposal

Malia Beaver to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 09:13 PM

From: "Malia Beaver" <malia.beaver@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

I am a 25+ year veteran teacher at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School. I am urging the BOE members to NOT allow pay cuts to teacher salaries. I am tired of the reductions always hitting the school teacher. During my tenure, teachers have experienced multiple pay cuts, pay grade adjustments and other types of salary loss that impacts our personal income and future retirement. Yet, we teachers are held responsible for the character and academic development and growth of each of our students. A responsibility that directly impacts society and home.

Even now, with the COVID shutdown, we teachers work more than eight hours daily per week to support our students because of their difficulties during the long distance learning this school year. We sacrifice our family time and money to support our students during regular school schedule and now via long distance learning.

At this time it is 8:59 p.m., I am taking a breather from personally helping students navigate online learning, just to submit my written testimony to let you know any teacher salary reduction is unjust, inequitable, and reprehensible.

I respectfully demand the respect and consideration from the BOE who should place a higher value on our importance to society rather than devalue teachers by subjugating us to yet another level of economic hardship.

--

Kū i ka pono,
Mrs. Malia Beaver
Secondary Teacher

Don't find fault, find a remedy. ~ Henry Ford

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

please reconsider salary cuts

Alisha La Hogue <aslahogue@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 9:20 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am a teacher from the mainland. I have been teaching special education at Makaha Elementary for the past 3 years. If we have a 20% pay cut, it will be extremely hard for myself as well as many other teachers from the mainland to afford to live out here. This salary cut will inevitably lead to teachers leaving the state and therefore the teacher shortage will only increase. This negatively impacts our keiki, especially special education students, as they will not have enough qualified special education teachers.

Please reject salary cut options in the budget.

-Alisha La Hogue



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

Aloha from a 4th Gd. Teacher

Andrea Nance <andrea.nance@aol.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 9:22 PM

Hi!

My name is Andrea Nance and I'm a 4th grade teacher at Waimanalo Elementary & Intermediate School. I teach because it's what I love to do. I teach in Waimanalo because I want to be a consistent and positive adult role model for my students. I teach in Hawai'i because I am passionate about my career. I picked up a second job a month into the 2019-2020 school year and it's helped me stay afloat. Not helped me thrive. Helped me stay afloat. Me and my fellow educators work endlessly to provide for our keiki. We use our own money to buy necessities, we take time away from our families to worry about theirs, and we get 40 minutes a day to ourselves. I teach in Hawai'i because I want to make a difference in our kids lives. If you cut my salary, I will move back to the mainland where I can afford to live comfortably. I share my home with two others, so technically my rent is only 1/3 of what I would be paying and it is still hard for me to make ends meet with my second job. If you cut my salary at any rate, I will suffer financially and will have to relocate back to the mainland. What does that mean? One less highly qualified and Hawaii certified teacher in our classrooms. We need teachers. If we want Hawaii to stay true to its beautiful culture, we must take care of its young and nurture them the way educators naturally do. You can't keep grabbing from people who are giving their all to every single kid, every single day. People can't keep giving and giving without receiving anything in return.

Humbly, I ask whomever to please reconsider cutting the salary of people who work tirelessly to take care of our children in more ways than academically. Y'all story with some students who are missing school- it's evident that teachers are doing their job- loving and teaching the future of our world.

All the best,
Andrea Nance



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

Public Testimony Hawaii Board of Education General Business Meeting May 7

SH 77 <silverhonu77@hotmail.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 9:30 PM

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

Aloha Esteemed Board Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to share how reducing teacher pay will not only harm myself and my family but the students I serve as well.

Lahaina is beautiful but very expensive. It is hard to find housing. My husband's father qualified for a Hawaiian Homes lease. My husband is the successor of the lease. We are grateful, otherwise, we would not be able to afford to live in the community where I teach. Many teachers at my school commute from other areas of the island. It is even harder for new teachers with no existing base of support to find housing. If we reduce teacher pay, we will all suffer.

I am a graduate of Hawaii public schools. I teach on Maui, at Lahainaluna, at the high school I graduated from. When I started my own career, about one-third of the teaching staff at my school had been at the school for less than 5 years. I was a few years into my own teaching career when "Furlough Fridays" rolled out across the state. Since then, that number fluctuates between 30% and 50%.

I have witnessed students struggle firsthand when there is a revolving door of substitutes. There is a lack of consistency: in academic expectations, in discipline, in care.

Please do not contribute to the neglect of the Hawaii's teachers & students.

Mahalo for your time,

Anjanette Naganuma

Lahainaluna High School, Maui

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

Teacher pay cut testimony

gilliganboy@gmail.com <gilliganboy@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 9:34 PM

My name is Brett Kumabe, 6th grade social studies teacher at Washington Middle School. I oppose the pay cuts proposed. Now is not the time to kick people while they are down. Haven't you figured out we are all essential workers who are all contributing to the well being of our people. Now, more than ever we need to value each person. Cutting pay is demoralizing and is disrespectful to our profession. Thank you for your consideration.

Brett Kumabe

Sent from my iPhone



more hours spending in teaching

Marissa Roxas to: testimony.boe 05/04/2020 09:36 PM

From: "Marissa Roxas" <marissa.roxas@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

As the covid19 era went onwards, I was spending more hours collaborating with students through email, google classroom and doing online assignments for continuous learning.

It was considered the same work as teachers doing in class; additionally more stressful to force students finishing work and coping with their questions even out of school hours.

I would be very thankful if the DOE could figure out how to help students and teachers collaborate into the learning process more effectively during this period of time .

I do believe teachers could still integrate effective learning in accordance with DOE modification of class schedule or meeting with students.

Reducing teacher salary is not the solution ; it may lead the teachers to find other options of having additional income to cope with the monthly bills or eventually leave the teaching profession (if necessary)

Are there other solutions how teachers could help in this US economic crisis instead of cost cutting?

Mahalo for attention on this matter.

Marissa Roxas

Nanakuli High and Intermediate School

Mathematics Teacher

Algebra 2 , Trig/PreCalculus

Grade 10-12

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

Teacher Pay Cut

Jenna Hiramama <jhirayam@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 9:41 PM

I am upset that we are talking about reducing teachers' salaries. As a first year elementary school special education teacher my colleagues and I have been working hard to meet students' needs during the COVID-19 school closures. We have been adding extra hours to change curriculum into our new remote learning environment to give our students a semblance of normalcy. There is no way that we were prepared for something like this.

Personally, if these pay cuts are passed then I will be forced to leave the field of education leaving one less licensed special education teacher. With that said more students will go without licensed teachers as many of us won't be able to afford Hawaii's high cost of living.

Sincerely,
Jenna K. Hiramama



Testimony for BOE meeting 5/7/20

Pamela Walencewicz <pamelawally@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 9:53 PM

Aloha Board of Directors,

My name is Pamela Walencewicz and I am a Special Education Teacher at Waikoloa Elementary & Middle School on Hawai'i Island. I am currently in my second year as a licensed teacher, having decided in 2015 to make a career change to teaching after a long and successful career in healthcare. Teaching is, by far, the pinnacle. This school year, I have been co-teaching 5th grade SPED with two exemplary general educators who make me love my job even more than I thought I could. I am also a Hawai'i homegrown SPED teacher. I completed my training via the University of Hawai'i at Manoa post-baccalaureate distance learning program and just completed my Master's in Special Education, also through UHM, maintaining a 4.0 GPA throughout both programs. I thought long and hard before making the commitment to get a teaching credential and a Master's degree; these were not snap decisions or made because I decided to move here on a whim "to see what Hawai'i was all about." I have roots, ancestry, and family here. I know the history of Hawai'i's education struggle. And, I felt strongly that our keiki in the public school system, especially those with special needs, were the most in need and the most overlooked.

Since my education journey began five years ago, I have seen many educators leave the islands. Each teacher exodus leaves its mark and for students with special needs--who thrive on routine, sameness, and consistency--the loss of even one educator can be the difference between growth and delays, accomplishment and regression. If our state takes measures that impact teacher livelihood, the teacher exodus will be great, it will be lasting, and students will suffer. Teachers in Hawai'i notoriously work more than one job to make ends meet. We regularly use our own money to help students who cannot afford school supplies, snacks, or other basic necessities. We cannot afford to continue to do so if our salaries are impacted. I made a career change during my 40s, my "top earning" years. With a salary decrease, I will not be able to adequately save for retirement and may not be able to afford to purchase even a small, studio-size condominium here. On Hawai'i island where monthly rent for a 1 bedroom apartment hovers near \$2,000 per month, almost my entire salary will go just to paying rent. How will I be able to live if that salary is further decreased? If my salary is reduced, like many other teachers, I will be forced to consider moving away from the islands I call home, and the students who have been my teachers, my purpose, and my salvation.

Board of Directors, please, use your power for good and preserve teacher salaries. In doing so, you will be preserving the public educational system of our great state.

Respectfully,
Pamela Walencewicz

--

Pamela Walencewicz

(808) 927-1511

pamelawally@gmail.com



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

Teacher pay cuts

Brian Murphy <murphy@whea.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 10:04 PM

Dear Hawaii BOE

My name is Brian Murphy and I am a new teacher at West Hawaii Explorations Academy (WHEA) PCS in Kailua Kona on Hawaii Island. I teach high school math and science (this year was Trigonometry/PreCalculus and Physics) and also advise 5+ year-long student STEM projects. I really enjoy teaching at WHEA and living in Hawaii but the cost of living here is very high. I have an advanced degree (PhD) and have gone to great lengths to become certified to teach in Hawaii. My family and I are already struggling to sustain even a very modest life in Hawaii on my current salary. With the proposed pay cuts for next year, I am not sure that we will be able to keep teaching in Hawaii.

I don't know how teachers without certification and an advanced degree can afford to live here. If salaries are cut even lower, I worry that many current teachers, myself included, will either leave the islands or the profession of teaching and the state already has a severe teacher shortage. This will result in students being forced to learn in extremely large classes where they won't get the instruction and attention they need. Hawaii's education system already suffers from the high-turnover of teachers due to low salaries, cutting salaries is a step in the wrong direction.

Thank you for your consideration,
Brian Murphy, PhD



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

Salaries

Jennifer Moyer <jen.c.moyer@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 10:04 PM

Please don't change teacher salaries right now. Living in Hawaii is incredibly expensive and if you lower teaching salaries, you are contributing to the economic crisis during this time. Teachers need every penny of their salaries...not only for bills but also for the classroom supplies they purchase out of their own pockets.

I taught at Kailua Intermediate as a military spouse and currently live in Germany.

Jen Moyer



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

DO NOT CUT TEACHER PAY

Joelle Neuman <joelleneuman@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 10:14 PM

My name is Joelle Neuman. I'm an 8th grade US History teacher at King Intermediate in Kaneohe. I have 4 children of my own and on my teacher salary, qualify for food stamps RIGHT NOW without a cut in pay. Any cut to my pay would not only affect my own children but my students as well. If my pay is cut, I would need to leave my home in Hawaii (where I am born and raised) and go to another affordable state or if family has space in their home for my 4 children and I, I would need to uproot them from their schools and also leave my school of 15 years! Relocation is going to have a detrimental impact on their learning.

My students will also suffer. I am one of few experienced teachers at my school because of high turn over. My school would have to fill my position with another teacher who may be unqualified to teach or with a long term sub. These types of teachers are less effective in the classroom than experienced one and with the COVID 19 school closures this year, we are going to need as many experienced teachers as we can get to catch kids up.

Also, the other senior teachers at my school have vowed to retire if their pay is cut! That will be another huge blow to the quality of teachers and therefore education for the keiki of Hawaii! I understand their feeling though. They have consistently taken blows in their pay over the years and we never catch back up with inflation. What is their incentive to stay????

We are already THE LOWEST PAID TEACHERS in the nation when cost of living is factored in. Any cut in pay (let alone a huge blow like 20%) will directly affect the quality of education in Hawaii and will have long lasting effects for years to come. Teachers are essential to reopening the economy and we should be treated with respect. Not have the budget balanced in our backs yet again! It is time that we have the right priorities for the people of Hawaii instead of only catering to big business and tourism!

Thank you for taking my testimony into consideration and I pray you have the strength to make the RIGHT decision.

Sincerely,
Joelle Neuman

Sent from my iPhone



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

Don't cut teachers...don't harm our students...

The Burtons <kauaiburtons@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 10:20 PM

Aloha dear Board Members,

My name is Laura Burton, and I am a highly effective, successful Kindergarten teacher on Kauai. (Formerly at Hanalei School, now at Kapa'a Elementary).

I have a passion for what I do. Teaching students to read and write is the most amazing accomplishment, and fills my heart with joy. But teachers cannot eat, or live, on passion alone.

I am writing on behalf of all teachers, and our students, to urge you NOT to implement pay-cuts for educators. I have been teaching here for over 10 years, and planned to teach another 12+ years. However, if these cuts are implemented, I will have to reconsider my residency here in Hawaii. I, like most other teachers, are barely making a living on our current salary. While I can comfortably manage now...a pay cut would mean I couldn't feed myself and my two boys, and may have to cancel health insurance. A \$700.00 + per month pay cut for a family is devastating.

Our students deserve teachers who are not distracted by how they will survive, bring food to the table, etc. They deserve teachers who are not distracted or frazzled from their second job (if 2nd jobs will even exist post COVID). Students deserve to keep their licensed, professional teachers, and not be taught by long-term substitutes or emergency hires, especially coming back from such a stressful time of pandemic when we will need to boost skills even more, while attending to the social-emotional fall out.

Please take all options into consideration before considering such a drastic cut to our educators. Our keiki deserve better. Our teachers deserve better.

Mahalo for hearing my voice.

Respectfully,

Laura Burton



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

Teacher Salaries

Heather Aldridge <msheatheraldridge@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 10:22 PM

Aloha!

Legislators,

If you cut teacher's salaries, I will be forced to go back to the mainland. Other teachers will choose early retirement. Please don't make these cuts on the backs of teachers! Hawai'i Schools are already ranked at the bottom of our nations schools. We can get through this financial crisis with reserves and federal loans.

Sincerely,

Heather Aldridge
2nd grade teacher
Waikoloa Elementary & Middle School

Sent from my iPhone



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

Educator testimony

Noelani Spencer <nspencer001@hawaii.rr.com>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 10:26 PM

Reply-To: Noelani Spencer <nspencer001@hawaii.rr.com>

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

Aloha,

My name is Isabella Noelani Spencer. I am a grade 2 teacher at Ka'umana Elementary School on the Big Island. I have been teaching in Hawaii for 35 plus years. I started my teaching career in the state of California and I chose to move back home to Hawaii - I took a pay cut at that time and my salary would be more if I remained in California.

I am looking closely and watching how Governor Ige and the Board of Education proceed with this pandemic and our present salaries. If our salaries are reduced, please anticipate retirement from many of my colleagues and possibly myself. This will leave our educational system with a teacher shortage for sure.

Are you prepared for this? Do you want the DOE to hire unlicensed teachers educating your future leaders. I love and enjoy my job--I feel I have a lot to offer our youth and I would like to continue to teaching but if my salary is decreased-I will probably retire and eventually substitute. Many of the teachers I work with are concerned as I am a mentor teacher and I am on the leadership team at school.

I ask you to please try your best to keep our salary as is or our educational system may face further problems-possible teacher shortages and more. Education is key for our future. I appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Isabella Noelani Spencer



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

Student Cuts

Jason Smith <mrjsmith1283@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 10:42 PM

Dear Board of Education,

My name is Jason Smith and I am a 3rd grade teacher at Nu'uaniu Elementary School. I am writing to you in regards to the proposed budget cuts to teacher's salary. I have been a teacher for 13 years here in Hawai'i. When I saw the proposed cuts for directed leave without pay it reminded me of furlough Friday. Students lost a day of school for several months. It was very difficult to provide the quality of education students deserved in the shortened time frame. A repeat of furloughs after this pandemic would result in students falling farther behind in their academic studies. I am pleading we find other alternatives to avoid cuts that will impact our students. I know with all of us working together we can find a solution to prevent losses that will be detrimental to our students in Hawai'i. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jason Smith
3rd Grade Teacher
Nu'uaniu Elementary School

Sent from my iPhone



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

Please do not approve pay cuts

Malie Koehler <mmalie17@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 10:46 PM

I am a single Mother of a wonderful three year old. Pay cuts would decrease my ability to pay my mortgage and other life necessities. I want to be a teacher and to give back to my community, to be a part if raising our next generation. I can't do that well if at all if my own family's basic needs are not being met. This is not just numbers you're throwing around, it's people's quality of life. My son's life. Not to mention the countless lives I could touch staying in this career.

Jesus loves you & I do too.
- Malie S. Koehler
(808) 313-1923



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3776K



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

Proposed payouts for teachers

Celia Frost <celiafrost@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 10:49 PM

To whom it may concern:

I stuck with teaching throughout the last recession, and the state has just started to catch up for those shameful years without a contract, and those years without acknowledgment of education and experience. Those years where teachers were asked to do more for students, jump through more administrative hoops to prove our teaching was effective, all the while paying to continue our education even though our salaries were shrinking. Now, if this proposed pay cut goes through, how many more years will it take to catch back up? Many of us are at or nearing retirement age, and continue to work out of love; it does not make financial sense for us to keep working if it is going to impact our retirement income! Chasing older teachers out of the system is not going to attract new teachers: who will be able to afford to pay off student loans and live in the islands on such meager pay?

Cutting teacher salaries is going to set us back 10 years - it should be considered as a last resort, not a first course of action that takes advantage of a population who is known for their dedication and willingness to "make do."

Celia Frost
Hawai'i Island
Pa'auilo Elementary and Intermediate School



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

Please Don't Cut State Workers' Pay

Cindy Tamashiro <cctamashiro@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 11:05 PM

I understand that the State budget is experiencing a major shortage due to the impact of COVID-19. This pandemic is affecting every member of our nation. We need to find ways to rebuild our communities so that our lives continue to improve. I would like to urge the Governor and Legislature to please try to find other alternatives to balancing the budget rather than cutting State workers' pay.

I am a teacher at Kapunahala Elementary School. I have taught for 37 years and I love my job! I was planning to work another two or more years. However, I have come to realize that the 20% pay cut would not make sense for me financially. I would make more money if I retired rather than take the 20% pay cut. It saddens me that this unfinished school year could be my last. During this distance learning period, I am really missing working directly with the children and being able to see them in person. I was so looking forward to the day when school could return to normal and I could see my precious children in person again. Lately, I've been feeling sad and depressed thinking that that may never happen again for me.

I believe that public education will suffer if teachers like me who are qualified to retire do so because of a major pay cut. There already is a shortage of teachers and if there is a mass exodus of teachers retiring and teachers leaving the field for better paying jobs, classrooms will be left without qualified teachers teaching our precious children.

Please help public education retain our valuable teachers! Please find alternative ways to balance the State budget!

Mahalo,
Cynthia Tamashiro
Kapunahala Elementary School
EL Coordinator-Teacher/Reading Intervention
(808)542-5511

Sent from my iPad



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

Teacher Salary

Ahlayn Labuanan <ahlaynlabuanan@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 11:13 PM

My name is Ahlayn Labuanan and I teach first grade at Pomaika'i Elementary. I am writing to you to let you know that reducing teachers' salaries will leave students with long term substitutes and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. I am already having to work two other jobs just to make ends meet. I would be one of those veteran teacher's who would start looking elsewhere to live possibly because I will not be able to afford to live in Hawai'i any longer. This is sad because I have lived in Hawai'i all my life and have spent 20 years as an educator. Please consider the hardship this will put on teacher's once again as the weight of the state seems to fall once again on our shoulders and those of our keiki!



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

Please do NOT reduce teacher salaries

Lani Gokan <gokanc001@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 11:52 PM

Aloha!

My name is Lani Gokan. I am a teacher/librarian at Wilcox Elementary School on Kauai. At the end of this school year, I will have taught for 27 years in the DOE in Hawaii.

I truly enjoy working with our elementary school students. However, even after 27 years working in a profession I enjoy, it is hard to make ends meet financially. It is a struggle to to make payments each month and we (my family of 4) live quite simply.

Cutting teachers' salary, even by a smidge would be devastating! We can barely hang on to teachers who recently graduated (when they find out they have to 1 or 2 part time jobs to pay for school loans and make ends meet! Not to mention us "veterans" who are barely hanging in there (while looking for other jobs to supplement pay)!

Believe me when I say, it's a struggle- the struggle is real!!

Please- I humbly ask for your support in NOT cutting teacher salaries anymore.

Warm mahalo!

Lani



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

Jemeil Deliz Alicea Nānākuli High School HI BOE Please Reject Salary Cut option

Jemeil Deliz <masajistaterapeutapr@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 11:16 PM

Aloha Hawaii Board of Education,

I hope you and family doing well during this COVID19 pandemic and start of a decade.
I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself.

First, I am Jemeil David Deliz Alicea. I currently teach Career Technical Education, Health Services Pathways in Nānākuli High and Intermediate School since 2015.

Next, I support HSTA position on urging the Hawaii Board of Education to reject the budget cuts on Teachers salaries. For decades there has been no benefit.

Also, our country, youth needs your support to help Teachers avoid unnecessary financial hardship and to their respected families.

Lastly, I do like to thank you to work hard to make difficult decisions during these shared difficult times.
Mahalo.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

v/r,

Mr. Jemeil Deliz Alicea
CTE Health Services Teacher
[89-980 Nānākuli Avenue](#)
[Waianae HI 96792](#)
jemeil.deliz.alicea@hawks.k12.hi.us

My home address:
[1912 Kalihi Street Apt 207](#)
[Honolulu Hawaii 96819](#)
cel. (787) 365-8177
jemeil_d@yahoo.com

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v/r,

Jemeil D Deliz Alicea

DELIZALICEA, JEMEIL D
SSG, USAR
Human Resources Sergeant
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jemeil.d.delizalicea.mil@mail.mil

My classroom C113 Nānākuli High School:

(808) 305-7655 (820-1450)

My Work email:

jemeil.deliz.alicea@hawks.k12.hi.us



Hawaii State Workers Salaries

Clinton Schultz to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/05/2020 12:51 AM

From: "Clinton Schultz" <clintonschultz@hotmail.com>

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

Aloha Kakou,

Due to the current world status due to this Coronavirus Pandemic, we have all been faced with many extra burdens and obstacles. We all need to continue to do the best we can, but that would be very difficult and nearly impossible with the ~20% salary decreases that Hawaii Teachers and other State Workers are possibly facing.

For the majority, our spouses have been put out entirely of their jobs and we are down to one income. It is truly a blessing to be a teacher and still be working also, but we do not live lavish lifestyles and are simply asking for reconsideration of seeking alternate options to help balance the upcoming State Budgets. These cuts would make life even more difficult as we battle the struggle to remain in Hawaii and support our families.

I humbly urge you to find alternative solutions to the situations that Hawaii Teachers and State Workers are facing. Close to a 20% pay cut for two years hurts tremendously and for some that are making higher salaries, they can still manage accordingly. However, that is not the case for the majority for people like Teachers and other State Workers.

There are other ways to balance the budget without impacting Hawaii State Workers so dramatically!!!

We make an effort to make a life in Hawaii because we know who we are...Please support those that support the future of us all as well!!! Please remember that it was a teacher who helped you to navigate the process of where you are today, whether that teacher was in a formal setting or not.

Mahalo Piha,
Lapule Schultz
HSTA - Teacher (15+ years)



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

Teacher Salary Reduction Testimony

Kelli Kajiwara <kkkajiwa@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:38 AM

Aloha,

My name is Kelli Kajiwara and I am a teacher at Nānākuli High and Intermediate School. I work with 7th, 8th, 11th, and 12th graders in different subjects within the Social Studies department. This is my fifth year of teaching and I plan to continue my career in education until retirement. Being a classroom teacher is difficult and heartbreaking but is also one of the most rewarding experiences of my life, a sentiment most teachers could agree with.

However, my plan to remain in education has been severely shaken by the announcement of potential salary reductions for teachers. My generation has grown up with this understanding that teachers are underpaid and underappreciated for all that they do. Yet, there are still many of us who dive into education to do good for the children of Hawai'i, sacrificing the potential of earning higher wages through more lucrative careers. I was an elementary student during the 2001 teacher strike and in high school for "Furlough Fridays." I observed firsthand how demoralized my teachers were because of the state's unwillingness to provide an appropriate salary and the foolishness in creating an unstable situation for the very adults providing the most support to our young people.

Now, during a global pandemic where I am struggling to provide the best alternative instruction for my students due to school closures, I have to add my pay to my growing list of concerns. Cutting teacher salaries during this sensitive time is such a disrespect to the profession and has made me reconsider my initial plans to remain in education. Any amount of salary reduction will create a financial burden for myself and my colleagues that I speak with regarding this topic. Teachers, and other state workers who may be affected by these salary reductions, are not your pawns to play with when times get rough. There are always alternatives but if those in leadership positions are unwilling to consider these, then perhaps they do not deserve to lead and represent us. Ultimately, if teachers are hit with a salary reduction, no one should be surprised when many of us don't return to the classroom because of our need to support ourselves and our families. I wonder how many substitute teachers there are in the State of Hawai'i and how qualified they are to teach while also considering each child's emotional needs. I teach 4 different age groups in 3 different teaching assignments; there are not many substitute teachers that I know of who would jump for this job.

Please do not go through with these salary reductions, it will only exacerbate or change the problem instead of being a solution. Thank you for your consideration,
Kelli Kajiwara



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

Budget

David Brown <hidbro@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 5:21 AM

My name is David Brown. I teach Special Education at King Kamehameha III Elementary School in Lahaina. I have taught in Hawaii for 5 years after a 30 year career in California.
Don't cut teacher salaries in Hawaii!!!
It's hard enough to get and keep good teachers as it is. Don't drive away even more by cutting their pay.
Thank you

Sent from my iPhone



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

Teacher pay cuts

Jodi Yoshimura <jcy808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 5:35 AM

Dear Board,

During this unprecedented time, we all understand the financial crisis we face. I have been a public school educator for 30 years. I will be eligible to retire in less than a year. I have watched the emphasis on teaching dwindle and I am saddened to see the state and other officials looking to have state employees carry the financial burden of the Covid pandemic. How is that fair? I chose to be an educator and I have willingly made the sacrifices without regret for the past 30 years. I recently purchased my first home after saving my whole career. I weathered 1% pay raises, Furlough Friday's and insurance premium increases. Now, we are being asked to take pay cuts? Surely the future of our keiki should be considered. The quality of education will surely suffer.

I agree the education budget should be cut, all government budget over spends. Resources should be redirected to teachers and classrooms. Teachers outside of the classroom should be minimized. I have experienced first hand, the haste to "use it or lose it". Those are our tax dollars. I ask the board to consider other options. Fill our classrooms with teachers who are outside the classroom. Curriculum coordinators, Curriculum coaches, District and state office resource positions should be minimized. Teacher pay should not be cut. Perhaps we should look at all current state agencies and bare down to only essential services.

Please consider options and take substantial pay cuts off the budget consideration. If education suffers, we all suffer.

Respectfully your,
Jodi Towata
Sent from my iPad



Teacher Pay Cuts

Linda Jones to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 06:14 AM

From: "Linda Jones" <linda.jones@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

I am a homegrown teacher for twenty years. I went to Radford, UH and Chaminade. I am the teacher every one wants to be in the classroom.

The governor even suggesting this is a slap in my face! Why? Because I am still suffering from the last time the economy tanked and teachers took the cut. After TEN YEARS the local government finally started to place teachers where they should be on the pay scale... I was frozen at step 6 for eight years! I should be at 14b. Finally I was to earn what I am worth! And reflective of my many years of service! Then the economy takes another hit... and here We are again,m! Placing the entire state economy on the backs of teachers.

I have not recovered financially from 2008/9...

I know, for me, this will drive me from the classroom and into retirement!! I cannot handle another cut.

It will ruin me.

Linda Jones

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Reducing teacher salaries is a terrible mistake for our children!

Vince Wiernicki <wiernickif@aol.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 6:19 AM

This last quarter our students in Kohala struggled to try and do the packets we were able to send out. Only a quarter of my class was able to get online and do what I assigned. The ones that were able to get online were only able to do review skills. We were not allowed to teach new skills. And because I was doing work at home and trying to keep up with the daily tasks our school has given us to do, my own five year old son sat around not being taught. Not getting the education he needed. My parents and I struggled to teach our own children. The children that are not at the top of their classroom have really suffered from this virus. They have not been learning for a whole quarter now and will not go back to school for months. If we have furlough days again. Teachers will feel that they have to scrunch a weeks worth of learning into less and the children who struggle already will really not be able to keep up the pace because they are now really behind. They did not have access to books to read because library is closed. I have already done the 4 day weeks and seen what that did to my own children and my classroom. I feel like there has got to be some other way to do this than punishing the already struggling students and teachers that are barely getting by with what they make. This is how it feels. It is a punishment. I have a masters in education. I have worked so hard to get to this point. I have one daughter in college. Another one will graduate next year and go to college. And I have a little 5 year old who struggles to learn his phonics. How can we afford gas. Food. Electric water. I have never qualified for free and reduced lunch once I became a teacher. How do we keep my household going. The other day there was 29\$ in the bank. And we had many days until we got paid. Please do not cut teachers pay. Please try to find another way. Or wait until other funds become available. Thank you Vince Wiernicki.
Sent from my iPhone



Do Not Reduce Hawaii Teachers Salaries

Harmon, Valerie <valerie.harmon@kalakauamiddle.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 6:41 AM

Dear Sir/Ms.,

As a middle school teacher at a Title I school, I have seen the problems with our already underpaid profession. We do not have enough teachers as is, since most people cannot afford to work full-time at a lower salary rate than most positions in the private sector. This problem causes our keiki to go without qualified, certified teachers, thus impacting their education.

By reducing our current salaries, we will lose even more of the teacher workforce. If teachers salaries are reduced to help balance the state's budget, many teachers will either choose to retire early or find work elsewhere.

Do Not cut teachers salaries. Balance Hawaii state's budget by using reserved funds, stop wasting money on The Rail, and provide educators, Hawaii's essential, professional educators with adequately salaried positions.

To conclude, a simple summary of the above information is:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Thank you,
Valerie Harmon
Teacher
Kalakaua Middle School

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

No Pay Cuts For Teachers

Dawn Augustin <lahela.augustin@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 6:46 AM

Aloha

I hope this message finds you doing well. Please do not cut my pay. We are barely getting by on our current salary. I work well beyond my contractual obligations as it is. Besides, if you cut our pay you can expect that more students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. Consider the impact that teacher pay cuts will have on our future economy.

--

Dawn Augustin



Proposed Salary Cuts For Teachers

Keola Ka'uhane <keola24@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:26 AM

To The Members Of The Board Of Education,

My name is Keola Ka'uhane and I am a public school teacher at King Intermediate School. This year, 2020, marks an important milestone in my career as an educator as I have reached my 30 years of service in the Department of Education in the State of Hawai'i.

I have held a variety of positions in our public education system at several different schools. I started at Moloka'i High and Intermediate School as a Social Studies teacher. I saw an interesting dynamic of old timers (some Moloka'ians and some transplants), educators with a handful of years under their belt and newbys that were in their first or second year of teaching. Within those groups, some were from Moloka'i, some from Honolulu or an outer island and some from the mainland.

It was a very challenging beginning for me as I was brand new to the profession, on a different island from my family, and not having any friends. To compound the challenges even more I was there the year the plane crashed into the mountains in Halawa Valley killing some of our best student/athletes and staff members. Our island mourned the loss of life for years to come. My immediate supervisor/department head, Lorey Ishihara, mentored and basically saved me. Without her support I am 99% sure I would have left teaching.

I moved back to O'ahu a few years later and taught at King Intermediate School. There, the classroom setting was short-lived because halfway through the year a Counselor abruptly left and the Principal, at that time, and a few veteran teachers thought that I related to the kids well and would be able to cause the least amount of harm to our fragile and diverse student population. My mentor/department head at that time was Noreen Mumaw. I finished that year and went on to be an Outreach Counselor for the next 8 years because I felt my calling to help students in a different capacity.

I went to Moanalua Middle School for a year as a Resiliency Counselor to support the at-risk population there but never felt a true bonding with any of the staff there. A position opened back up at King Intermediate for me as a half-time Student Activities Coordinator and half-time Polynesian Dance Teacher. Student Activities was a whole new world for me but the SAC at Castle, Regina Yoshimori, took me under her wing to guide me through the roles and responsibilities in this coordinator position.

My point is, effective veteran teachers are important in helping newer teachers learn how to deal with all of the things their college teachers did not cover in the classroom. There are many things that you can only learn in a live classroom. Decreasing teachers salary will definitely lead to veteran teachers leaving public education.

On March 1, 2020 I officially reached my 30 years of service. I turned my retirement forms in at the end of December 2019 but decided to stay in teaching a little longer because of the teacher shortage. If there is a cut in teachers pay, I will be re-submitting my retirement papers. Please make every effort to save teachers here in our beautiful state so our students can experience the best possible educational opportunities that may come their way.

Mahalo nui,

Keola Ka'uhane, public school teacher



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

Teacher pay cuts

Tammy Criscuolo Gamble <tammy_gamble@baldwin.k12.hi.us>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:41 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha, I am writing you because I am against pay cuts for teachers in Hawaii. If this occurs more students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Also, students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. I am a special education teacher in co taught classroom, larger classes will only negatively effect students ability to learn.

I like many other teachers can not afford to stay in Hawaii if you cut our pay. Please Hawaii students deserve quality teachers!

Tammy Gamble
Special Education - Co-taught classes
Baldwin High School

--

Tammy Criscuolo Gamble, Ed.S. H.P. Baldwin High School



Do NOT Impose Pay Cuts

Samoana Mcangus to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 07:49 AM

From: "Samoana Mcangus" <samoana.mcangus@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

It is extremely unwise to cut ~20% of teacher pay because more of our Hawaii students would go without licensed and effective educators. It is abhorrent to think that the essential workers who rose to the pandemic situation, learned profusely in the matter of days, and supported families in the most emotional way possible are looked at first for pay cuts.

As a grade 4 elementary teacher at Keoneula Elementary, I, along with my entire school staff, have worked diligently and purposefully to contact each family, continue individualized and differentiated education for each child, all the while handling our own families and well-being. Many essential workers that you depend on have put the children and others first before their own families. It is completely unjust to take away well-deserved pay from us. Teachers have fought long and hard to get the minimal raise contract, all to possibly get it redacted.

In this time, it is teachers and first responders who are taking care of the people of Hawaii. Do not disrespect us by taking away ~10% from State employees, including ~20% from State educators.

Now is not the time to gamble with the future and education of Hawaii's keiki. We need you to protect us--teachers, students, essential State workers. Keep Hawaii, Hawaii, and do not impose pay cuts. Do not scare away our teachers and upcoming student teachers. Do not gamble with my life. Do not gamble with the lives of my students.

We will keep fighting to ensure this irresponsible pay cut does not happen to essential State workers, including firefighters, police officers, and especially, the educators of Hawaii.

Mahalo for your consideration. I urge you to make the pono decision.

--

Samoana McAngus

Keone'ula Elementary, Grade 4 Kumu

"Ua ao Hawai'i" *Hawai'i is enlightened.*

"Hao kila" *Fearless.*

"He keiki aloha nā mea kanu" *Beloved children are the plants.*

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

Please do not reduce teacher pay

Richard Toynton <richardtoynton@hotmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:50 AM

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

Dear Board of Education,

Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my family, but the students I serve as well.

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.
- Friends of mine who teach in Seattle for nearly double my salary are actively recruiting former coworkers and myself to move into big homes in cities/suburbs with more transportation options than Honolulu.
- The notion of teaching in Hawaii beyond my ten years of experience at King David Kalakaua Middle School is becoming more foolish by the day, especially when my salary of \$65,000 before taxes can be nearly doubled by a simple move to Washington. The salaries there are so high one could afford to fly to Hawaii during every break to enjoy the weather and beaches.

Sincerely, Richard Toynton

808-388-9283

[2525 Date St. apt 2403](#)

[Honolulu, Hawaii 96826](#)



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

Teacher Pay Cuts

Reeves, Tatiana <tatiana.reeves@kalakauamiddle.org>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:51 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

My name is Tatiana Reeves, an 8th grade math teacher at Kalakaua Middle School. I am also currently working on my Master's degree at the University of Hawaii Manoa in the Curriculum Studies program. One of the reasons I decided to continue my education was to set myself up for my future financially, because higher education would allow me a step in pay. Like many Hawaii residents my age we struggle with paying our debt from college and are trying to earn a liveable wage to remain in Hawaii. I love Hawaii, my family, my students, and I want to continue to give back to the community that taught me so much; however, there are days I have to seriously consider my future and financial well-being. Discussions of a 20% pay cut for teachers would lead to more vacancies in already hard to fill positions. As a math teacher, I work tirelessly to support my students and to support long term substitutes that fill other positions in my school. This pay cut would make matters worse for teachers which would cause more vacancies and in turn harm our keiki. Please consider balancing the budget without putting our keiki and the future of Hawaii at risk. We need to invest in our KEIKI. They should be our top priority!

Mahalo,
Tatiana Reeves

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

Letter from a teacher

Helen Lau <lauhelen@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:54 AM

Dear Board Members:

As a single-mother and a proud public school teacher, I urge you to not allow the state to balance its budget on the backs of teachers and to help us to hold together the fragile education before our keiki.

Students cannot suffer further.

As a single mother with two children, I am still coping with the consequences of the furlough from the Great Recession. I was beginning to pull out of it through my second job of private-tutoring and translation. But those sources of income - earning me over \$5,000 last year - are out of the question now given the pandemic. As I struggle again to pay bills, I can't imagine being furloughed again. Just rent alone eats up one paycheck and everything else is squeezed out of the other paycheck for the month.

I have about 10 years before retirement. But if I cannot meet my cashflow - by the way I am a renter, not homeowner - I would have to switch my employment. This means going into something lucrative using my bilingual Chinese skills and previous employment experience in the private sector; I love teaching in a public school setting but I cannot sacrifice my well-being because the HDOE is chronically underfunded.

I believe that Moanalua High - my high school - gives a fighting chance to our students, whether they are heading to a top college or to a vocation that they love. In my line of teaching expository writing and American Literature to juniors, I strive to help my students to meet the entry requirements of the University of Hawaii's freshman English, at minimum. I am proud of my record. In my other line of teaching Mandarin of 4 levels, I initiate students to the Chinese language and culture, nurture their mastery of increasing vocabulary and grammar, and facilitate their practice and use of Chinese. I absolutely want to continue doing this job. But not at the price of not making ends meet for myself and my two children.

So I ask you to help me to help the young people in our state.

Sincerely,

Helen W. Lau
Teacher
Moanalua High School



Budget Cuts for Hawaii's Teachers

Chloe Murphy to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 07:56 AM

From: "Chloe Murphy" <chloesm@hawaii.edu>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

My name is Chloe, I am going to be graduating University of Hawaii at Manoa's Elementary Education program this spring. I am looking forward to teaching the keiki of Hawaii this coming fall. I believe every child of Hawaii deserves a great education with caring and qualified teachers. However, due to the recent proposal for cuts to educators finding across the islands, I feel this dream will be very challenging to maintain. *Teachers in Hawaii deserve a living wage in order to properly support their students.* These budget cuts will not only severely affect the lives of these teachers, but the lives of all the students, and here's why.

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.
- Teachers who do stay in the profession will not be supported enough to deliver a quality education to their students.

I ask that you consider other options before cutting the funds for education. We are seeing now more than ever that teachers are essential workers. Our kids deserve to come back to school with well qualified teachers at the front doors to greet them.

Thank you for your time, and I hope you strongly consider this proposal.

Sincerely

Chloe Murphy



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

Salary cuts

Keith Shiota <keithshiota84@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:57 AM

Dear Board Members,

My name is Keith Shiota and I will be starting my 30th year of teaching at Maui High School. It disturbs me that my salary, which took my a long time to earn is being considered to be lowered to help balance the state economic short fall. My plan is to teach 10 more years but if my salary will be lowered by 20%, I am considering retiring and finding another job. For 25 years of my teaching career, I worked a 2nd job and really don't want to do that at my age again.

I Presently have 1 child in college, and another child going to college in 2021. Money is tight for us right now and will be much tougher in the future with 2 children in college. Financial aid doesn't help much and taking out large loans to pay for college will be necessary. Working, middle class families get very little with financial aid.

My wife has been out of work for 6 weeks now and we have relied on my income. Times are tough for many teachers and their families so please don't make it harder on us to remain in the profession.

Aloha,

Keith Shiota
Maui High School



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

Do not Reduce Teachers' Salaries

Ira <iyamagata@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:57 AM

This is not a solution to any problem and definitely not the solution for education. Think, be resourceful, problem solve a solution that is worthy of the positions you hold right now. Thank you for saving what we have already earned.

Ira Yamagata Special Education teacher Innovations Public Charter School Over 35 years of teaching with the DOE .

Sent from my iPhone



Cuts to education

Nick Wainwright to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 08:02 AM

From: "Nick Wainwright" <alohalaaa@gmail.com>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

History will not look kindly on the proposed cuts to education. On a good year, our schools are woefully understaffed and underfunded. Not only will these cuts devalue learning, but our students would have less class- time which our communities cannot sustain. Parents need to work. Students need to be in school, and not just being babysat. The mismanagement of OUR resources and the siphoning of public funds into private hands has created a climate where these cuts are even on the table. Do not make a bad situation worse by cutting teacher pay. Don't be on the wrong side of this historical event by denigrating our community's lifeblood and our futures. My wife and I are teachers, but first and foremost, we are parents and our kids deserve better.

Nick Wainwright



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

Do not cut teacher salaries!

Donna Yamamoto <donnayamamoto17@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:05 AM

Cutting teacher salaries will result in more educators leaving her profession, less qualified educators in our schools and the children of Hawaii being the ones who suffer in the end.

I have been in the DOE for over 25 years as a math teacher and counselor at Moanalua High school. During this COVID-19 school closure period, my colleagues and I are working even more hours to keep our students actively engaged and informed. We all are working 7 days a week and I to the evenings.

A pay cut will hurt the children and future of Hawaii.

Donna Yamamoto
donnayamamoto17@gmail.com

Sent from my iPhone



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

Please, do not reduce teachers' salaries.

Eliana R. Sattler <camalote47@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:20 AM

To the Board of Education,

The idea of pay cuts for teachers is not a sustainable one from the point of view of best education for our keikis. More of our students would receive instruction from non licensed teachers because reduction of salaries would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Please, put the future of our keikis first in your priority list.

Sincerely,

Eliana Sattler MEd
Special Education Teacher
Kahakai Elementary School
Kailua-Kona, Hawaii



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

COVID Re-Balancing Framework Testimony

Paul De Lauretis <paul_de_lauretis@baldwin.k12.hi.us>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:33 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha People,

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! I'm a licensed mathematics and computer science teacher at H. P. Baldwin HS. I have a BS in Computer Science (CS) from UH Hilo and am currently focused on providing students with the skills they will need to join the effort to make Hawaii energy independent. If you begin to cut teacher pay, you will lose many of the highly qualified instructors that you have worked so hard to recruit. And what will be the quality of the educator that you replace them with?

I've seen the effect that employing unlicensed teachers has on our community. This year I had a freshman in one of my Geometry classes that told me that I was the first math teacher she had ever had! This was due to all the long-term substitutes and unqualified instructors that were assigned to teach her math in middle school. I was astounded! To make it all the way to 9th grade without ever receiving instruction from a teacher licensed in math is a travesty. After hearing that I realized that the main reason why our high school students are so far behind in mathematics is the lack of consistent access to qualified instruction. I'm certain that this dearth of qualified instructors also exists in the state's efforts to implement CS instruction as well.

If you cut teachers' salaries you will begin to lose all the recent gains you've made. You'll show that the profession of teaching in the state of Hawaii has a high degree of economic risk, that it's unstable and can't be depended on to provide a living. And this fact will only be exacerbated by Hawaii's inherently high cost of living.

I don't see how this state can spend billions on a high speed rail system that will most likely be obsolete by the time it is completed, yet fails to fund its teachers and in so doing fails its students.

Aloha,
Paul De Lauretis
Mathematics and Computer Science Teacher
Grades 9 - 12
H. P. Baldwin High School
Wailuku, HI



20% Salary Cuts For State Employees

Ryan Yoshizawa to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 08:34 AM

From: "Ryan Yoshizawa" <ryan.yoshizawa@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Hawaii Board of Education Members,

I have been a teacher-librarian for close to seventeen years. And over the years, I have done all I can to increase my salary because I did not want to rely on the State of Hawaii to give it to me through salary negotiations. Consequently, I've received two graduate degrees and completed several professional development classes to reach the highest class on the teacher pay scale. Yet, despite my efforts, I am still living paycheck to paycheck. Still, I was grateful that my salary allowed me to cover my bills and living expenses. I work close to 50 hours per week and only get paid for thirty. And a percentage of my total salary is already being deducted to cover the summer months.

I've been forced to endure furloughs, teacher salary compression, and budget cuts to my library budget over the years. But, I endured because I knew that teachers and students depended on me to be there for them. My library is supposed to be staffed by at least two librarians due to the size of my school, but I am the only one there, doing the work of two. I care for an elderly mother and still manage to advise the school's National Honor Society. I do this willingly to help students become active leaders and because I want to contribute positively to my community. But, a 20% pay cut will force me to consider looking for a secondary source of income to replace my lost wages.

As a result, I may no longer be able to support the National Honor Society's community service and leadership activities if I have to work a second job. I may not be able to open the library early and close late anymore. The loss of income will also affect my ability to support library activities like our annual Turkey Toss event, where teachers donate money to help me purchase turkey dinners to give out as prizes to students at this appreciation activity. I probably won't be able to purchase out-of-pocket items anymore to compensate for my department budget cuts as well (e.g., fiction books requested by students, small office items, snacks for students, cleaning supplies, etc.).

I love the students I work with and have developed close friendships with many of the school staff. I realize that the State has to balance its budget, but to do so on the backs of government employees would negatively affect students in the classroom and outside of it. Many schools are already short staffed because of the statewide teacher shortage, but a 20% pay cut could devastate the profession that is already the lowest paid in the nation, when adjusted for cost of living.

I urge you to give our children the education they deserve by maintaining teacher salaries and to consider creative alternatives instead. Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Ryan Yoshizawa

Waipahu High School Librarian

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

Teacher Salaries

Robyn Trivette <rtrivette@waiakeahs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:35 AM

Aloha

My name is Robyn Trivette. I am a brand new teacher at Waiākea High School in Hilo on the Big Island. I teach 9th grade ELA and Debate. I have no idea why the proposal for a salary reduction for teachers would arise at this time of chaos, unpredictability, and the unknown. This sends a message to island communities, the state, and the nation at large that Hawai'i does not value education. This also sends a similar message to our *haumana* (students) in a time of longing and sore missing for school.

As a new teacher, it is important for me to feel respected, honored, and appreciated in order to sustain the desire to contribute to the betterment of our society. This proposal feels like a slap in the face in a desperate time of loss. Loss of community, loss of classroom, loss of certainty.

It is expected that the BOE will continue to have unlimited support for educators rather than the threat of disregard. I implore you to redeem this reputation of holding teachers to the highest respect.

Mahalo

Robyn Trivette
ELA Teacher
Waiākea High



Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Malia P <maliavp@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:37 AM

To whom this may concern,

My name is Malia Pimentel. I am Hawaiian and I was born and raised on the Windward side. I will be graduating from UH Mānoa's College of Education in just one week. I will become a PreK EOEL teacher at Waiahole Elementary School. I wanted to clearly say, please do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my family but the students we serve as well. Specific ways this would effect me as well as others...

- A low chance of me being able to support myself on my own and an even lower chance of being able to support my family and continue to live in Hawai'i, my home.
- With the worry of how I'll support myself with a pay cut, it will bring on many anxieties. I do now want to have to worry about those anxieties while I teach. I want to be the best teacher that I can be for my students and a pay cut WILL NOT help that.
- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

I highly urge you to think of other places to pull the money from but I am NOT at all in support of reducing teacher salaries, that are already at a minimum for what we do. If you are having a hard time seeing teacher perspectives then I urge you to think hard about our Keiki of Hawai'i. They deserve to have the best teachers that are highly educated and there for them throughout the year and not just a constant stream of long term subs. Many of our Keiki struggle way more then they need to on a daily basis and to many, school is their safe place. Don't turn that one safe place into another place students need to worry about. Please think of other ways to get the money needed.

Mahalo,
Malia Pimentel



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

Teachers of Hawaii

Diane Nakoa <diane_nakoa@baldwin.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:38 AM

Aloha,

My name is Diane Nakoa, an English Teacher at H.P. Baldwin High School for thirty years. I am writing to express my concern regarding possible pay cuts for Hawaii's teachers. The recent state of our world is affecting all of its people regardless of occupation. For thirty years as an educator, I have worked beyond my capacity to pursue further education at my own expense as well as dedicated my life to the future of our students. I have endured the brunt of the state's shortfalls by way of strikes, furloughs, pay cuts, and no contracts to say the least.

The shortage of Hawaii's teachers is a direct result of the way we are treated resulting in long term substitutes, new teachers leaving the profession, and seasoned teachers seeking early retirement. Therefore, I implore you to reconsider your decision to cut teachers' pay. The damage of the coronavirus pandemic will have a stronger impact on all if you do so. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns at 808 357-5751.

Respectfully,
Diane Nakoa
English Honors, EL Coordinator, EL Teacher



Teacher Pay Reduction Inquiry

Martinez, Arnold <arnold.martinez@kalakauamiddle.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:43 AM

My name is Arnold Martinez. I am a National Board Certified teacher at Kalakaua Middle School in the Central District of Hawaii, submitting testimony regarding the possible teacher pay reduction.

In 2003 I moved here from the state of California. I had served as a licensed teacher in CA for seven years prior to that time I took a significant pay reduction as a teacher to come to this great state and help impact the lives of our children, like many other teachers (from here or transplanted here) have struggled financially for many years. I now have three children in the DOE. I have not recovered from the pay reductions during the state's economic downturn. I have student loans. My wife and I have two children, one a freshman in high school and the other freshmen in College of the University of Washington. I currently work two additional part time jobs and live paycheck to paycheck. I work all hours to prepare lessons and grade assessments. My wife also has a full time career and two additional part time jobs just to meet.

As a teacher who encourages secondary education to my students as the means towards a financially stable life, I am well aware that this is not always the case. I earned my Bachelor's degree from the University of California at Berkeley, then went to graduate school earning my Masters degree and a teaching license in secondary education. I also continued to seek out training earning my National Board Certification. I believe in education and have worked at my own training in order to be able to provide my students with the best I can give. That said, my training was very costly and working here in Hawaii as a teacher is a financial disadvantage. The teacher pay scale here is not sufficient, I am still paying my own student loans that I incurred during my teacher training. At the same time I am now paying for out of state tuition and student loans for my own child in California. Because of this, my wife and I are now exploring relocation to the mainland for improved employment opportunities. If there is a pay reduction, it would force myself and many other teachers to move away from Hawaii and seek employment elsewhere. Balancing the budget back of our teachers is the wrong approach. This would cause more students to go without licensed teachers because senior teachers into early retirement. And students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new teachers leave the profession, teachers who are unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

The Governor has stated he is researching alternate means to stabilize the state budget without teacher pay reductions. Please help us and help the students of Hawaii public schools by not considering teacher pay reductions.

Mahalo

Arnold Martinez

We need your help. Mahalo.

Arnold Martinez, Central District, Oahu

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

Reducing teacher salaries

RoadRunner <brucec002@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:47 AM

Dear Board of Education members,

Plz do NOT reduce teacher salaries as it would have a devastating effect on Hawaii's economy. Teachers are professionals and should be paid fairly. A pay reduction would mean LESS qualified teachers in Hawaii.

Also Hawaii is the only state to reduce teachers salaries! During this Covid 19 time teachers have stepped up to the plate to continue our children's education and now is not the time to reduce our pay. Hawaii has approximately a billion dollars in our rainy day fund. This is the time to use that money!!!!!! Also the next stimulus money can be used to help. DO NOT take our money! We need it desperately now! Thank you, Carmen. Bruce. Gr 4. Honowai Elementary Waipahu. Classroom teacher

Sent from my iPhone



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

Education budget cuts

Irene Kendig <ikendig4@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:49 AM

Hello,

My name is Iren Kendig-Sullivan, I am a science teacher at Roosevelt HS and I implore you to consider other avenues of balancing the state budget rather than allowing the lowest paid teachers in the country take another financial blow. How can we rationalize not educating our keiki with professionals? The budget cut will deepen the wound that Hawaii school system already has... more teachers leaving and less coming in.

Hawaii has been a state and a kingdom that has prided itself in being educated, let's not lose sight of that. Our community deserves to be educated and our teachers deserve livable salaries. Free and appropriate education comes from licensed teachers, not subs...

You all have a choice to make to show how you value education. Please show that education is a priority for this state and that we will fight to ensure the children of our state and their educators are taken care of.

Aloha,

Irene Kendig-Sullivan



Pay Cut Testimony

Laurel Galway to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 08:50 AM

From: "Laurel Galway" <laurel.galway@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

I am the Special Education Department Head at a very hard-to-staff school. We have been plagued with high staff turnover, long-term subs (who usually do not have a college education) teaching our most fragile children, and students moving from one grade to the next without the necessary skills. Earlier this year, with the advent of the special education and hard-to-staff differentials, it looked like all that was going to change. Suddenly, we had more qualified applicants than positions for our special ed department. I was planning for a new day.

Then COVID-19 hit.

Now, we are looking at reversing all that progress and going two steps back. Back to unqualified teachers in the classroom. Back to students without the skills to move up. Back to a community that lives in poverty without a chance for a real education.

Please consider all the alternatives before taking the drastic step of cutting salaries. The nurses, firefighters, and teachers who have worked tirelessly throughout this crisis should not be financially penalized. I understand the financial world is going to be forever changed by this event, but if we are going to recover, we must provide a living wage to our government employees.

In my case, if the differentials are no longer on the table and if I am forced to take a 20% cut as well, I could lose my home. I'm a single parent and my income is the only financial support in our household. Hawaii is my home and I hope to never leave, but if I have to move to the mainland to feed my family, I will do that.

Thank you for your consideration.

logo

Laurel Galway |

BFA UH Manoa, MS Ed Johns Hopkins University

Exceptional Learners' Department Chair

Nanakuli High & Intermediate School

phone: (808) 305-7662

email: laurel.galway@k12.hi.us

89-980 Nanakuli Ave

Waianae HI 96792

nhis.nwcomplex.org/

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

Support teachers and our keiki...do not reduce teachers' salaries!

(Kalelani Ogata) <kaleko76@aol.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:51 AM

Reply-To: "(Kalelani Ogata)" <kaleko76@aol.com>

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

Aloha! I hope this message finds you well and helps you to make the right decision for teachers and students. Protect and build our education system - support teachers. Through these times teachers have been relied upon so much to guide our keiki and bring a sense of normalcy to life. It is also through these times that everyone - parents, families, etc - have realized how important teachers and schools are for our children their families lively-hood and wellbeing. Education is so important - I know you know that. To strengthen education you need to support your teachers. Support us by not allowing any pay cuts. Pay cuts would drive senior/veteran teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with unqualified teachers or long-term subs to run their classrooms. This has been happening even prior to COVID-19 and I have seen the first hand effects at my school on the students who did not have a qualified teacher. Prior to COVID-19 I believe the state, legislature, DOE, and BOE worked very hard at providing for the teachers what they deserve to keep our veteran teachers and fill the hard-to-staff positions in SPED, Hawaiian Immersion, and certain hard-to-staff schools by getting them differential pay. Do not let all that you worked so hard for die. I was really thankful for what you did and the support that you showed to my profession by those acts. I am one of those text book teachers you were fighting to keep and support...I am a veteran teacher (over 20 years teaching experience); I am in the compression step bracket; and I am in a special education teaching position...and before all your bold moves to try and keep me I was honestly looking at leaving teaching. I love teaching but can't afford it. Now that you have to look at the budget through new lenses please continue to fight and keep our salaries and compensations that were already so hard won and put in place. I can't afford to lose...I can't afford a pay cut nor can I afford the differential to be taken away. I want to still teach but I need the money to support my family. If I don't have the money I will have to rethink my future. Please help to secure our future...for teachers and for the keiki/families we all serve.

Thank you for taking the time to listen and for making the right decision.

Kalelani Ogata

Lincoln Elementary

Preschool Special Education



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

Salaries

Christine McAngus <bluecolordiamond@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:57 AM

Voting for these very same politicians with trust like I did, and now with this type of bargaining on our Hawaii Keiki and teachers who were also former Hawaii Keiki to grow here and earn degrees to teach their very own, to maybe having to decide to move on to other states or worse changing their skills, this type of thinking in those same politicians I helped get their now positions? Wow! Not again will I not seek to reelect any of you. How is this table justified? The higher politicians even say "we taking cuts too" how dare they say that when their salaries is triple and way more than a teachers salary or any state employee salary. Please BOE, really take a good look in every detail on how you vote.
Concerned parent of a teacher.



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

Budget proposal paycuts

Karol Wack <alohilani39@aol.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:11 AM

Dear Distinguished Members of the BOE,

It is Teacher Appreciation Week and I was feeling excited to receive my effective rating for EES. Then I heard that once again, teachers may be hit with this drastic pay cut. I felt the opposite of appreciated, my rating was meaningless and a pit of anxiety formed in my stomach at the thought of how this cut will devastate so many, myself included.

We already have 1,000 vacant positions. Do the powers that be know the damage this cut will cause?! Teachers anywhere near retirement will leave, mainland teachers that came here to teach will leave because they will no longer be able to afford to stay and many others will leave as well to seek employment that will put food on their table and keep a roof over their head.

With this cut, I would make less than I was substitute teaching. I couldn't afford to support myself substituting, so I took a full time position this past year. Don't get me wrong, I don't do it for the pay, none of us do. The long hours, the weekends. I love my students, I love my school. Everything I do, I do for my students. I willingly give so much for them because that is what teachers do. But if you take 20% of my pay, I will have to leave the profession. I am single and support myself on a beginning teaching salary. The differentials that we began receiving in January made a huge positive difference in my life. I understand those will have to be taken away, but to cut a \$49k a year salary (before taxes) by almost 20% is saying that I mean nothing and that my students mean nothing.

Please stand with teachers, our keiki deserve better. There must be another solution. I don't want to leave my students and see our education system devastated by a mass exodus of teachers. It will harm our students and further cripple the economy. Mahalo for the opportunity to share my thoughts and feelings.

Sincerely,

Karol Wack
Special Education Teacher
FSC/Resource K-2
Honoka'a Elementary School
Hawaii Island

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony for the BOE meeting - May 7, 2020

Donna Kam <kamd@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:08 AM

Aloha,

In this time of uncertainty, proposing a severe cut to the salaries of essential workers when they are already "the lowest paid in the country" would be devastating to the welfare, morale, and livelihood of teachers. If this pandemic has taught us anything, it is that teachers are not only essential but lifesavers. Parents have had firsthand knowledge of a little bit of what we do for their children. For many kids, we are the only positive adult connection during their day. Along with educating children, we are developing the next generation of leaders.

Retention is a problem, we are losing highly qualified people as it is, this proposal will exacerbate the problem and leave Hawaii's children with an education that is understaffed and underpaid. What message does this send to our community? Teaching is a profession that should be revered not used as a dumping ground for the troubles of our poorly managed economic downfall.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna M Kam
Castle High School
SPED ELA - 10th, 11th, and 12th-grade Teacher

--

Mahalo,
Donna Kam
Castle High School
(808) 305-0818



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

Do not reduce teachers salaries!

Justin Yamagata <yamagata25@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:24 AM

My name is Justin Yamagata 8th grade science teacher at Waimea Canyon Middle School. I just want to write in to voice my disapproval of cutting teachers' salaries. I started teaching in 2005 and have been through furloughs which hit us doubly hard since my wife is also a teacher. That was a tough time being young, having a mortgage, and having to cut costs at every corner we could to stay afloat. Forward to now and we have a young daughter in tow, we have worked hard to move up in classes, and face the possibility of having to shoulder pay cuts for the second time in our careers.

Teachers and education in general are easy targets since we do take a large percentage of the state budget. We already are experiencing a teacher recruitment problem in Hawaii and lowered salaries only exacerbate that point. Each year at our school we are having ever increasing turnover and it is not an isolated case. Then when pay cuts are considered, not only are starting teachers salaries diminished, but those of us who have deep roots and are pillars at our schools and our profession are called upon to sacrifice yet again. We all understand the need for balancing budgets, but this, along with the after effects of the pandemic, will likely prolong the road to recovery both fiscally and as a society as a whole.



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

May 7, 2020 Testimony against DOE Budget Rebalance Framework

Laura Buller <buller.laura@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:27 AM

Aloha BOE Members,

It is with great concern that I am writing regarding the efforts to cut teacher salaries in order to reduce spending while the state economy recovers from the Covid19 pandemic.

The teachers of Hawaii already are facing higher costs of living and lower pay. We know that we lose teachers annually to this very problem. Reducing pay would only exacerbate the teacher shortage problem. Senior teachers would retire early, other teachers would continue to struggle financially.

The impact on the students of Hawaii and the state's future income potential will be greatly reduced if we can not put certified and licensed teachers in every classroom. Reducing pay for teachers is not the best solution for rebalancing the state's budget.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Laura Buller

Social Studies Teacher

Secondary Certified

Molokai High School

Sent from my iPad



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

Teacher budget cut

Irene Kendig <ikendig4@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:27 AM

Hello,

I am writing to give a testimony as to how a 20% salary cut would affect me as a teacher. I teach biology at Roosevelt HS. I graduated from UH in 2017 with a MEdT. I have been teaching at RHS my entire teaching career, and feel like a part of the family. In my personal life, my wife and I recently bought a home and are expecting a child. The idea of not having paid leave so that I can spend time with my family during the days when they will need me most makes me question if I can afford to continue teaching. Why am I being asked as a teacher, a profession that supports the families of the community, to choose between my work and my family. This is the hardship that young teachers will face. Highly educated and licensed teachers, like myself, will have to make that decision, and I believe that many will choose their family over their profession. If you take away our ability to take care of ourselves and our families, we will find an organization or another state that is willing to take care of their teachers. And where does that leave the keiki of Hawaii? Without professional educators that care about them, how can the future generation be ready for the world? You will be handicapping the entire state from adults to children, not just now, but in the future as well. Please think about the consequences of cutting the salaries of an already underpaid profession. The state will lose teachers and students will suffer.

Irene Kendig-Sullivan



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

Teacher Pay Cutbacks

slindberg@hawaii.rr.com <slindberg@hawaii.rr.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:34 AM

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

I am a 3rd grade teacher at Solomon Elementary school, teaching in a Title I (low-income) school with high instances of exceptional family members and english learners. This is my seventh year teaching 3rd grade at Solomon, I also taught Art for six years at Mililani Mauka Elementary school. I worked hard as a single mom to get my masters degree in education so I could provide for my family. I am dedicated to my profession and love every student I have ever taught. My concern is that if funding gets cut to teachers then I will no longer be able to continue in the profession I love. I will not make enough money to continue to live in Hawaii. It is hard enough to not be appreciated even though we do everything we can for the success of our children. I hope that pay cuts will not be necessary, not for my benefit, but for the benefit of the students. It will be hard enough for them to overcome this time of distance learning without having to deal with less funding and less qualified teachers.

Thank you,
Shelleen Sodersten



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

salary cuts

Judi Munekata <munekatajud@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:40 AM

I am a single mom and grandmother and a special education certified teacher. Cutting my salary will force me to retire and move to the mainland. I simply can not make it with a cut in my salary. I love my job and miss my students so much! It will break my heart to have put an end to my teaching here in Hawaii and leave the place I have called home for most of my life.



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

Testimony for Meeting, Thursday, May 7th

Karen Meyer <msmeyer25@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:51 AM

Testimony against teacher salary cuts

I love my job. Yes, I have a job, and as a veteran teacher, I have been considerably successful at it, but I not been immune to financial affects of this virus. Like many of my fellow teachers I have had to take on other jobs to make ends meet, to make my mortgage, and that income is now gone. This pandemic has already taken my 20% pay cut

Many of us have yet to recover from Furlough Fridays, the last time our State was in need. And our school system's has yet to recover from that cut as well. On my campus alone, there are so many long term subs, that some long term subs have subs! Children are already caught in a game of musical teachers because few can afford to stay!

And the children. Every day I look into my computer screen, into my students' faces, into their homes, and see anxiety. I see fear, and I spend time trying to give them comfort and some sense of normalcy. Our kids are looking for familiarity and consistency amidst this chaos.

Further pay cuts mean their teachers will leave. Please don't make me choose between my love for my students and keeping my house. I won't have a choice.

Respectfully,
Karen Meyer
Castle Performing Arts Learning Center
James B. Castle High School

Sent from my iPhone



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

Against the Reduction of Teacher Salaries

Stephen Smith <stephen_smith@baldwin.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:56 AM

Hello,

My name is Stephen Smith. I am a Spanish teacher at Baldwin High School. I am writing this message to share that I am against cutting teachers' salaries as part of the Covid19 Rebalancing Framework. We have already been suffering from a shortage of teachers in Hawaii and I have seen first hand the negative consequences of students being taught by unqualified and unlicensed long term subs. If Hawaii teachers are forced to suffer reduced salaries how can they afford the high cost of living in our state. More teachers will leave the profession and Hawaii students will suffer. We need to prioritize education, and the future of our children by finding other ways to balance the budget.

Thank you,
Stephen Smith



Do NOT Impose Pay Cuts

Samoana M. <samoana83@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:57 AM

To whom it may concern:

As a grade 4 teacher, I'm submitting my testimony against any and all pay reductions for educators. *Hawaii is ranked dead last in the nation--50th--when it comes to teacher pay.* Too many educators work two or even three side jobs to make ends meet. That was *before* Covid. **We need to pay our teachers a livable wage if we want our keiki across the state to thrive.** By threatening another pay decrease, the message that is conveyed to the state and overall public is that the governor and State of Hawai'i don't care about education--about educators or their students--even though education is proven to improve students' quality of life, efficacy, and overall well being, in addition to helping them overcome socioeconomic barriers like poverty. Why is it that whenever Hawaii faces an economic crisis, the State turns on the HSTA for cuts?

As a teacher for nearly eight years in Hawai'i, I regularly put in 50-60 hour work weeks without any overtime pay. I work nights, weekends, summers, and holidays. I do this gladly because I can see the direct benefit to students. It's frustrating that state continually looks to HSTA for cuts when **we are already the lowest paid teachers in the nation.** When will the state government begin respecting Hawai'i's teachers and their students? When will we put our foot down and provide our educators and students with what they need?

It starts with the State government and the governor. We can no longer afford the mindset that our teachers, school staff, and students are "expendable." Just ask all the parents working to home school their children now. If anything, parents and guardians are realizing just how difficult it is to teach.

Additionally, students stand to lose the most if cuts are made. Cuts will directly affect their education and their well being. We also stand to lose the truly exceptional educators who make students excited to learn and to go to school.

We need to treat HSTA like we do every other union in Hawai'i. With aloha, with respect, and with our support. If you can read this message, go thank your teachers.

--

Samoana McAngus
Grade 4 Elementary Teacher
Keoneula Elementary



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Hillery Taylor-Young <hillery_taylor-young@baldwin.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:57 AM

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage.

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Hillery Taylor-Young
Baldwin High School
Special Ed 9-12



Testimony from Cynthia Broc- Teacher at Laie Elementary School

Cynthia Broc to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/05/2020 10:02 AM

From: "Cynthia Broc" <cindyb108@msn.com>

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

To the Board of Education Members,

My name is Cynthia Broc and I am the Student Services Coordinator at Laie Elementary School. I am writing to you due to the possibility of another teacher pay cut. I am a veteran teacher who has been at Laie Elementary School for the past 28 years. I started out as a parent volunteer. Due to the shortage of special education teachers, even back then, I was asked to assist in the preschool special education classroom in 1998 as a long term substitute teacher. I loved it so much I went back to school to get my teaching license. I taught for 12 years as a special education preschool teacher and then moved into the Student Services Coordinator position where I have been for the past 8 years. I have experienced the Cayetano teacher strike, the Linda Lingle furlough Fridays. I have gone year after year with no pay raise or an increase in my pay accompanied by an increase in my insurance premiums. I have had to get a second job, sell my jewelry, and borrow money from my parents so my family has food on the table and a roof over our heads. My husband and I have lived pay check to pay check so our children could afford college and we could afford to care for my husband's 96 year old mother in our home.

I know what it's like to be at a school with inexperienced special education teachers. But my school has created our own home grown program where we have nurtured, supported, and trained current employees so they can be successful special education teachers who will stay at our school. I have spent numerous hours assisting these teachers- going in their classrooms, helping them with their paper work, and guiding them through their special education meetings with parents.

If the Board chooses to reduce teacher's salaries to balance our state budget many of these successful teachers will leave the profession which will do untold harm to our students. How will our students fare with the possibility of unlicensed and inexperienced teachers continuing to be the status quo in their classrooms. If my salary is reduced I will also be forced to retire early and leave the island as my family will no longer be able to afford to stay here on Oahu. My plan has been to continue to work and support my school for the next 5 years and volunteer there after my retirement but I will not be able to do this if my pay is reduced by 20%. I urge you to please come up with another solution to balance the state budget without affecting teachers and our first responders who are risking their lives so we can be safe.

Thank you for your time and consideration- Cynthia Broc



Cutting teacher salaries again?!?!

MATTHEW MASUYAMA <matthewmasuyama@gmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:05
AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Born and raised in Hawaii and being a teacher for over 20 years it's just... I don't even know what the words are. Really?!?! You would think one would RECOGNIZE and VALUE what people are doing during this time and for what they do on a daily basis. Police officers, Firemen and women, EMTs, nurses, Air Nation Guard women and men, and TEACHERS!!! The list goes on and on of these TRUE HEROS. The people that care for, keep safe, and EDUCATE people... I have NEVER emailed anyone to lobby for my own professional gain BECAUSE THAT'S EXACTLY WHY I CHOSE THIS PROFESSION! I do my job at a high level for kids! I do it because GOD HAS CALLED ME IN THIS LIFE TO SERVE AND TO GIVE MY LIFE TO MENTOR, LOVE ON, LISTEN TO, LAUGH WITH, MOVE WITH, ENJOY LIFE, AND TEACH kids! I apologize for my PASSION but I guess I don't apologize for this email or these words... because it is with this same passion that I do what I do.

We have scraped, fought, stood by, and endured so many struggles with pay, respect, appreciation, worth.... again I can go on and on. But why do I have to do that? Why do I have to take precious time away from distance learning (which is a beast) to write this email? Because it's absurd, it's terrible, it's actually shocking that we teachers need to go through this my entire lifetime. Or maybe it's not. And we wonder why there is a teacher shortage? Wonder why we can't keep great teachers in the classroom? Why our kids our not prepared to enter into the "real world"? Why we are not given a RAISE during this time?!? CRAZY.

DO THE RIGHT THING AND PROTECT THOSE WHO PROTECT YOU! PAY PEOPLE WHO DO THE WORK THAT MOST WOULD NOT CHOOSE TO DO! REWARD AND PROVIDE FOR THE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE VALUE FOR THIS SOCIETY! TEACHERS HELP SHAPE SOCIETY FOR GOOD!

I could write more but I have to get back to doing the real work that I do. Reaching and teaching the youth of our society. May God bless you and help guide you all to doing the right thing and making the tough decisions. That's what GREAT LEADERS DO! You have been put in this position to SERVE OTHERS. There is still HONOR, INTEGRITY, HOPE, AND LEADERSHIP OUT THERE IN PEOPLE LIKE YOU. Ask yourself why you are in the position that you are in! FIGHT FOR OUR KIDS LIKE I DO EACH AND EVERY DAY.

Matthew Masuyama
Hilo High School
Physical Educator
9th Grade



Cutting our pay?

Ryan Kagami <rskagami@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:10 AM

Aloha,

My name is Ryan Kagami. I am a former Middle School teacher and currently in my 4th year as a Science Resource Teacher for the Windward District and a part of our Windward CTE [Academic Integration Team](#).

The teaching profession is tough. Talk to any teacher and you will hear the struggles we face every day. Not only is it taxing on us emotionally and physically, but the thought of having our own state cut our already low pay is such a punch to the gut, and honestly makes me feel completely disrespected as an educator in the public education system.

I am a teacher who strives to be the best. I was awarded Kailua Inter Teacher of the Year, Milken Hawaii Teacher of Promise, DOE Team of the year (Kailua Inter-Science Dept.), and DOE Team of the year (Windward CTE), all within my first 10 years as an educator. Without a doubt, I feel any pay cut undermines the great work teachers like myself and countless others have been investing in toward our future. Cutting salaries will send a very strong message to not only teachers but the community: education is not a high priority. On the [Governor's home page](#), the first priority that shows up is teaching our keiki and investing in our local workforce. How is that so if we're slapped in the face with a pay cut?

If there is a 20% pay cut (or any), I would be severely struggling (along with many new teachers just starting at the pay scale) and would seriously be considering either finding another job or leaving the profession to find some other way to survive. If either of those two options are taken by many, the quality of education will take a huge blow, and the state will then be scrambling to fill vacancies along with funding lawsuits (SPED, 504 needs not being fully met). Our team has been working so hard to build teacher capacity to develop critical thinkers in their classroom, preparing them for what the world throws out. To have this start over or take 2 steps back is so discouraging and will severely impact our positive momentum. It's a very grim future I hope we will never have to live with, and going down that route is in the complete opposite direction of building a strong workforce for our future.

If teachers have to suffer a pay cut, this will result in a gap of unprepared and illiterate Hawaii students graduating for years to come and it will all be attributed to when teacher salaries were deemed a low priority when faced with the COVID-19 outbreak.

Mahalo for your consideration. I hope the right decision is made to keep our future looking bright in these hard times.

Ryan Kagami



re: a billion dollars a week
Eric Iwasaki to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 10:11 AM
From: "Eric Iwasaki" <eric.iwasaki@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Board of Education,

My name is Eric Iwasaki and I am a 7th grade social studies teacher at Kalama Intermediate.

I think we should do everything in our powers to maintain attractive salaries for teachers in Hawaii.

This benefits our current students as well as future students in having a highly qualified teacher in every one of their classes.

Parents have known and probably know more now in these times of pandemic that qualified teachers are needed and should be treated as professionals with professional pay.

Sincerely,
Eric Iwasaki

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

19.62% salary reduction

Cookielani <cookielani@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:15 AM

Aloha BOE,

I beg you not to reduce teachers' salaries. These cuts will negatively impact na keiki education and the teacher shortage.

The struggle is real, we may drive veteran teachers to early retirement, young teachers to leave and widen the gap of students with teachers without teaching credentials.

We have great teacher who are passionate about educating their students.

Who will suffer? Na keiki of Hawai'i nei!

Mahalo,
Terry Malterre
Roosevelt High School
Student Service Coordinator



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

Teachers cannot afford a cut in pay during these unprecedented times

roeleno@juno.com <roeleno@juno.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: crosenlee@hsta.org

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:17 AM

Dear Board of Education,

My name is Romeo Eleno and I'm a teacher at Lanai High & Elementary School. I am writing you this email to ask that you support teachers by not allowing the State to cut our pay in order to balance the budget. In these times of crisis, the last thing that should be happening is taking away financial support from government workers. We will need everyone to help bring our economy back to normal as soon as possible.

Just yesterday I heard from one of my colleagues that she will be moving back to the mainland due to the possible 20% cut in pay which will make it impossible to pay for rent, bills, and necessities. In addition, family is becoming more of an issue with this pandemic and we cannot afford to lose teachers if they do not have any support system here in Hawaii. If I know of one teacher, could you imagine how many more will follow suit if this cut in pay occurs?

Living on Lanai is not an easy comfortable place to live. We pay the highest in gas prices as well as food and nutrition. If my pay gets cut, it will make it that much harder for me to support the community out of this dire situation. Also, not to mention, our school has the highest percentage of unqualified teachers in the state; therefore, our students will continue to suffer academically in the years to come with empty classrooms and/or teachers that are not qualified to teach.

I am urging you to support the teachers and all government workers that the State cannot and should not balance the budget on our backs. It's a "lose lose" situation for everyone.

Sincerely,
Romeo Eleno
Health/PE Teacher, Lanai High & Elementary School
Lanai Island, Maui District



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

teacher pay cuts

Jim OBrien <jobrien@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:22 AM

My name is James OBrien. I am a teacher at King Kekaulike High School on Maui. I have been teaching at this school for 15 years. During this time I have seen the negative impact of high student teacher ratio, long term substitutes filling in for licensed teachers and teachers not qualified filling in a teacher line I am a highly qualified teacher licensed in Industrial Arts and Social Studies.

Please find a way to balance the budget without reducing teacher salaries. We are already short now and cutting salaries would have a devastating effect on the quality of education for our keiki.

Thank You,

Sincerely, James OBrien



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

Teacher Appreciation in Action

Caleb Stroud <mr.caleb.crew@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:24 AM

Aloha HSBOE,

Thank you for your effort to lead, especially in this most difficult time! I understand that many decisions that people in leadership have to make right now are "lose-lose" scenarios. It's tough.

Here is why I think that you should not allow the state to solve the present and subsequent economic dilemma with teacher pay cuts.

- Great teachers with a life's worth of experience will leave the classroom.
- Educators from other states who were thinking about a move to Hawaii will stay where they are.
- Newly minted teachers from local TEPs will reconsider their options and perhaps not choose teaching as their career.
- Fewer teachers will result in more un-licensed, long-term substitutes taking on the full-time job of teaching. (Turning our profession into gig work).
- Administrators will be forced to increase class sizes because of the limited workforce.
- Students who have already had their educational pathway detoured would receive fewer instructional days in a furlough situation.
- Charter schools, who already receive fewer per-pupil dollars from the state and yet have to pay their own rental fees for facilities, might not survive a drastic budget crunch.

Please consider these factors when weighing out the costs/benefits of reduced funding for schools and teacher salaries.

Mahalo for your service to our keiki & ohanas,
Caleb Stroud
Innovations Public Charter School
7th & 8th Grade Humanities



Please no pay cuts

Jonathon Fia to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 10:24 AM

From: "Jonathon Fia" <jonathon.fia@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha BOE,

My name is Jonathon Fia. Teacher at Waipahu High School serving 12th graders as a teacher in the Guidance Department.

Im pleading with you not to cut our salaries and/or implement Directed Leave Without Pay. I went through the last round of furloughs and Directed Leave without pay. The thought of going through that twice is almost unbearable. The BOE, the State, and our Governor need to consider the economic impact it will have on our teachers. But not just our teachers but our whole state economy. With those cuts how can we put money back into the economy? It has already been estimated by our state economists that it will cost the state Billions of dollars in GDP.

Many experienced AND licensed teachers with years of experience will look to retirement as they will not want to face the reduced income reflecting on their last three years of salary to calculate their retirement income. Many know they can retire but stay for the love of it. This will for sure push them into retirement and exacerbate a situation where we have even more unlicensed teachers and long term subs in classrooms. I have a child who is a senior who during his senior year had 50% of his classes taught by long term subs. Either they didn't possess classroom management skills or even worse had no content knowledge so little to no learning was occurring in the classroom.

I plead with you to keep our salaries in place. We suffered for many years after the 2008 financial crisis and only really recovered fully after several years.

--

Aloha

Jon Fia

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Please rethink

Traci Rosario <traci.rosario@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:26 AM

Aloha during Teacher Appreciation Week,

My name is Traci Rosario and I am a renewed National Board Certified teacher at Maui High School with my Master's degree in Education from UH Manoa. I teach 12th grade English, AP English, facilitate our Eng 100 course and am the National Honor Society advisor. I am also the Google Apps for Education Administrator at my school. In the past, I served as the AP Coordinator, Smaller Learning Communities Grant Coordinator, Academic Coach and Curriculum Coordinator.

I have been teaching at Maui High for 20 years and am also a 1990 alum. I am also a National Board Certified Teacher Candidate Support Provider and have been working with at least ten teachers from Maui to help them become Board Certified. I am so passionate about my profession and love all of my students so very much.

My school and my colleagues are everything to me. I have missed them every day since this Covid 19 has come through and find myself tearing up not being able to attend my seniors' graduation. I work many hours beyond what is required and with teaching remotely, put in even more hours than that! This has been tough, to say the least.

My husband lost his job as a boat captain of 30 years and this means he has also lost his health insurance. I will have to put him on mine and that will increase my payout for insurance by \$500 a month (cut in pay). We still have not received his Unemployment, we are going on 6 weeks on just my paycheck alone. We live frugally but we do have a mortgage to pay on my husband's father's house we rebuilt from 1967 and of course we do have other bills such as electricity (\$150) a month, internet (\$100), water (\$60), one car bill (\$350), cell phone family plan (\$190), and our mortgage is \$1798 a month. I bring in \$2300 every two weeks which will go down to just \$2000 after I start paying my husband's health insurance. Now let's say you take away close to 20% of my paycheck in which two people are now living on. That will bring me to somewhere around \$1540 every two weeks. So let's say \$3000 a month now. Deduct the bills, this now leaves somewhere around \$350 a month for two people to feed themselves, pay for gas, and save a little for things like car registration and health bills. Oh! I forgot about car insurance. And I am sure there are other bills I have forgotten as well.

My husband and I would not be able to make it and I will probably look at early retirement if this is what happens.

I tell you what, if this is what happens (and I am no economist) but I know I will not be going out to dinner or buying things outside of necessity. I may even have to sell my car so that I would not have payments anymore. THIS DOES NOT HELP THE ECONOMY!

And you want to know what else? After just barely finding my feet teaching from home, my husband losing his job, fears of the virus, working 15 hour days, the Governor comes on the news and tells us he is going to cut our pay by 20%. I have to be honest, I cried for two days straight. That was such a painful slap in the face. I could not believe it. Especially since I had just sat next to him at a luncheon at the Bishop Museum where we were celebrating education and our most highly recognized teachers. I didn't feel respected, appreciated, or cared for after how much I was putting into my kiddos.

Lastly, I know we are all replaceable, but do you know how many years I have studied my craft in order to get my Master's and second time National Board Certification? Do you know how much training and PD I have gone to to become an excellent AP English Teacher? I find it hard to believe, that if I have to retire early, it will be easy to fill my shoes with a substitute teacher and the ones who are going to be hurt the most are my kiddos.

I beg you to look at other ways to amend your budget. Look at the Rainy Day fund. Look at the next monies coming in from the government. My students will thank you and so will your economy.

Take care--

Traci Rosario



Testimony

Michael Shutley <michael.shutley.18@tfacorps.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:28 AM

Hello and thank you for taking the time to read my message. My name is Michael Shutley and I am an 8th grade Math and Science Teacher at Wheeler Middle School. I am writing to voice my concern for the proposed budget cuts that will specifically affect the pay of teachers and those in the education profession. The current state of teacher salaries cannot warrant any discussions about pay decreases. The cost of living in Hawaii is far too high and the salaries at their current level barely cover the minimum costs of food, transportation, and rent. This low salary coupled with a high cost of living is the driving force of current abundant teacher shortages in the state.

Those teachers that are currently in the profession are not in it for the money. All of the colleagues I have had the privilege to work with are incredibly hard-working and caring, and compensation was low on their list when deciding to take the job of an educator in Hawaii. A 20% decrease in salary for teachers will be a devastating blow that knocks the low but manageable salary as is, into a range that is too low to even support teachers at a bare minimum. Teachers will be faced with several choices: get a second job, lean financially on another, or quit. The ramifications of a 20% salary drop will be far-reaching and detrimental to students' learning for years to come.

I would love to have the opportunity to discuss with Governor Ige about this topic. I believe that before making any decisions that will have drastic effects, elected officials should discuss first hand with those affected. If not me, I implore the Governor's office to at least discuss with teachers before going further. Thank you.



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

No Teacher Pay Cuts

Tonantzin Weathersbee <tonaweath@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:29 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

I understand the seriousness of the economic situation that the state is facing due to COVID-19; however, cutting teacher pay should not be considered as a solution. The first and most important reason is the kids. They are already at a loss due to the current situation, cutting teacher pay will only compromise their future education. If teacher pay gets cut, lots of teachers will leave the state or find a new career. With the pre-existing teacher shortage, this will only worsen the situation for our keiki.

My husband and I both teach Special Education in Oahu. We have been able to stay in the profession we love here in Hawaii because of the SPED differentials that we recently received. We have told our principal that we will stay for another year; however, if a 20% salary cut goes into effect, we will be forced to resign and leave to the mainland during the summer.

I hope and pray that you consider a different option for the current situation. I know you are not in an easy position, but affecting the livelihood of thousands and the education of all of our kids should be enough for you to consider other options.

Sincerely,

Tonantzin Weathersbee
Wheeler Middle School



Please do not cut teacher pay!

Jason Agsalda to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 10:29 AM

From: "Jason Agsalda" <jason.agsalda@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

I started teaching in the spring of 2000 and was on the picket line during a time when teachers stood together to improve our salaries and work conditions. Over the past 20 years we have made great strides as a profession and would not like to see us take a step back. Even in this pandemic we should stand together again to show everyone the importance of having qualified licensed teachers in the classroom with the keiki of Hawaii. Should a cut occur morale would go down and I guarantee we would lose a lot of awesome teachers that just couldn't afford to live in our beautiful state. We are already facing teacher shortage and this would only exacerbate the problem.

Again, I know everyone has to sacrifice but please consider not decreasing teacher salaries as way to balance the budget. We have sacrificed enough! The future of Hawaii depends on our children and the teaching profession is the way to foster that!

Aloha!

--

Jason Agsalda
Physical Education Teacher
Tennis Coach
Mililani High School
(808) 307-4387

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Please no cuts!

Mia Fitzgerald to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 10:32 AM

From: "Mia Fitzgerald" <mia.fitzgerald@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Board of Education,

I am a middle school teacher at Washington Middle School. I have been at my school for 14 years as a counselor and teacher. I LOVE my job. I LOVE my students.

Please do not consider cuts to our salaries. We are already underpaid for what we do compared to teachers around the nation. I have had two close teacher friends move away, because they simply can't make it being a teacher in Hawaii. I, too, have another part time job to help make ends meet for my family.

I am very proud of my school, and the wonderful achievements our teachers have gained with our students. However, we have had long term substitute teachers at our school for a few years now. We have had numerous teachers retire with the gloomy outlook for our profession. Let's try to keep our veteran teachers in the classroom. Please.

Being a mother, I want my kids to have certified teachers teaching my son's class, and not an emergency hire without any educational background. I want qualified teachers who are willing and able to stick it out here in Hawaii.

Please hear my plea to keep our salary gains going in the forward direction. I appreciate your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully,
Mia Fitzgerald

--

Mia Fitzgerald
Art Teacher
Washington Middle School

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Please Do NOT Reduce Salaries

Angela Agustin Oka to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 10:37 AM

From: "Angela Agustin Oka" <angela.agustin_oka@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

This is Angela Agustin Oka. I'm a Kindergarten teacher from Keone'ula Elementary (Ewa Beach). I have been teaching for HIDOE for almost 10 years.

I understand how COVID-19 has impacted our economy and has placed many families in limbo during these uncertain times. I am also part of the families who have been placed in limbo. In addition to my full time job as a teacher, I also hold 2 part time jobs just to survive and support my family. Since COVID-19, I only hold my teaching job and no longer receive income from my other part time jobs. This has put an extra strain on our family.

I invest countless hours for my students and this continues to hold true till today. Teachers continue to work hard to support their students even during these trying times. Even without my other part time jobs, I feel that I am still overworked trying to navigate distanced learning and constantly worrying if my students basic needs are being fulfilled.

I kindly ask that you do NOT reduce our salary. I already feel the strain with my current salary and fear that this reduction may be the end of my teaching career in Hawaii.

Please reconsider the salary reduction. Perhaps, there are other options.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

--

Angela Agustin Oka

Kindergarten Teacher

Keone'ula Elementary

91-970 Kaileolea Drive

Ewa Beach, HI 96706

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Budget Cut Teacher Testimony

Kay Yat <keri.yatogo@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:37 AM

My name is Keri Yatogo and I have been teaching 6th grade English Language Arts and Social Studies for the past three years at Wheeler Middle School. The proposed budget cuts would negatively impact me as well as the student population in which I serve. In my three years at Wheeler Middle School, I have worked with long term subs every year. As someone who was an emergency hire herself, teaching is a highly-skilled profession that requires experience to be effective. However, the climate of education has never been hospitable enough to allow teachers to stay and live comfortable in this wonderful but expensive state. Every teacher that I have spoken to since hearing about the budget cuts has been on the fence about leaving Hawaii's teaching force. I myself have had to review my budget and assess whether or not I can continue teaching. That is still a decision that I need to make with consideration to my finances, my career, and future.

The Covid-19 situation has been an unprecedented situation calling for restrictive measures and has taken a toll on our economy. There's no denying this and the massive challenge that faces all of us, whether or not we are in the position to make policy and decision that will affect the people of this state. The only thing I wish to emphasize is that the costs of these budget cuts will have an even longer devastating impact on the education system and our economy as well. Teaching was once a well-respected and stoutly middle-class profession. The fact that this is no longer a possibility calls into question much larger issues with our economic structures that won't be resolved with these budget cuts.



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

Budget Cuts

James Weathersbee <james.weathersbee@wheelermiddle.k12.hi.us>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at
10:43 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

My wife and I are both middle school teachers on Oahu. With our salaries as is, we are doing alright. We share a small house with my brother and his wife. The splitting of the rent allows us to live comfortably on the island. However, we have very little wiggle room. We came to Hawai'i with the intention to move here permanently. If the pay cuts were to go through, my wife and I would be forced to move to a different state this summer.

Hawai'i is already ranked low in almost all things education. It seems that the remedy is presented over and over again: obtain and retain better teachers. However, it seems to fall on deaf ears. If a state already struggles with keeping qualified teachers and their answer to a budget crisis contains significantly cutting teacher pay, I'm not sure what they are thinking. To me it seems that they do not care about education nearly as much as they say.

If this pay cut goes through, will we be the only teachers leaving? The people making this decision need to understand that many teachers in this state are already on the cusp of being able to afford living here. Having a wave of qualified teachers leave would set the education system in this state back by years. Hopefully the realization that this would be a short-term fix that would have long-term detrimental effects (a wave of qualified teachers leaving the island, a stain on the reputation of the Hawai'i DOE, fewer new teachers coming to the island) will be enough to convince the powers that be that this is a risk/reward that is highly unbalanced, away from the reward side.

Sincerely,

Mr. & Mrs. Weathersbee



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

Please Support Hawaii's Teachers

Lisa Yoshimoto <lisayosh643@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:45 AM

Dear Board of Education,

Aloha! My name is Lisa Nishimoto and I am a second grade teacher at Pearl Ridge Elementary School. I have been a teacher for 22 years and have seen many changes during this time. What hasn't changed is the dedication and passion for teaching that Hawaii's teachers show each and every day. Unfortunately, another thing that hasn't changed over the years is the pay we receive for what we do in the classroom-- quite possibly the lowest in the nation when cost of living is factored in. While no teacher gets into this profession expecting to strike it rich, we do expect that we'll make enough to live comfortably here in the islands. I have seen a number of talented and dedicated colleagues leave the profession because they just couldn't afford to live in Hawaii on a teacher's salary. If this continues, what will we be left with? What will our keiki be left with? Classrooms being taught by unqualified teachers and long-term substitutes. Is this what we want? Is this what we need?

Please encourage the state to find other options to help our economy. Cutting teachers' pay may help balance the budget in the short term, but think about the long term effects. New teachers will be discouraged from entering the field and seasoned teachers will be forced into retirement. There has to be another way.

Thank you for your time,
Lisa Nishimoto



Testimony DO NO TCUT TEACHER SALARIES

lyon@hawaii.rr.com <lyon@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:46 AM

Aloha and good morning BOE,

I am writing to you in regards to the current news regarding teachers and essential workers in the state of Hawaii. Gov. Ige is making a rash, unprecedented statement that will cripple our educational system, which is already limping here in Hawaii. We began this school year 300 teachers short. Our classrooms were not fully staffed with qualified teachers and we were asking for pay raises that occurred from our last crisis. Teachers still live under the deferred pay checks from that time period and have not received their pay increased from those frozen years. Now Governor Age is making a blanket statement that is already forcing families to rethink their location and move back to families on the mainland where it is cheaper and they will not have a pay decrease.

Can you help? We have a rainy day fund we should be using before cutting salaries. This will devastate our work force, many of whom are bringing home \$1000 to \$1500 every two weeks, already living pay check to paycheck. Teachers are being forced to make a decision now, as his threat will be on our next paycheck. This allows for no planning, no saving, just panic decisions. When I compared a friend's paycheck from unemployment to a beginning teachers salary, the former will actually be bringing home for 4 months, while on unemployment, more than a full time DOE employee.

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my family but the students I serve as well. Each year our schools do not have the teachers we need to fill classrooms and students seriously suffer. No wonder we cannot make the gains expected. The cuts would make our situation so much more serious. Many teachers I know are considering moving to the mainland, as they feel that they cannot financially make it on Maui any longer. The pay cut would cement their decision.

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. I am a few years away from retirement, if my salary is cut I will be forced into early retirement as I would not want the cut salary to reflect my top 5.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Is this how we want to move forward? Please help the state you love so much by helping us bring sense to this situation and do not cut teacher salaries.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth DeLyon
3rd Grade GLC
Haiku Elem - Island Of Maui

Blessings of Peace and Grace

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Bartholomew Patitucci <bartholomew_patitucci@baldwin.k12.hi.us>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at
10:46 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

Reducing teacher pay will not only stress my family and I but will stress students as well. This will be my 5th year teaching on Maui, 3rd year at Baldwin HS and I have been working hard to gain tenure and take PD courses to INCREASE my pay in order to support my family. Teachers are at the core of society and yet underpaid, especially in Hawai'i! There is already a shortage of licensed teachers and cutting pay will increase the shortage. RECRUITING and RETAINING highly qualified teachers is already difficult and will become nearly impossible during a pandemic!

Thank you,

Bart Patitucci
10th Grade English
Baldwin High School



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

Please Protect Teachers' Salaries

Joe Wagner <joe.wagner90@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:47 AM

Aloha,

In light of a recent proposal by the governor to consider cutting teachers' salaries in an attempt to save money in light of the budget challenges brought on by COVID-19, I am reaching out to ask you to please consider options other than cutting teachers' salaries in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

Teachers work incredibly hard to educate our keiki. We work in a system that already requires teachers to give up hours of their personal time each week to complete the requirements of the job. Time spent grading students' tests and papers, providing feedback on student work, communicating with parents...the list of activities teachers are never able to fully accomplish within the hours of their workday goes on. So when does most of all that happen? During teachers' personal time, when they are unpaid for this essential work they have to put in. Teachers are expected to be generous and selfless, to work hours of overtime each week not for their regular pay, not for time and a half, but for free. In many ways, the system our teachers work in preys upon the good will of good people. Please don't let the state prey upon teachers even more.

During this time ahead, we ask that you protect our teachers' salaries and respect their work by searching for financial alternatives other than cutting salaries. Among the things our state cannot currently afford, I hope you consider losing our teachers and the critical work they do to support Hawaii's keiki high on that list.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Joseph Wagner



CORNAIR Testimony re: 19.62% Salary Reduction

Lia Cornair <cornairl@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:50 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my sincere wish that this email finds the recipient(s) in good health. My name is Lia Cornair and I am an 8th grade English Language Arts teacher at King Intermediate School in Kāne'ohe. I am writing to express my outrage over the proposed 19.62% salary reduction for teachers.

On the agenda for the Thursday, May 7th meeting, Superintendent Kishimoto provided a document containing an Executive Summary. This Summary contains the following statement: "In confronting [the coronavirus] challenge, the Department remains student-centered in all decision making and focused on our core mission to ensure all students reach their aspirations." If teacher salaries are reduced by 20%, the Department will send the message to the public that it is no longer student-centered, and that it no longer cares about students reaching their aspirations-- if it ever did at all. The direct result of 20% salary cut will be a significant loss of highly-qualified teachers-- an already critical area of need for nā keiki o Hawai'i-- who willingly teach, nurture and care for the future generations of the 'āina. Many of our current teachers will be forced to leave the island (to the benefit of future mainland generations), to leave the profession entirely, or to accept early retirement. And without licensed, highly-qualified teachers running our classrooms, schools will be forced to hire unlicensed and unqualified personnel, the results of which can be dire and often dangerous. These are consequences that can easily be avoided: do not cut teachers' already dismal salaries in search of spare change.

While many teachers identify with the passion and commitment that comes with the profession, we are still human beings, above all. If teachers cannot afford to pay their bills, they cannot devote themselves wholly to their students and their students' futures and aspirations. The Hawai'i Department of Education's Core Mission states, "We serve our community by developing academic achievement, character and social-emotional well-being of our students to the fullest potential." When you cut teacher salaries, you cut their ability to serve the community. You force teachers to find second and third jobs in order to continue living in a state that only sees increases in cost of living on an annual basis. When you cut teachers' salaries, you cut their abilities to maintain their own character and their own social-emotional well-being because you cut their livelihood and you cut their means to remain safe and sane in an already stressful working environment. I plead with you, please do not do this to us, and please do not do this to our students. While it's clear that we need a solution amidst the drop in tourism revenue, cutting teacher salaries is not the answer. Hawai'i may never recover from such a decision, and the future generations will be the ones to reap what you have sewn.

Once more: Please, do not do this.

Sincerely,

Lia Cornair, MA
(808) 436-1850

Shawna Davis

Third Grade Teacher
Kealakehe Elementary School
shawna.davis@k12.hi.us

May 5, 2020

To The Hawaii Board of Education:

I am writing this letter with great concern for the future education of Hawaii's keiki. I have a vested interest in this matter as a mother, a taxpayer, and a teacher. I have taught in Hawaii's public schools for seventeen years.

In the last seventeen years, I have seen so many colleagues leave Hawaii and also leave teaching because of the inability to survive on a Hawaii teacher's salary. I myself have spent many years waitressing or nannying on top of my full time teaching position to supplement my basic pay. Sometimes I would not get off my second job until midnight and would need to arrive at school by seven a.m. in time to see my sweet students.

I struggled financially during "Furlough Fridays" and my pay still has not recovered from that time. You see, when times get tough, teachers have to buck up and do more with less. But in reality, it is the students who suffer and the kids who were furloughed unfairly during those times were the ones to miss out on 20% of their education. The pay cuts from the furloughs were supposed to be addressed this year in S.B. 2488. And now, during teacher appreciation week, it is again being proposed for furloughs or 20% cuts to teachers. Teachers are the ones who are going to have to move mountains next year and try to catch up the students who lost an entire quarter of education in the classroom.

We already have a teacher shortage in Hawaii. This was addressed in January when the Board of Education voted for shortage differentials. If teachers' salaries are cut, we will see an even greater teacher shortage as teachers take an early retirement or elect to move back to the mainland during this difficult time. Please reconsider. The future of our keiki depends on qualified teachers in the classroom.

Sincerely,

Shawna Davis



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

Aloha from Kauai

erin finlay <rnfny@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:53 AM

Aloha,

I want to take the time to share how cutting our teacher salaries will directly impact my family and my students.

First, I am a single mother of 3, of which 2 of my children are in college. I already have 2 other jobs besides teaching middle school Science. I am a graduate from Kaiser High, with a Masters from UH. As of now, we are short staffed with teachers, both for position lines and subs. We NEED more teachers, not less. This pay cut will cause many teachers to leave and find other jobs. This will directly impact student learning. High turnover rates, unqualified teachers, no subs.....We are at this Point NOW. 20% less pay will only increase the need for qualified teachers.

Please please please, for the sake of our Keiki.....do not reduce teacher pay!

Sincerely

A mother and teacher from Kauai



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries.

Diana Grant <dgrant@mwis.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:57 AM

Aloha,

As a single, veteran teacher of more than twenty years, I've survived the strike and the furlough Fridays from the past. This, however, just might force me out of the classroom. If these proposed pay cuts happen, many many teachers (those of us who are veterans and the brand new teachers) will not be able to live here and teach our keiki. This will devastate our already fragile education system adding to the massive teacher shortage.

It is time to fight for Hawaii's children instead of allowing them to feel this effect for years to come.

Make wise choices.

Respectfully,

Diana Grant

ELA educator- grade 8

Maui Waena Intermediate School



Please do not cut teachers pay
Micah Turell to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 10:57 AM
From: "Micah Turell" <micah.turell@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

Hope you are doing well in these stressful times we are living in. I am writing this email on behalf of not only myself and my fellow colleagues, but for the students in Hawaii. Before this pandemic, Hawaii has already been facing a teacher shortage. As a result, retaining new teachers and quality teachers have been extremely difficult. I'm sure you are already aware of this so I won't bother you with facts you already know, and will speak from the heart.

I am a beginning teacher, currently finishing up year two of my teaching career. I really enjoy teaching, as I am able to make many connections with my students. I truly believe I am meant to be a teacher. I am a Health teacher at Mililani High School, and over the past 2 years, I have been able to not only teach my students, but make a positive impact on their lives. I've helped students that were suicidal, on drugs, struggling with depression, pregnancy scares, family problems, relationship problems, friend drama, sports drama, and far more to list. I've been doing this with joy because I know this comes with teaching, including pay that does not match up with the amount of work we put in. I never complained about pay because I already knew coming in that this is a selfless profession. However, I feel extremely undervalued and disrespected as not only a teacher, but a human being that you guys are even considering cutting our pay, using educators as a sacrifice for the sake of Hawaii's economy. We have already been sacrificing as educators by being underpaid with the amount of work we do, and to even think about cutting it 20% shows that you all don't have the best interest of HAWAII and IT'S PEOPLE in mind if this goes through.

Our union and other unions have laid out other proposals that would work, rather than cutting our pay, which will do no good for our economy, such as experts predicted. With all of that being said, I am seriously considering a change of career ALREADY into my teaching career if these pay cuts go through. I will respect myself and my family using my skills to be treated with fairness and respect. I will be the class advisor next year, and you want me to do all of that extra work with a 20% pay cut. Not acceptable.

Do what is right,

--

Micah Turell
Health/Physical Education Teacher
Classroom: P-1
Mililani High School
95-1200 Meheula Pkwy
808-307-4205

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please do not reduce teachers' salaries

Sheila Yuasa to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 10:57 AM

From: "Sheila Yuasa" <sheila.yuasa@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

I have taught Language Arts at Mililani High School for almost 20 years. In regards to the COVID-19 Rebalancing Framework, I am asking that teachers' salaries not be reduced. Hawaii already faces a shortage of over 1,000 qualified teachers. From my personal experience, a new teachers whom I mentored this year had to leave Hawaii due to the high cost of living. Reduced salaries would force other teachers to do the same. Students would be left with long term subs because veteran teachers would likely retire early if salaries are cut. Please consider alternative funding. Mahalo,
Sheila Yuasa

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

Teacher testimony

Shane Sigetic <ssigetic@nawaiolapcs.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:57 AM

Aloha

May this day be of beauty to you. Mahalo for taking the time for me to share my story.

I am writing as a small representation of our community here on the islands. I am a teacher here in Hawaii. I am also community member. I am a husband, and a tax payer. I...am so much more.

Recent times have caused the entire world to shift perspective on what existence is, what our human existence is within the world. Our societies, cultures and families all unique yet sharing similar desire for betterment in all domains of life as we know it.

With the shift in perspective, and the reality of our former and under stress 'ways' or system of living, it is clear that those in government who help guide our societies and cultures, must shift the perspective of our existence. Economic, social, health and other scopes of our community are under new stressors and are shifting.

While you help guide the educational programs offered to our communities here on the island, we as educators also guide the programs offered. Together the Board of Education and Teachers are guiding the education of our people. There are more contributions to this guidance from other parties, let us focus on the BOE and the teachers.

Resources are being shifted due to limited supplies and interruptions in supply chain. The prior status of resources available to students (our end product so to say), was always in question of being too little. Educators providing experiences and guidance to students using limited resources did their best and continually make progress.

We are aware that there may be an additional cut to resources, including those of teachers funding and pay. A question if I may. What type of meal (future) are we to provide our selves and communities if we continually omit ingredients (resources/funding)? What type of nourishment do we value in providing ourselves (Hawaii community)?

If the Board of Education moves forward with subtracting resources from students, schools and teachers in the way of materials, staff and funds, then the Board of Education is sending a message that it is ok to feed

our communities and even thinner meal. Will we expect the same results and achievements from schools, administrators, students, staff? How realistic is it to ask someone to complete and strive for 1st in the Tour de France while only being supplied with a unicycle?

An other thought. How is it right to compile and sign a contract to then renig on obligations in pay? Is this a just system and method for conducting business? Additionally, how is removing pay/resources from teachers a method of ensuring the future of our communities? Has it been proposed to cut all fiscal contributions to the entire education system? Starting with the head of the education system; the Board of education all the way down to personnel in the schools inclusive of teachers, custodians, office personnel. If the Board is going to cease funds, it might be seen as fair for them to cut across the board inclusive of themselves. It more than likely will not be viewed as smart or an educated decision, yet that's the board's kuliana.

Please highly consider your choices. I would urge in seeking federal relief funds to supplement in these times of need. The nationally government and other world governments realize the impact of our recent COVID19 pandemic and have formalized plans of action to supplement their people. Let us not be lead by ignorance and fear. Let us be lead by Aloha.

Mahalo for your time.

Shane Sigetic

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pay cuts

Richard Franco to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 10:58 AM

From: "Richard Franco" <richard.franco@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha e government,

I am a teacher with 15+ years of teaching experience on Maui in the private sector. I've been a sub for a couple of years and am now full-time, as I saw the need the DOE had for teachers. At MOST of the schools I've subbed, I've been offered long-term sub positions because wide-eyed, young teachers from the mainland have had dreams of teaching on our island-paradise. However, once they realize how difficult it is to sustain themselves on the mere pennies we're paid as teachers, they gave up and left. It's understandable, so now you offer more incentives and bonuses to these youngsters. However, an old-timer with roots to the 'aina is struggling too. But I'm NOT leaving. This is HOME. These are MY keiki. I wish to do nothing but help them. PLEASE help me by providing a semi-decent wage, so I may provide for MY 'ohana, as this IS, WAS, and will ALWAYS be home. Ua Mau ke Ea 'o ka 'Aina i ka Pono. Be Pono and provide for teachers, so we may provide for the future caregivers of Hawaii nei.

Malama Pono,

Mr. R. Franco, Jr.
PE teacher 6&7
Kalama Intermediate

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

Cutting teachers salaries is not the solution

lorna curran <winterslc@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:04 AM

Unfortunately, cutting teachers salaries in the State of Hawaii has become a standard practice when faced with a financial dilemma. A practice that has long lost it's validity by a state that claims to value their keiki.

We value our keiki by actions, not words. We have been afforded a wonderful opportunity today, to put this simple truth into practice.

Cutting any teachers salary is a dead end road, traveled too many times. It's time to forge a new path for our teachers. One that does not even consider touching their livelihood. Not today, and not in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorna W. Curran

.

Sent from my iPad



Testimony: "Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ('CARES Act') K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process."

David Negaard <draagen@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:05 AM

Aloha, Board Members,

I am David Negaard. I teach English Language Arts at Henry Perrine Baldwin High School in Wailuku, Maui.

De facto salary cuts will exacerbate and extend the ongoing teacher staffing crisis. Categorically reject even the possibility of directed leave without pay (DLWOP) or supplemental time off without pay (STOWOP) or face an exodus of teachers that will disrupt public education for the foreseeable future.

I cannot remember a time when Hawai'i public schools had enough teachers to fully staff its classrooms. While multiple factors drive this shortage, there can be little doubt that inadequate compensation is perhaps THE major one. More than 50% of teachers in Hawai'i work multiple jobs to make ends meet, compared to 20% nationally. Without professional compensation, it is difficult to recruit and even more difficult to retain qualified teachers.

The mere possibility of significant pay cuts already has teachers contemplating or even planning moves—some are leaving the profession, others are moving to the mainland, and some of the most experienced are retiring earlier than they had planned, just at the governor's April mention of possible cuts. The mere suggestion has already cost the Department of Education a number of licensed, qualified teachers. Should the DoE contingency for DLWOP or STOWOP be implemented, the trickle will become a flood.

At Baldwin, a critical teacher departed at the winter break because for her, life as a teacher in Hawai'i was untenable. That is only one example of the problem at CURRENT salary levels. Cut pay by nearly 20% and MANY more will follow. We cannot properly serve our keiki with current shortfalls in staffing, and a pay cut will make things worse.

We cannot expect teachers to sacrifice their own or their families' well being to serve our keiki. We cannot continue to depend on substitutes and emergency hires to make up the shortfall in staffing. We cannot sustain a cut in pay.

Public education has the potential to be the great equalizer, lifting up those in poverty and otherwise marginalized, but without teachers, public education becomes public day care, and allows inequities to persist and even grow. We owe our keiki qualified teachers who are paid a professional salary and can focus on teaching rather than having to split their attention between teaching and the side jobs that make up the difference between teacher compensation and a decent living.

Reject out of hand the notion that teachers' livings are somehow expendable, because if the state considers teachers expendable, it is ready to consider students expendable, as well.

Mahalo,

--

David Negaard
cell: (808) 214-8919

"Man is most nearly himself when he achieves the seriousness of a child at play." -Heraclitus



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

Testimony

Cathy Lattin <clattin815@gmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:06 AM

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

I'm writing to oppose a 20% decrease in teacher's pay. Or any decrease. I support an increase instead.

Teachers here on the Big Island barely earn enough now especially with all the special challenges we have faced recently. Earthquakes, massive eruption of lava, and now teaching via internet.

Sincerely,

Cathy Lattin
P.O. box 172
keaaau, Hi 96749



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

AGAINST REDUCTION TO TEACHERS' SALARIES

Angela Sagisi <angesagisi@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:06 AM

Aloha,

My name is Angela Sagisi, and I am a 4th grade teacher at Queen Ka`ahumanu School. I write to you not only as an educator to our keiki, but as a concerned resident of Hawai'i nei. I understand that the state is debating on how to tackle the financial impacts of COVID-19. I urge you not to cut teacher salaries as a way to manage the state budget cuts. Education is the most important aspect of our society and our community. If you cut teacher salaries, you will drive highly qualified, dedicated, and passionate individuals away from the profession and from this state. Salary reductions will leave our students with long term subs, unqualified teachers, oversized classrooms, and more. All of these will hinder the learning and success of Hawai'i's future!

INVEST IN OUR STATE'S EDUCATION, INVEST IN OUR STATE'S FUTURE!

Mahalo,

Angela Sagisi



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

Proposed cut in teacher's salaries as a solution

lorna curran <winterslc@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:14 AM

Substitute teacher, Konawaena school district

Unfortunately, cutting teacher's salaries in the State of Hawaii has become a standard practice when faced with a financial dilemma. A practice that has long lost its validity by a state that claims to value their keiki.

We value our keiki by actions, not words. We have been presented a wonderful opportunity today, to put this simple truth into practice.

Cutting any teachers salary is a dead end road traveled too many times. It's time to forge a new path for our teachers. One that does not even consider touching their livelihood. Not today, and not in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorna W. Curran

Sent from my iPad



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

Testimony to the BOE and

Todd Sato <godwarrior71@gmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:15 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov, Todd Sato <tsato@viking.k12.hi.us>, elaliberte@viking.k12.hi.us

Good morning to you all,

My name is Mr. Todd Sato, and I am currently teaching at Hilo High School on the Big Island, and I am a certified licensed Social Studies Teacher for the Juniors and Seniors.

I feel strongly that by reducing teachers pay will not only harm you and your families but also your children that we serve to educate them to become more productive and knowledgeable to our community, our economy and also politically.

These pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement, where more of our future leaders (our students) would learn from non-license teachers, or substitute teachers.

So I humbly ask that you do not cut our pay, since I have 2 disabled people and my daughter who decided to help with them who are living with me and I am the sole provider for this family. So with that said, I would not be able to survive on a reduced teacher's salaries.

Sincerely yours,
Mr. Todd Sato
HSTA Member
Hilo High School
Social Studies Teacher



COVID Re-Balancing Framework testimony

Mary Miura-Aguinaldo <mrs.miuraaguinaldo@gmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:16
AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Board members,

I am a veteran teacher with 15+ years experience currently teaching science at Mililani High School. I am writing to strongly oppose any measures, through pay cuts or "directed leave without pay/supplemental time off without pay." These measures are come off as repackaging the disastrous Furlough Fridays implemented under the Lingle administration. It is insulting to see press releases and news briefings that state salary reductions are a "last resort," but then see that they are still being moved on and just rebranded as "time off without pay." This feels sneaky and underhanded and comes across as a slap in the face and an insult.

I understand that we are living in unprecedented times, but balancing the budget on the backs of educators and keiki is absolutely unacceptable for several reasons. First, when adjusted for costs of living, Hawaii teachers are already the lowest paid in the nation: this will only make the problems associated with that worse. No other state is looking to balance its budget by taking away from schools and teachers. Secondly, Hawaii already faces a teacher shortage - by lowering salaries (regardless of how), we exacerbate the problem because many will simply leave the profession - early retirements, or leaving for another state or career. We will lose qualified classroom teachers who want to stay in the classroom but can't afford to. Study after study has shown that having highly qualified teachers is correlated to better student outcomes. Adopting measures that have a direct negative impact on that ability flies in the face of logic.

Personally, my family has already lost because my husband's job has been directly impacted because of the pandemic. Even without pay cuts, this has been a financial strain on my family. Losing 20% of my salary on top of everything else would be disastrous.

We have made so much progress forward in closing gaps in teacher compensation - it is unfathomable that these draconian measures are even being considered. Please look at balancing the budget without reducing salaries. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Mary Miura-Aguinaldo



TESTIMONY

Kehaulani Deboma to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 11:18 AM
From: "Kehaulani Deboma" <kehaulani.deboma@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

MORNING,

This pay reduction would negatively impact my kids, grandkids, high cost of living here in Hawaii & student loans to become a teacher. Why hit the teacher's salaries & 1st responders salaries when we are on the frontlines of helping the communities.

We barely make ends meet now even with the differentials, and then to take this cut I would need to get a second job which gives less family time & supervision. This is how teenagers get into mischief being left home alone while parents struggle to work multiple jobs just to pay rent, gas for the car, bare necessities/essentials.

There are so many options out there or resources to use instead of doing pay cuts. **DO CUTS FROM THE TOP OF THE CHAIN OF COMMAND BEFORE YOU CONSIDER CUTS FROM THE BOTTOM.** People that make \$100K could afford a 20% cut vs. \$50K....

DOE wants highly qualified teachers, licensed teachers, teachers that go through the SATEP all to be in the classrooms. All these qualifications **COSTS MONEY** and yet make **CUTS** at the same time. So much responsibility rests on teachers shoulders and then adding on the stress of **CUTS** is **RIDICULOUS!!!!**

Kehaulani Deboma
Nanakuli High and Intermediate
Special Education Teacher
#305-7647

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

Salary cuts

Roberts, Moyrah <moyrah.roberts@kalakauamiddle.org>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:22
AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern,

I am a middle school teacher from the Farrington Complex who will also be affected by the proposed pay cuts. I have been teaching in Hawaii for four plus years, and have been faced with many challenges which I have chosen to overlook and overcome. I cannot attest to the effect that this pay cut will have on other teachers, but as for me it will reduce my income significantly enough. I have a mortgage which currently accounts for about one-third of my monthly salary--before taxes, and do not even want to begin recalculating how I would make ends meet after this pay cut. I have always placed my life in God's care, and I believe that this job was allowed me through divine intervention. I know that God will make a way for me, but like all others, I would prefer not to have to bear unnecessary hardships. If you were to have 20 percent of the flesh cut from your body, from which region would you prefer to have it removed? This is quite similarly the dilemma many people will be faced with shortly if you proceed with this venture.

M. Roberts--Language/SS teacher

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

Teacher Salary Pay Cut...

Josuha Walling <jwalling55@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:26 AM

Plain and simply put, my wife and 2 step-daughters CANNOT survive on Oahu with a 40% pay cut.....PERIOD. To propose taking almost 1/2 of our income is ludicrous. How am I to put food on our table? How am I to pay for clothes, medical visits, etc..... My wife is a 4th grade teacher at Waipahu Elem. with 13 years experience and I am in my 3rd year teaching 5th grade at Keone'ula Elem. Together we make just enough money to subsist here on Oahu raising 2 teenage girls who both attend Kapolei High School, if you choose to cut our pay 20% each we will be forced to move to the mainland, there is no other choice for us. I will not subject my family to poverty conditions while my wife and I both work as professionals. Especially when there are 15 other alternatives to consider when looking for funding for this state in addition to Federal help that is readily available. I am appalled and offended that you would choose to harm, your states own future by diminishing the keiki's opportunity for a solid education. Make a good choice....your future depends upon it.



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

Charlene Kincaid

Charlene Kincaid <charlene_kincaid@baldwin.k12.hi.us>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:31 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov, Lester Kunimitsu <lester_kunimitsu@baldwin.k12.hi.us>

H.P. Baldwin High School
1650 Kaahumanu Avenue
Wailuku, HI. 96793

I am qualified to teach within the business education dept. I respecialized in special education through the RISE program. I am also highly qualified to teach all core subjects. I am considering retiring, it's just a matter of when. And this pay cut may just be the when.

Sincerely,



Where are your PRIORITIES??

Kalei Bras to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 11:32 AM

From: "Kalei Bras" <kalei.bras@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

As a Hawaiian, born and raised on Maui, I chose to become an educator to empower my lāhui, inspire our keiki, and to honor my kūpuna through our ‘ōlelo makuahine.

It has been almost 22 years since I made that commitment for myself and my ‘ohana. It has been a commitment that demands dedication, sacrifice, and love. Over the years, it has not been easy. I’ve been through a strike, furloughs, and pay cuts with a continual increase in cost of living and taxes.

Now, with the possibility of another financial blow, I am again disgusted that our educational system is put at risk. As individuals, we talk about the future for our keiki, the endless opportunities that await them, the dreams they can pursue. Yet, we consistently undermine their potential by devaluing education.

Over the past six years, my school has recruited more and more mainland teachers to service our local keiki. The local teachers are now a minority on campus and our voices are being quieted. Mainland teachers with mainland ideas and mainland ways are transforming the school. Mainland teachers who do not know our rich culture or history that make up who we are as a people. Mainland teachers who can not connect with our keiki to be able to “reach and teach” them all. Mainland teachers who come for some fun and sun then return to their mainland home. This needs to stop; we need to grow our own teachers here, at home, in the islands, but how can this happen when the state continues to undervalue the significance of education?

In addition, every year, I witness more and more students being taught by long-term substitutes because there is an existing teacher shortage. Teacher salary is too low and cost of living is too high in Hawai‘i. Our local people are suffering so more and more ‘ohana chose to leave our home and move away. As a result, our lāhui suffers, our community suffers, and our keiki suffer.

Now, with the prospect of potential pay cuts for educators to reduce the financial impact of Covid19 on the state, more students will go without seasoned, licensed teachers because these veteran teachers will be driven into an early retirement. Our local keiki will be taught by long-term substitutes, unqualified teachers, and mainland teachers whom will fill the void.

Once again, we will show our keiki that education is negotiable. We will teach them the meaning of **false hope**, **wavering belief**, and **conditional faith** in their dreams, in their future, and in them as a people.

We need to stand together and raise our voices to support education, honor our lāhui, strengthen our community, and value our keiki.

Where are your PRIORITIES?

Me ka ‘oia‘i‘o,
R. Kalei Bras

Sample Enoka Kalama Intermediate

RTI Reading, Grades 6, 7, 8

Former:

Kumu Kaiapuni ELA & Hawaiian Language, Grades 6, 7, 8

ELA, Grades 6 and 7

Testing Coordinator

Title I Coordinator

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

Do Not Reduce Teacher's Salaries

Kahealani Taniguchi <kahealanit@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:34 AM

Aloha,

My name is Kelli Taniguchi and I am a Counselor at Olomana School. I am writing this email to strongly encourage you to not reduce teacher's salaries.

I have been a high school counselor for 25 years. It is apparent to me that we are in a teacher shortage/crisis. The unlicensed teachers that are brought in to teach students, struggle daily with their effective teaching practices as well as their classroom management. This results in a huge loss of academic achievement for students.

If teacher salaries are reduced at all, or if teachers are put on unpaid leave, we will lose so many teachers. Our school system will not recover from this loss.

The State of Hawaii must find other ways to cut money from their budget. We do not need buildings open with expensive electric bills and insurance costs. Close down physical buildings and stop the purchase of "things" within the state budget. But please do not cut employees' salaries.

Besides losing teachers, state employees will stop spending money and this will hurt the economy. If the state employees' salaries are cut, then they will immediately stop spending money which will hurt all businesses in Hawaii.

No pay cuts, no furloughs, no leave without pay or stop work scenarios. If the teacher's do have to be on unpaid leave, then we will have less days to teach kids which will result in further academic achievement declines. Teachers are not going to work for less pay because they can't afford to live in Hawaii on less pay!

Sincerely,
Kelli Taniguchi



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

Teacher Pay Cuts....19-20/ Covid-19

Josuha Walling <jwalling55@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:35 AM

Plain and simply put, my wife and 2 step-daughters CANNOT survive on Oahu with a 40% pay cut.....PERIOD. To propose taking almost 1/2 of our income is ludicrous. How am I to put food on our table? How am I to pay for clothes, medical visits, etc..... My wife is a 4th grade teacher at Waipahu Elem. with 13 years experience and I am in my 3rd year teaching 5th grade at Keone'ula Elem. Together we make just enough money to subsist here on Oahu raising 2 teenage girls who both attend Kapolei High School, if you choose to cut our pay 20% each we will be forced to move to the mainland, there is no other choice for us. I will not subject my family to poverty conditions while my wife and I both work as professionals. Especially when there are 15 other alternatives to consider when looking for funding for this state in addition to Federal help that is readily available. I am appalled and offended that you would choose to harm, your states own future by diminishing the keiki's opportunity for a solid education. Make a good choice....your future depends upon it. My name is Joshua E. Walling and my wife is Roberta Perrone-Walling, we reside in Kapolei where the Mean/Medium income is roughly \$94,000. A 20% cut in our income will put us earning approximately \$88,000 dollars, this is insulting.....



Covid-19 impact on state funds for education

Christina Ellis <christinaellis3@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:50 AM

Dear Board of Education:

We are currently living through a global historic event that is changing the world on a daily basis. This pandemic has greatly impacted our state's economy and our well-being.

As a special education teacher, it is part of my job to look for the root cause of a problem and use the cause to help find a solution. The root cause of the problem with the state's economy is the lack of diversification and the dependence on tourism, not that teachers and other state employees make too much money.

Our state has a historic opportunity to use this pandemic to diversify our economy so we are less dependent on tourism and we can become more self-sustaining. In order to do this, we need to invest in our education system. We must ensure that we have quality teachers in every classroom. We cannot keep shortchanging our keiki by balancing the state's budget at the expense of our children. We need to be providing our children with highly qualified well-educated teachers who do not have to work multiple jobs just to get by.

I am strongly urging you to reject pay cuts to Department of Education employees and look at other ways to cut unnecessary spending in the Department such as; cutting travel both interisland and mainland, not maintaining rented offices for non-classroom teachers and other employees, and getting rid of department of education owned vehicles for employees.

Cutting teacher pay does not solve the problem of a weak and poorly diversified economy. In the long run, this will only contribute to the problem by leaving our students without the education that is required to rebuild our economy in a way that can lead to a stronger and healthier Hawai'i.

Please do the right thing for our teachers, our children, and for the future of Hawai'i by rejecting pay cuts, and instead, let's consider ways the department can contribute to rebuilding our sorely broken economy.

Mahalo nui loa,

Christina Ellis
Special Education Teacher
Ka'ū- Kea'au- Pāhoa Complex Area



SPED TEACHER'S PLEA: Impact on one family
Dayle Yokoyama to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 11:56 AM
From: "Dayle Yokoyama" <dayle.yokoyama@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

I have been a special education teacher for 33 years and my daughter just graduated with a dual special education and regular education degree. This budget cut will unfortunately force our family to take us away from our passion, which is teaching students with special needs.

It breaks my heart that my daughter has always enjoyed working with our kids in Kona and is now forced to look at moving to the Mainland so she can have a fair chance of continuing her love of working with this population or look at other career options. It kills me to think that we struggled so much to build our family here in Kona and this may not be fulfilled.

I will have to make the move to retire and supplement this financial loss by working on our family business. I did not intend to do this till my other daughter graduates from medical school but I will be forced to choose this route. I have been at the same school and have worked so hard to mentor all of the new special education teachers and also encourage young teachers to continue their education in SPED. How can I with good faith try to encourage our youth in our community to pursue this area when they are not supported by our State?

I am only one seasoned special education teacher who has worked my heart out for our students... please don't do this to us.

--

Mrs. Dayle Yokoyama
Student Services Coordinator
Kealakehe Intermediate School
74-5062 Onipa'a Street
Kailua-Kona, Hawaii 96740
office: 808-313-3070
fax: 808-327-4315

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Teacher salary reduction

Jami Nielsen to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 12:04 PM

From: "Jami Nielsen" <jami.nielsen@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha!

I am an educator who chose to join with the state of Hawaii Department of Education four years ago. I brought a large student loan with me and have had to make additional choices to be able to live in Hawaii with the cost of living as it currently stands. I must rely on making hard line choices to live here as an educator, very unlike if I was to live elsewhere. These are my choices. I enjoy living and teaching here.

Now, lets talk about the BOE choices. This must be a difficult time to navigate what needs to happen in education. This isn't the first time though, there should be history to reflect upon. Hawaii Department of Education has been given multiple opportunities over the years to learn from previous mistakes when it comes to salary cut or frozen salary issues; a cycle over and over again.

Thank you for considering all options to make a sound decision, one that is in the best interest of educators and students. Both should have skin in the game.

To even consider cutting educators pay, reflect on these consequences:

- less qualified educators, educators leaving the island, teacher early retirement, less capacity of teamwork to support students (as we go back into the classroom with the largest disparity of ability yet!) due the inevitable long term substitute teacher need, and much more work/tasks/responsibilities for educators that choose to stay.

Hawaii ranks near the bottom in so much: teacher pay, teacher satisfaction, teacher retention, student test scores, and so forth. Could there be a correlation? Any data? Do you ever wonder if it is due to the way educators have been treated over the years?

Since stating some of the obvious less-preferred outcomes for salary cuts, here are some possible alternative solutions:

Schools are given smaller budgets to CUT field trips (luxury education), activities (many are luxury) some programs, materials, internal handling of personal leave, and restructure how staff are being utilized.

Think about **need vs. want**. We need really good, satisfied, empowered educators who are given a voice to be agents of change. Do we need every luxury, built in item that schools are currently spending? **No, we don't**. It is like any cutback. We take care

of the basics (Maslow's Hierarchy of Need) and we do less of the luxury. This is the law of economics in any situation, including school operations.

If the BOE looks out for the educators it synthesizes with the care of the students.

Let's get **back to basics** and manage what we have well without cutting those we need to do well.

Make good choices!

Mahalo,

Jami Nielsen
Waipahu Intermediate School
Science

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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 V

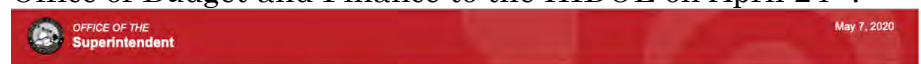
THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2020

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
 HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Payne, and Members of the Board:

We are asking you to oppose any suggestions of pay cuts or furloughs for our educators in our public schools, including our charter schools.

Under discussion items for today’s agenda, there is a document titled, “Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process.” On page six of the presentation, under Draft COVID Re-Balancing Framework, there is a list of potential expenditure adjustments to rebalance the state’s general fund budget. It includes calculations based on directed leave without pay, or supplemental time off without pay, which amounts to a 19.62% salary reductions for our members and other state employees. This table is based on information provided by the state Office of Budget and Finance to the HODOE on April 24th.



Draft COVID Re-Balancing Framework

*Figures prepared by B&F for discussion purposes only (as of April 24)

	Est. FY20	Est. FY21	Est. FY22	Est. FY23	Est. FY24	Est. FY25
Revenue Adjustments (in millions):						
1. Walk back Gov admin bills		\$11.1	\$0.7	\$2.1	\$1.1	\$1.0
2. Use Rainy Day Fund		0	\$378.2	0	0	0
3. Use Hurricane Relief Fund (Withdrawn)		0	0	0	0	0
Expenditure Adjustments:						
1. Trim supplemental budget, admin bills	(\$69.7)	(\$153.8)	(\$76.2)	(\$101.7)	(\$166.9)	(\$159.3)
2. Restrictions & projected fixed savings FY20	(\$115.3)					
3. Defer FY19-21 collective bargaining increases	(\$59.4)	(\$141.0)				
4. 10% pay reduction for BU 9, 10, 11*. All others 34 hours per month DLWOP/STOWOP**	(\$105.7)	(\$634.0)				
5. Suspend Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Contributions		(\$292.7)	(\$286.3)	(\$277.8)	(\$271.0)	(\$263.5)
6. 12% across the board on all non-fixed costs		(\$394.7)	(\$394.7)	(\$394.7)	(\$394.7)	(\$394.7)
	(\$350.0)	(\$1,616.2)	(\$757.1)	(\$774.2)	(\$822.6)	(\$817.5)
REVENUE OVER/UNDER EXPENDITURES	(\$7.7)	(\$255.0)	(\$342.1)	(\$392.5)	(\$198.6)	(\$30.3)
CARRYOVER (DEFICIT)						
BEGINNING BALANCE	\$752.1	\$744.5	\$489.4	\$147.3	(\$245.2)	(\$443.7)
ENDING BALANCE	\$744.5	\$489.4	\$147.3	(\$245.2)	(\$443.7)	(\$474.0)

* BU9 Registered professional nurses, BU10 Institutional, health, correctional workers, BU11 Firefighters.
 ** Directed Leave Without Pay/Supplemental Time Off Without Pay (34 hours/month equivalent to 19.62% salary reduction).



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

While the HIDEOE and the BOE have supported teachers and the need to increase teacher pay in the past, HSTA does not support the conversation returning to balancing the budget on the backs of educators and our keiki. This is the last thing we should ever do.

More importantly, since Governor Ige's initial meeting with public sector union leaders, he has publicly stated that he is looking into alternatives, such as borrowing from the Federal Reserve and waiting for more state stimulus funding from Congress. Unfortunately, neither of these preferred alternatives are guaranteed. This is where we ask the BOE and HIDEOE advocate for these alternatives which are completely viable and what other states are advocating for. Why would the issue of cutting educator and state worker pay come up yet again, when we have other viable alternatives? It is not the solution at all. In fact, pay cuts or furloughs for teachers and other state workers will further hurt our economy.

As the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization (UHERO) recently said, "We cannot overstate the tremendous adverse impact that a sharp contraction in government spending will have on the Hawaii economy, and the corresponding positive effects that sustaining public spending will confer." It found that cutting salaries would have a multiplier effect that would "lead to a drop in GDP of \$3.3 billion over the 2020-2022 period."

We ask you to urge our governor, to consider the following options:

- Follow UHERO's recommendations to borrow up to \$3 billion from the Federal Reserve's Municipal Liquidity Facility;
- Wait for the federal government's next stimulus funding supported by President Trump and Democratic congressional leaders, which will support lost revenue for state and local governments;
- Use the \$1.1 billion in cash surplus and rainy day fund for the interim period;
- Use the \$53 million allocated to Hawaii schools and colleges under the CARES Act;
- Take advantage of the significant savings from school buildings being closed in the spring semester such as the reduction of electrical and transportation costs, as well.



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Please look to HSTA, AFSCME, HGEA suggestions to Governor Ige that offer 15+ alternatives to public worker pay cuts. Full report here <https://www.hsta.org/News/Recent-Stories/hsta-afscme-hgea-offer-governor-15-alternatives-to-public-worker-pay-cuts>

If educators' pay is cut, and please understand that furloughs are also a reduction in their paycheck too, more teachers will resign, especially those who are able to retire, but have stayed in our ranks to help our keiki. If these cuts or furloughs go through, it will drive our senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with substitutes, unqualified teachers, and our keiki will suffer. People keep saying they want our school system to be accountable, but how can we even be held accountable if our schools are not able to recruit and retain certified teachers? During furlough years and times of economic downturns, tenured teachers have already sacrificed and have not yet recovered, and this was over ten years ago.

As we have stated before, many time, in Hawai'i, teacher turnover is high, it is not just our new teachers leaving, and the number of teachers leaving continues to rise. Chronic teacher turnover, in turn, forces the department of education to rely on emergency hires and long-term substitute teachers, who are not certified teachers, to fill vacancies resulting in thousands of students each day in a class without a licensed teacher. Our teacher shortage problem is further clarified in the DOE's 2017-18 Employment Report, which shows that teacher voluntary resignations increased from 850 to 1,111 with only about 30% being due to retirement. It has only increased since then even more every single year.

This lack of certified teachers causes inequity for our students. Already low salaries are impacting the retention of licensed, tenured teachers who are essential to closing the achievement gap to ensure equity and excellence for each student.

Currently, only 53 percent of teachers remain in the Hawaii DOE for five years or more. In addition, about 1,000 long-term substitutes and emergency hires filling vacancies in classrooms are not graduates of a state-approved teacher education program. In fact, some of those subs and emergency hires are not even college graduates.

A study published by the Learning Policy Institute in 2016 showed the following: Based on a review of 30 studies published within the last 15 years that analyze the effect of teaching experience on student outcomes in the United States and met specific methodological criteria, researchers found that:



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- Teaching experience is positively associated with student achievement gains throughout a teacher's career. Gains in teacher effectiveness associated with experience are most steep in teachers' initial years, but continue to be significant as teachers reach the second, and often third, decades of their careers.
- As teachers gain experience, their students not only learn more, as measured by standardized tests, they are also more likely to do better on other measures of success, such as school attendance.
- Teachers' effectiveness increases at a greater rate when they teach in a supportive and collegial working environment, and when they accumulate experience in the same grade level, subject, or district.
- More-experienced teachers support greater student learning for their colleagues and the school as a whole, as well as for their own students.

We have to do more to encourage educators, especially those who have years and even decades of experience, to remain in the classroom. We cannot allow their salaries to be cut through a direct pay cut, nor furloughs.

As our NEA President, Lily Eskelsen García, also wrote in a recent letter to Governor Ige, "Teachers are rising to meet this challenge because we know our students need us now, and will rely on us to restore a sense of normalcy when the crisis ebbs. This will be much more difficult if pay cuts or furloughs are enacted because Hawaii will very likely lose teachers across the spectrum: those who are close to retirement, those with several years of experience and expertise, and those just entering the profession, bringing new insights and perspectives. Given the teacher shortage your state already faces, students will ultimately pay for this loss at a time when Hawaii will need all-hands-on-deck to create the nurturing environments that will help students recover and thrive," she said.

To take care of the needs of our hardworking public school teachers, and to provide our keiki with the quality education they deserve, the Hawaii State Teachers Association implores the Board of Education and the Hawai'i Department of Education to NOT look at pay cuts nor furloughs for our teachers. That is the LAST thing we should be doing. There are alternatives. This is NOT necessary and we all need to stand together against any discussion about they pay cuts or furloughs.



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

teacher salary

Matthew O'neil <o'neilm@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:13 PM

To whom it may concern:

Teacher's are chronically underpaid in Hawaii. Schools cannot attract or retain talent on 40k a year. That is not a sustainable wage.

Governor Ige, you have a decision to make. Erode the future of this island and its people through budget cuts in education, or find the money somewhere else. For the future of the people of Hawaii, these cuts are unfair, unnecessary and shouldn't even be on the table.

Let's talk about a 20% increase for all the adaptation and tenacity teacher's have shown thus far. Do kids get taught magically or do teacher's make that happen? Any cuts to teacher pay are simply unacceptable. This proposal is totally out of bounds and needs serious reconsideration.



teacher salaries

Leilani Vierra <lhevierra@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:18 PM

To Whom It May Concern!

I am writing to you with concerns regarding possible cuts to teacher's pay. It really bothers me that in the 27 years that I have been teaching, there have been countless times that the state has considered cuts in education. If teachers pay were to be cut, this would be detrimental for students. Schools are already having to hire long term substitutes because teachers are leaving mid-year due to teacher burnout and low pay. Although many people think teachers work 5 days a week, this is not true! Teachers are working 7 days a week. Yes, our weekends are spent grading papers, inputting grades, planning lessons, driving to school to xerox assignments, preparing for the hands-on lessons, emailing parents/students to answer questions or provide feedback on assignments and so on. How many more teachers would leave if there was a pay cut on top of the already low pay and multitude of work teachers do outside of school? That would leave many positions unfilled and schools having no choice but to hire unlicensed or unqualified teachers. Our students deserve to have highly qualified teachers in the classroom.

I hope you take into consideration all the testimonies you receive and that the thought of cutting teachers salaries is not a good idea. Mahalo for your time!

Mahalo,
Leilani Vierra
Wheeler Middle School



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

Testimony against teacher pay cuts from a Hawai'i State teacher

Paulina Felcher <paulinafelcher@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:21 PM

Dear BOE,

I am a first grade teacher at Kapa'a Elementary school on Kaua'i. I was shocked, saddened, and honestly quite upset to hear of Mr. Ige's proposal to cut teachers pay by 20% and first responders by 10%. This is completely unacceptable. Our state already pays its teachers pennies compared to other states with the same or lower cost of living. The teacher retention rate it's terrible, and many teachers are moving to more affordable areas that pay their teachers well. I'm confident in saying I am a great teacher and I love what I do, but I will not and can not live in squalor to continue in this profession. I sincerely hope that you do not go forward with this proposition, you do everything in your power to fight it, and instead you do the opposite and pay our teachers what they are worth so that our public education can get better in the state of Hawaii.

Sincerely,
Paulina Felcher



RE: Cuts to Teachers' Salaries

Lucas Dembart <lucas.dembart.19@tfacorps.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:25 PM

Aloha,

My name is Lucas Dembart, and I am a 7th grade English and Hawaiian Studies teacher at Wheeler Middle.

I am reaching out to urge you to reconsider the proposed cuts to teachers' salaries for the following reasons:

- 1) Teacher pay in Hawaii is already among the lowest in the nation, especially when considering the cost of living. If our salaries are cut, many of us may not be able to maintain living here and might have to leave our positions, causing even more teacher vacancy than already exists, and therefore hurting the potential of our students to feel connected to their community.
- 2) Teachers are among a small group of professions with consistent pay throughout this recession, and we are one of the only sources of money being injected back into the economy by providing patronage to small businesses. If our salaries are cut, you would be directly cutting off part of small business revenue streams.
- 3) Many teachers have become the sole providers for their families during a period of astronomical unemployment rates. If you cut teacher salaries, you would cause further damage to the financial stability of thousands of families across the islands, and potentially increase the risk to property owners that rely on our incomes to continue paying rent and managing the property.
- 4) Teachers already work countless more hours than we are paid for, and even sacrifice part of our income to pay for classroom supplies which are not provided to us by the state. By cutting our salaries and continuing to rely on us to purchase our own resources, you are forcing us to invest less in our students and spend more time outside of school hours working to make up our income in a 2nd or even 3rd job.

Overall, the existence of this proposal is devaluing everything we work to achieve for our children and our communities as a whole, and you are severely limiting our ability to provide a stable and positive learning environment to hundreds of thousands of kids throughout the islands. Please consider how history will look upon a government that chooses to financially handicap the foundational workers of its education system and public services before finding alternative ways to limit funds being spent by the state.

Regards,
Lucas Dembart
Wheeler Middle School



Please do not compromise our students' education!
Dawn Tillery to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 12:30 PM
From: "Dawn Tillery" <dawn.tillery@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

It was brought to my attention that one of the budget options being considered for the upcoming school year is Directed Leave Without Pay. Our students have already missed out on valuable educational experiences due to the coronavirus pandemic. Please do not further compromise their education by reducing their classroom time this upcoming school year.

Mahalo,
Dawn Tillery
Hilo High School
school counselor, grades 9-12, alpha A-F

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Do not reduce teacher salary

Waianela to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/05/2020 12:31 PM

From: "Waianela" <wboiser@hotmail.com>

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

Aloha,

My name is Waianela Boiser and I have been a special education teacher with Kapaa High School for over 21 years. I have been through the 2001 teacher strike and the furloughs in 2009 and haven't recovered from those salary cuts.

For many of us our household income has been reduced to just one income. My partner works for the tourist industry and has lost his job and we are living on solely my income. Teacher's salary is not enough to buy a home in Hawaii. I haven't had the luxury of owning my own home because based on my salary alone and my student debt I do not qualify. So I was born and raised here and am in a "professional career" that does not afford me a home.

Seriously, shame on people who are in positions of leadership and are not helping the people of Hawaii.

Mahalo



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

20% salary cuts???

Kara Ishimaru <karakeiko@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:37 PM

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE consider 1-2 days/week of furloughs INSTEAD of 20% salary cuts.
TEACHERS will get paid for the days they work.

What I had hoped for was to end the school year on April 30, 2020 since no grades would be given in quarter 4 anyway. For the month of May, the teachers wouldn't get paid which would save the state money. By doing this, it would have eliminated all negative thoughts from the community about teachers teleworking or not!!!

Kara Iopa
Grade 1
Hilo, HI

Sent from my iPhone



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

detrimental loss to current state of affairs - Hawaii DOE

Olga Dolgopolova <dolgopolova.olgaa@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov, lnnkawano@gmail.com

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:40 PM

Aloha,

My name is Olga Dolgopolova - I am an educator from Wheeler Middle School (Oahu). I am writing this email to share my voice:

I can write an entire email about teacher impact and how educators really are at the center of the change-making process for a better Hawaii. I can also highlight how teachers in Hawaii already have some of the lowest salaries in the nation, after factoring the cost of living. Nonetheless, this is information that we already know.

As someone who has studied human nature and psychology - I can reassure you that what keeps us up at night is not what we have but what we know we have lost. As we think about pay cuts, let us think about a fraction of the loss that the state will experience every single day:

- a broken Promise Plan, with future progress undone
- the greatest teacher shortage, heightened by news headlines across the country
- strikes that are echoed by a broken community
- a drastic increase in unemployment
- poverty and crime
- stagnant population with a lack of access to opportunities
- keiki who lack mentors and resources
- an increased list of individuals who can't afford to pay rent or mortgage
- a crumbling community

Let us lose sleep. Let us embrace this loss. And let us be reminded that it could have been different.

Rojd# rojrsryd



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

Budget cuts for teachers

Scott LaBoy <huilokahiacademy@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:41 PM

Aloha Board of Education Members,

My name is Scott LaBoy, I am a School Counselor at Kailua Intermediate School. I am sending you this email to ask you to please do not reduce teachers' salaries! These cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage and this in turn will ultimately affect our students. For instance more students will have to go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Also students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

In addition to this, these cuts will affect mine and my families financial well being. I am presently working 2 jobs trying to make ends meet in Hawaii's high cost of living. With these pay cuts I may have to find a third job or leave the teaching profession all together. Thank you for your time and your consideration in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Scott LaBoy

School Counselor

Kailua Intermediate School



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

No to teacher salary reduction.

C Falk <mrfalk808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:45 PM

As it is teacher appreciation week the idea of voting to reduce teacher pay is, at the least, bad press. Teachers are still working. Teachers will continue to work. They should continue to be paid their negotiated salaries and receive their benefits. Many are still impacted by furlough Fridays. Facilities are not being used so the electricity and water used is near nothing. How much would that offset any deficit?
Belts need to be tightened, but balancing budgets on the backs of teachers is not a good plan, especially not the near 20% cuts that may happen. Teachers form a large part of Hawai'i's middle income earners. They help fuel our local economy. Cutting pay is also a bad recruitment strategy.
Respectfully,
Chris Falk

Sent from my iPhone



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

(no subject)

treena kamiya <treenay@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:54 PM

My name is Treena Kamiya. I am a sixth grade teacher at Washington Middle School. I have proudly served the DOE for 20 years. Currently, I am frustrated with the way the state and DOE are handling this whole situation. Their lack of direction has caused a lot of stress for everyone and I think it's unfair to have to justify whether or not teachers are working. It is emotionally tolling on us everyday we are not with our students. We spend hours trying to figure out how to reach them and teach them when all we want is the make sure they are ok and give them a hug. On the other hand, I am learning a lot about distance learning and excited to try new things, but it really isn't the same for me. I miss being in the classroom .

A pay cut would mean more than money. I would be unable to support my family alone. I would lose our house and I would have to find another job. Teaching is the only thing I've ever wanted to do and just the thought of the government taking away 20% of what little I make is demoralizing and disheartening. I don't mind putting in extra hours. I don't mind being nurse, counselor and sheriff along with teaching my students. I do mind being taken advantage of and discarded as a professional. Please, for the sake of our students, do not do this.

Treena Kamiya



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

Please preserve teacher pay

Laurie <lschafer747@yahoo.com>
Reply-To: lschafer747@yahoo.com
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:54 PM

Cutting teacher pay would not only effect my personal ability to stay in Hawaii but also impact my students.

I have been teaching in a hard to staff area for 15 years. I would love to continue teaching here but a pay cut would not only devastate my family, but it would take away quality teachers from the field and impact our students. The children of Hawaii deserve high qualified teachers that are paid as professionals should be.

Sincerely,
Laurie O'Brien
Keaau High School
Math and Computer Science Teacher grades 9 - 12



Testimony against 20% pay cut

Rachael Denessen <rachael.denessen@mauihigh.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 12:55 PM

Hello,

I am one of the many teachers and parents that will be damaged by this proposed 20% pay cut. The stake I have in this is deeply personal, but it is also professional and ethical. Personally, my family of three is already on a paycheck to paycheck life and not by choice. The low pay I receive for my work plus the high cost of living and the addition of our baby boy this year makes it difficult to pay all our bills every month, let alone set anything aside for savings, for emergencies, or for our son's future. If we are forced to take a 20% payout that we do not deserve, I will not be able to pay my rent. I will not be able to feed my family. I don't know how we will survive. We may have to consider leaving the state as so many others are doing. We don't want to. Maui is our home. It is where my son was born, where his village is. But if we cannot support our family on the income from a job that demands an incredible amount of service to the community, then we will be forced to leave the community we serve.

Professionally, it is unacceptable that the governor is taking money from children and their teachers. Teachers are the hardest working, most adaptable professionals, as this recent pandemic has proven over and over again. In addition to being a teacher, I am also department head, and all of the feedback I've gotten from them since the move to online teaching has begun is that we are working harder than ever. We are more stressed-out than ever. But we are rising to the challenge, adapting, and doing everything we can for our keiki. Why is our government not doing the same? Why is it that our teachers and our keiki are asked to suffer over and over again when it comes to money? Why is it never the big businesses, the million-dollar resorts, the private sector? We already know that politicians only value teachers and children when we can make them look good for election season. This 20% cut to our already poverty level pay is an absolute slap to the face. It guarantees that we will lose what few highly qualified teachers we have and that we will not be able to get new ones. Who will want to teach somewhere that demonstrates time and again that their work will not be valued?

And ultimately, as it always does, it comes down to the keiki. Who will be teaching them? At a 20% pay cut, the only teachers that we will be able to attract are unqualified and inadequately educated ones. Students will suffer across the islands in crowded classrooms that are lead by incompetent teachers. And this decision will reverberate through the education system for years if not decades. Look where we are now-- our education system is already ranked one of the worst in the country. This will surely push us further down the list. The bottom line is this-- if teacher pay is cut, the keiki will suffer through no fault of the teachers.

--

Sincerely,

Mrs. Denessen

Expository Writing II and British Literature
ELA Department Head
Maui High School

"You know what thinking is? It's just a fancy word for changing your mind." - Peter Harness

Maui High School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Mr. Jamie Yap, Maui High School Principal. [660 South Lono Ave.](#) [Kahului, Hawaii 96732.](#) Jamie_Yap@notes.k12.hi.us ph# 808-727-4000.



Teacher Salary Cuts

Kara Sweeney <kara.sweeney.19@tfacorps.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 1:09 PM

Aloha,

My name is Kara Sweeney, and I am a High School Special Education Inclusion Science Teacher at Kealakehe High School in Kona, HI on the Big Island. I am desperately reaching out to ask that you please vote against cutting teachers salaries for a PLETHORA or reasons.

- 1) Pay for teachers in the state of Hawaii is already painstakingly low, my salary right now is below 40Ka year and after taxes I barely take home 26K. With the especially high cost of living in Hawaii I can hardly make ends meet AS IS. If pay gets cut even more, myself and many of my colleagues will not be able to maintain our lives and will have to find other types of employment or potentially even leave the state. There is already so much teacher vacancy, and as Kona being a high need area where we can't even get substitutes half the time, it will only further hurt the education of our kids. I want to stay here, I want to stay teaching, and I want to stay in a position where I can be a positive influence on my students and our community. Losing good teachers will also result in larger classes, less attention and care for kids, poor graduation rates and just overall less opportunities for our keiki.
- 2) Us teachers were lucky enough to have consistent pay throughout this COVID pandemic. This means that we are one of the only sources of money being injected BACK into the economy by buying things, especially at small local businesses. If our salaries are cut, you would be directly cutting off part of small business revenue streams.
- 3) Many teachers have become the only income for their families. If you cut teacher salaries, you would cause further damage to the financial stability of thousands of families across the islands, and potentially increase the risk to property owners that rely on our incomes to continue paying rent and managing the property.
- 4) Teachers already work countless more hours than we are paid for, and even sacrifice part of our income to pay for classroom supplies which are not provided to us by the state. By cutting our salaries and continuing to rely on us to purchase our own resources, you are forcing us to invest less in our students and spend more time outside of school hours working to make up our income in a 2nd or even 3rd job.

Overall, the existence of this proposal is devaluing everything we work to achieve for our children and our communities as a whole, and you are severely limiting our ability to provide a stable and positive learning environment to hundreds of thousands of kids throughout the islands. Please consider how history will look upon a government that chooses to financially handicap the foundational workers of its education system and public services before finding alternative ways to limit funds being spent by the state. Additionally, knowledge is power! It's no secret that there are issues with the Hawaii Public Schools, but we've worked so hard to GET funding, improve them, and SUPPORT our keiki. Doing this would turn the clocks back and give our keiki a WORSE education and limit the kind of adults they will become in our society. Please reconsider the real repercussions that this would have on ALL families.

Mahalo,

Kara Sweeney



Salary Cut Options

Catherine Price to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 01:18 PM

From: "Catherine Price" <catherine.price@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hello, I am Catherine Price and I work at Waipahu Intermediate as a 7th grade ELA teacher. I am writing to urge the BOE not to reduce teachers' salaries. I just completed my first year as a full time teacher while also going through the MEdT program at UH Manoa. I've enjoyed all that I have learned and look forward to teaching in Hawaii for the foreseeable future. However, I and other teachers must have an appropriate and reasonable salary to do so. Please consider alternatives.

--

Catherine Price

7/ELA

WIS

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Testimony

Morgan Mauiola <morgan.mauiola@mauihigh.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 1:26 PM

Hello,

My name is Morgan (King) Mauiola and I teach freshman English at Maui High school. I have been teaching for three years and will be tenured in the fall and I absolutely love what I do. I didn't go into the job for the money, but I may have to leave it if you cut our pay by 20%. I am currently in escrow for a house and the idea of my pay getting cut even lower than it already is being an untenured teacher that has only moved one level on the PD scale makes it terrifying. I have been working so hard it move up on the pay scale (and worked two jobs) to make more money to live on Maui where I was born and raised and making these pay cuts will not only take away a lot of my hard work, but make it almost impossible to live here. Additionally, More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement and students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. Please think about the children who will be suffering if these pay cuts happen. And additionally please think about us teachers who often go overlooked and are still the driving force of everything. Without teachers, we would have nothing. Please support us and do not take from our pay.

Thank you,
Morgan (King) Mauiola

--

Morgan Mauiola
English Language Arts
Maui High School

"One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world." - Malala Yousafzai

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No pay cut, PLEASE!

Leah Jade O'Brien <leahjadeobrien@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 1:28 PM

Aloha,

My name is Leah O'Brien, and I am proud to teach 11th ELA at Maui High School.

I am just completing the requirements of a Hawaii SATEP, and I will be a Hawaii State licensed teacher in just a few weeks. The 2019-2020 school year has been a financial challenge due to my Emergency Hires' Salary, but I was only able to do it because it was supposed to be temporary. For almost a year, I have been looking forward to completing my licensure program and becoming eligible to earn a Hawaii Teachers' Salary.

It will be a SIGNIFICANT STRUGGLE to live on a First-Year Teachers' Salary that has been reduced by 20%. I spent close to \$2000.00 of my money on my classroom and teaching supplies this school year, and I expect to do the same for the 2020-2021 school year. Cutting teachers' salaries will negatively impact the contributions that I can make towards my students.

Like many, with the adverse effects of Covid-19, I have a growing amount of expenses that have placed a financial burden on my family's livelihood. This also greatly affects my potential to build and maintain my teaching curriculum. Therefore, I ask that there be no reduction in our pay.

As teachers, we love our kids. We give them our all in meeting the demands of our honored jobs.

We deserve salaries that meet the needs of our beloved profession. Allow us to serve our community and our kids!

Mahalo and BE WELL,

Leah O'Brien
Maui High School
English Department



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

again?

Lane Yanagisawa <lyanagisawa61@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 1:27 PM

ive gone through strikes, furloughs now this? Should i retire?

--

Lane Yanagisawa



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

Proposed pay cuts for teachers

Malgorzata Herrick <gosiaherrick@hotmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 1:33 PM

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

To Whom It May Concern,

As a Hawaii educator, a member of the community, and a parent, I am very worried about proposed 20% pay cut for teachers. I understand that the whole country is suffering right now, but creating another group of people struggling even more financially here in Hawaii is not going to resolve anything. We all know how expensive living in Hawaii is. However, only I and my family knows the struggles and stress of trying to survive here on my salary. My husband hasn't been successful in finding a steady job here. We have 3 children under 6- years old. We rent a house, and all of my salary goes toward the rent, bills, and groceries. We are eating through our savings just to stay afloat. Losing 20% of my income would make us homeless as we won't be able to stay at our house.

I do not want to leave Hawaii or use good bank to feed my family. I want to be able to feed my children and provide a home for them.

I urge you to take into consideration the fact, that some of the teachers are single parents or the only income providers for their families. Please, do not take away from us means to feed our families.

Regards,

Malgorzata Herrick
Kindergarten teacher
Konawaena Elementary

Sent from my iPhone



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

pay cuts?

Lane Yanagisawa <lyanagisawa61@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 1:33 PM

Ive been through a strike 20 years ago, furloughs 10 years ago. Now this?
Should i retire now?

Awesome way to appreciate teachers during TA week; guess it means less than ever.

Hows about banking all your mileage for state business into an account, wait what if everyone did that and used miles from this account for future travel instead of personally banking it for their kids college flights. Id bet ee'd save millions!

--

Lane Yanagisawa



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

Rejection of Teacher Salary Cut

Terrence Tenjoma <terrytenjoma@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 1:51 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

As a public school teacher living in the state of Hawai'i, I'm living the paycheck-to-paycheck life with my current teacher salary. If this 20% salary cut were to be implemented, there is no doubt that I will not be able to continue paying my monthly mortgage. Please reconsider this decision because teacher salaries are already too low for the cost of living in this state. The decision to cut teacher pay will have longlasting financial impacts on teachers, as well as shrinking the already diminished teacher workforce that's currently in the Hawai'i DOE. The keiki deserve better than this. COVID-19 has already considerably affected student learning, please don't make it worse.

Sincerely,
Terrence Tenjoma



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

Proposed Teacher Pay Cuts

Mr Benavitz <mr.benavitz@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 1:52 PM

Good afternoon,

My name is Micah Benavitz, I have taught for ten years, and I currently teach social social studies at Mililani High School. Currently there is a teacher shortage in Hawaii mainly because of the salary and the cost of living. However, if the BOE or the State decide to reduce teacher's salaries to balance the State budget it would be disastrous for the public education system. Teachers would be force to find better paying jobs, or the senior teacher may be forced into early retirement. This would hurt the keiki's education without having qualified teachers. Cutting teacher's pay would also result in a high dependence on substitute teachers or unqualified teachers.

Personally I depend on my spouse's income, and my own to provide for my family. 95% of my current income goes to my mortgage. If teachers receive a pay cut it is impossible for me to continue working for the DOE. I know of co-workers who's spouse has been recently unemployed due to COVID-19, and some of them told me if there is a teacher's pay cut they would be forced to seek other employment. The reason why I became a teacher was to help my community, and guide the next generation to become outstanding citizens. But it will be impossible for me to continue my passion if I cannot financially support my family.

Sincerely,

Micah Anjin Benavitz



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

No Budget Cuts

Jerome Crisostomo <romirome808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 1:56 PM

Aloha,

My name is Jerome Crisostomo, I am a first year special education math teacher at Farrington High School. I currently teach 9th and 10th graders. My students need the consistency of highly qualified licensed teachers in the classroom that will help them excel in the classroom and in the real world. They have had different teachers/long-term subs in the past. It is not fair to our students that budget cuts will strip that away from them. Budget cuts will steer away new aspiring and existing teachers to leave the profession from an already critical teacher shortage and high cost of living here in Hawaii. Give our keiki the education they deserve, don't take it away.

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony

Diana Wan to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 02:01 PM

From: "Diana Wan" <diana.wan@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha, BOE,

Do not reduce teacher's salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teacher shortage. More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Sincerely,

Diana Wan

Washington Middle School

Dance and Drama Teacher

--

Diana Wan, M. Ed.

Dance and Drama Teacher | Washington Middle School

1633 South King Street

Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

Phone: (808) 973-0177

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“This too shall pass.” Do not reduce teachers’ salaries!-Justin Allen

Justin Allen <allenjc511@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 2:05 PM

Dear BOE,

“This too shall pass.” We are all affected by the COVID 19 pandemic. Some are affected emotionally, financially, spiritually, or all three ways... maybe even in more ways. I understand how our economy has been affected due to the closures and lack of tourism. However, as a high school mathematics teacher, who lives by a budget, I understand how a 19.67% salary cut could DEVASTATE all of our TEACHERS. My wife is an elementary teacher as well. We moved here in 2018 right out of college to become teachers here in Maui. We have since bought a house and had a child in Maui. We love our students, community, and our growing ‘ohana here in Maui. However, a pay cut of any sort would kill our budget and make living in Maui nearly impossible. We had to refinance our house, pursue our masters degree, and cut back our monthly budget just to manage to afford to have one child here on Maui. Anywhere else in the United States, professionals such as teachers are paid and respected as such the professionals we are. However, during this crisis we talk about cutting the salaries of first responders, teachers and other vital government employees? Is this a joke? What certainly won't be a joke is how there is already a 1,000 certified teacher shortage in Hawai'i and there will be a much larger teacher shortage if there is any pay cut that goes out to teachers. Let me be clear, if a 20% salary cut happens to teachers, my wife and I will be forced to move back to the mainland. We are both licensed and certified teachers. We have experienced this pandemic for close to two (2) months and we are talking about a salary cut of 20% for up to 3-4 years? Again, nonsensical and unfathomable. I encourage you to borrow from the federal government, use our rainy day fund, increase our sales tax by 1-2%, anything other than salary cuts. “This too shall pass.” Do not reduce teachers’ salaries!

Sincerely,
Justin Allen
Secondary Mathematics Teacher
Maui High School



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

Hawai'i deserves better, for our keiki, our ohana, and our community

Rhonda Comet <rhondacomet@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 2:17 PM

Aloha,

I normally do not write or reach out in regards to political topics. Today I am compelled to be heard as the damaging effects of cutting salaries when there is already a federal reserve of monies for education given to the Governor for education, is going to cost Hawai'i as whole economic distress for decades to come.

Nearly every state used the funding for education. Hawai'i is the only one making this move and makes our Governor look embarrassingly dim-witted as it relates to understanding economies. Hawai'i deserves to be treated BETTER than other states because of the growth that has been made in our state in regards to education. We were beginning to see growth! This will set our communities back five years if not more.

With hiring freezes we will be relying on substitute teachers to teach our Keiki in content areas that they have never been trained in, like Math and ELA. Totally unqualified teachers are what we want for our communities?

There are not enough teachers and the ones that do live here will leave if they can not afford to live here because of the decrease in salaries.

Senior teachers will take their retirement and go because Hawai'i did not care enough about them instead of taking a pay cut to do the same work they have done for us for decades. I know two who are preparing this for a hard to staff school on Maui.

I beseech you to read each letter you receive.

Rhonda Comet
Special Education Teacher



Do NOT cut teacher & school employee pay!
Jaxon Doi to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 02:18 PM
From: "Jaxon Doi" <jaxon.doi@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Board of Education,

My name is Jaxon Doi, and I teach 10th and 12th grade Social Studies (US History, Sociology, and Psychology) at Waipahu High School. I am also the Social Studies Department Head and the percussion instructor for the Waipahu Marching Band.

While I understand that the coronavirus is impacting our economy, teacher pay must NOT be cut! Speaking on behalf of myself, teachers I know, and our precious children, this would result in:

- veteran teachers -- some of whom are the best teachers due to their experience -- retiring early
- young and new teachers leaving the profession and/or the state because they will no longer be able to afford living in Hawaii as teachers
- the worsening of the teacher shortage crisis, which means overcrowded classrooms and our keiki being taught by unqualified substitutes
- increased economic strain on the families whom teachers support
- lost educational opportunities for our keiki, the long-term cost of which is incalculable

The quality of public education is correlated with virtually every societal ill you can name: poverty, crime, violence, substance abuse, poor health / life expectancy, ideological extremism, the list goes on. Improving education helps to mitigate all of these problems, while weakening education -- such as by cutting teacher salaries -- makes them WORSE.

Do the right thing for Hawaii's long-term wellbeing. Do NOT cut education funds and salaries! The Governor and our legislators have given us plenty of lip service about how they support education, and that was easy for them to do while our state and country's economy was strong (at least for the powerful and wealthy) in recent years. Now we're facing tough challenges, and it's time they keep their word.

Sincerely,

Jaxon Doi
Social Studies Teacher & Department Head
Waipahu High School
jaxon.doi@k12.hi.us

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

teacher pay cuts

Robyn Skudlarek <robynskudlarek@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 2:28 PM

Aloha,

I am writing to respectfully ask that the BOE considers all other options to address the financial shortfalls that are projected before cutting teacher salaries. Cutting salaries would likely result in early retirement for veteran teachers, more long term substitute teachers in classrooms, teachers who have been here for less than three years leaving the state, and those on the lowest rung of the pay scale being asked to live on a wage that is, in fact, NOT a living wage. I personally know of two young, energetic, highly educated teachers who are strongly thinking about leaving the state because the wages are already too low. We cannot afford to lose these types of teachers! We need to do everything we can do support them. Youth who see a consistent, yearly turnover of teachers at their school tend to shy away from establishing a trusting relationship with these adults because, in the words of one student, "they are just gonna be gone next year anyway". Research shows that relationships are absolutely critical to students' academic success and mental health.

I think most parents now understand very clearly what it means to be a teacher as many of them have tried to support their child with distance learning during Covid. Now is the time to honor teachers and continue to recognize them for the work they do each and every day. Many do so at their own momentary expense - because it is a calling. Teachers are essential workers and they impact lives each and every day in ways that are profound and, in many cases, life altering for young people.

Mahalo for supporting teachers during this time.

Regards,
Robyn Skudlarek
Resource Teacher HIDOE



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

Please don't cut teacher's pay

jenningse001 <jenningse001@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 2:29 PM

Aloha and thanks for taking the time to read my email.

My name is Erik Jennings and I am a special education teacher at Lahainaluna High School on the island of Maui.

Please consider not cutting Teachers Pay at this time.. for the first time as a teacher in 15 years I feel where I am starting to be able to pay down some debt. Cutting teacher pay will not only hurt the teachers for hurt many students as well.. before the pandemic many students were in classes with long-term subs or even day to day Subs.. cutting education would only make this problem worse leaving more students without highly qualified teacher in the classroom.. again I ask that you please consider other options before cutting teacher pay.. I know your task. Had their hard with all that is going on but please take a moment to think about the future needs of the students..

Take care

Erik Jennings

808 385 6592

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device



HAROLD K.L. CASTLE
FOUNDATION

To: Hawaii State Board of Education Chairperson Catherine Payne
Vice Chair Brian DeLima
Members of the State Board of Education

From: Alex Harris, Vice President for Programs

Date: May 4, 2020

We hope each of you are healthy and safe as you shoulder your huge responsibilities for the children of Hawaii and for those who teach them. In these unprecedented times we are all creating the new normal, day by day. Now that we know public schools will remain closed through the end of the school year, we must evaluate the loss of learning and prepare a road map for the future.

Thankfully, federal CARES Act funds were made available by US ED for emergency relief to states, to be used for distance education, student health and safety and executing plans for the next school year. This testimony recommends strategic ways to make the most of these funds.

Research by the national assessment non-profit NWEA estimates that that this past quarter coupled with summer learning loss will erase *all learning gains from this school year* by the start of next school year.¹ Impacts are particularly acute in grades K-2 reading and middle grades mathematics.

Public education systems have never been able to make up learning loss on this scale. Nor can we expect with any certainty to reopen schools on time as the nature of the virus makes it likely we may once again need to rely on distance learning at some point in the next school year.

So what plans can mitigate the loss of learning and prepare for a very uncertain future? We believe that five strategic actions are important to consider:

- 1) **Use the Summer Wisely.** We recommend repurposing the high-stakes Smarter Balanced test contract to instead offer an interim assessment for all students prior to the end of this school year. Former PARCC CEO Laura Slover offers several smart ways in which to assess learning during the shutdown.²

¹ https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/04/KAP5122-Collaborative-Brief_Covid19-Slide-APR20_FW.pdf

² https://www.the74million.org/article/federally-mandated-state-tests-may-be-gone-but-there-are-other-better-ways-educators-can-assess-students-during-the-shutdown/?utm_content=127045322&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter&hss_channel=tw-229554815

The goal of this effort is not accountability; rather, it is to gauge which students have met the academic content standards and are on grade level. Once it is known which students need remediation, we recommend that federal funds be used to underwrite and dramatically scale up summer school to offer remediation, and targeted credit recovery. Summer school has an established structure that does not require a supplemental teachers contract.

We encourage the Department to deliver coursework on key academic gateway courses like English and mathematics. Distance learning charter schools such as Hawaii Technology Academy and Myron B Thompson Academy as well as the DOE's e-schools program have deep expertise in distance education that should be leveraged.

As summer school only covers a half day for a two-week period, we also recommend using federal funds to offer recall pay to teacher leaders like the Hawaii State Teacher Fellows to design additional summer learning opportunities.

- 2) **Focus on Early Literacy.** At a recent national Literacy Summit hosted by the Council of Chief State School Officers, several state superintendents termed early literacy 'the civic rights issue of our time'.³ Never has that been more true. Young children with limited attention spans are the ones suffering the greatest loss of learning right now.

Thankfully, Hawaii is blessed with a five-year, \$50M federal Comprehensive State Literacy Development grant in support of school and complex area efforts to promote early literacy. This is a huge opportunity to rethink how early reading is delivered. We encourage the Department to review these plans in the context of our current COVID-19 reality and ensure they reflect state of the art science in how to teach reading and deploy curriculum. Plans should then be accelerated so this work begins immediately.

- 3) **Personalize Instruction.** All resources must be fully maximized, especially the talent of Hawaii's educators. The first two months of the next school year are critical. We encourage the Department to deploy every single non classroom teacher at the school, complex area and state level back into classrooms to support intensive small group instruction and learning using Response to Intervention protocols, which are well developed at many schools.

Taking this action will send a powerful message about what the Department values. Offering students a far smaller, personalized learning environment to start the year should kickstart achievement – especially for those farthest from opportunity. We estimate this action could add 1,500 - 2,000 teachers back into the classroom, at no additional salary cost.

- 4) **Budget Strategically.** Unquestionably, federal funds should be put towards increasing broadband access, purchasing devices at the system level drawing on our economies of scale, and training all classroom teachers in how to adjust their practice to a distance learning

³ <https://www.the74million.org/article/at-national-literacy-summit-state-education-chiefs-warn-of-reading-stagnation/>

environment. Next school year will likely be a hybrid approach of in-person and remote learning and teachers should be fully prepared to deliver rich instruction to all students as simply as possible.

At the same time, state revenues will be far lower during this time of much greater need. Chief Financial Officers from 12 large school districts recently joined Education Resource Strategy and Aspen Institute to offer additional budgeting strategies to prioritize student learning needs.⁴ Third-party expertise as you develop next year's budget can help prioritize scarce resources while increasing legislative confidence in the recommendations. We would be happy to consider cost-sharing with you for these outside experts if they aim to bring lasting benefits to our school system.

- 5) **Take Part in the Economic Solution.** The economy cannot recover until schools reopen. Beyond that, however, the Department has a chance to accelerate more students into career pathways that lead to jobs paying a family-sustaining wage. Hawaii P20, UH Community Colleges and the Chamber of Commerce are laying important groundwork for work-based learning and learning pathways to degrees and certificates that hold real value to employers.

More than half of the Department's public high schools have embraced career academies as their school design of choice. And the Department is mid-stream in an important effort to modernize outdated career technical education programs of study. *Each of these efforts offer a critical opportunity to position public schools as engines of economic revitalization.*

Now is the time to double down, to prioritize anticipated federal infrastructure funds for high school classrooms, labs, clinics, and shops that offer career technical education in areas of high need. Put federal funds towards teacher recruitment incentives to attract displaced workers into the teaching profession and to help train academic and CTE teachers in the new content expectations. Use these funds to underwrite costs of high need industry certifications like A+ computer science and certified nurse aids. Lift up career academies that have received national certification. Federal funds can also help launch the long-planned internship portal.

Above all, we encourage the Department and Board to clearly communicate your approach to catching up students and reopening schools. Frustration in the community is high due to the perceived lack of transparency and clarity. Business, community, and funding partners stand ready to help but we need to be given direction and unleashed in support of our students.

We are happy to further discuss any of the ideas contained within this letter. The Foundation that we help lead has proudly been an active partner with the Hawaii State Department of Education for two decades; with a clear road map for how to address learning loss and keep achievement and preparation gaps from widening, we hope to be a partner for years to come.

⁴ <https://www.erstrategies.org/cms/files/4494-covid3finalfinalfinal.pdf>



Future plans for the DOE system

Cheryl B <burgharc@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:17 AM

Aloha,

It is my understanding that the BOE will be assessing the financial, educational future of the DOE in the meeting on May 7 as well as future meetings. After 40 years working in elementary, public schools, now retired, I would like to be hopeful that the students and the educators who work directly with them will have the highest priority. It will be up to all of you to put aside what "you have always known and done" and truly look at what's best for the students and community.

For me, this means, to look at the resources that are readily available to us in our islands. To listen to each individual community because the needs are different and unique. These are not issues that can be solved by companies from the continent or corporate programs. These will be met best by listening and changing the lens by which we look.

I have read through Supt. Kishimoto's presentation. Here is the slide that means the most to me and I believe should set the tone for our paths.

Looking Ahead

Questions Tri-Level Leaders Are Reflecting On

Prioritize investments. What is the hierarchy of priorities to run our organization? What are non-negotiables versus lower priority activities? What are nice-to-haves versus need-to-haves?

Be Planful. What can we do in the last two months of this fiscal year to maximize savings and help mitigate for next school year, for general funds and federal funds?

Adapt to New Realities. How do we advance this conversation beyond savings to better serve our students? What should we stop doing and start investing in? What is tradition versus necessity?

Be Innovative. How can we leverage the tri-level structure to take advantage of economies of scale at the state, complex area, and complex level?

Assess Staffing. How might the hiring freeze imposed on non-federal and non-instructional positions impact how we operate next school year?

Prioritize Investments: Look at what we can eliminate, save and set the path for the future. One way would be to stop spending the ridiculous amounts of money on the SBAAC testing and all of the expenses that come with it. Another would be to allow schools to purchase resources which they feel are best in their community. We always learn the hard way after huge amounts of \$\$ have been spent on resources from the continent that don't work here. What are non-negotiables? EDUCATORS in the flesh in classrooms that are supported with the \$\$ for their pay and the resources they need. This includes making sure that their students have food as well as the Special Ed. access and also that ALL schools have equitable access to special subjects and recess.

Adapt to New Realities/Be innovative This does not mean put everyone on computers. We have learned through the past weeks that human contact is very important. That being said, with a shortage of

educators in schools, it is important to reexamine the use of coaches in schools. Do schools really need 4 coaches? Does a school really need a teacher to be fixing computers.. helping with tech. yes, but not I.T. as such. Some schools have a coach for every subject, while other schools are hurting to get regular staff.

Want equitable? Continue the path to keeping educators in hard-to-staff-locations by using the home grown educator path . Look at changes in the life of our community. Intensive absentee policies may actually discriminate against the families with schedules that don't match that of the system. Some flexibility will need to be given. Tradition vs. necessity? Look to place-based education, Hā and the ways of the islands. PARENTS do not need to buy wipes and the extensive amount of supplies and particular containers for their children and schools need to stop bullying them to do so. IF a child can bring a pencil, that should be enough. It has gotten out of control with the expectation of some teachers and schools.. THAT being said, the DOE should ensure that hand sanitizer and soap is available in all schools ALWAYS. AS FOR staff, the military should be vetted/bonded as well as County/State staff to be able to volunteer for routine help around schools. Administrators should be given assistance in how to use those resources well. The admin. that I last worked with here in Hawai'i was excellent at this. LISTEN TO the educators who are in the classrooms every day. There are some amazing educators who are sharing PD and support during this time, encourage them to continue.

ASSESS One of the issues that comes up often is that districts take \$\$ from the Feds. ie Race to the Top and then find themselves in challenging situations for the minimal amount of \$\$ received that actually reach children. **ASSESS** how many support folks are at Complex and Miller Street who could actually be in the classroom for amounts of time. There are many talented and qualified people sitting behind desks who would be assets to schools and directly to children. **LOOK** at the hiring process again. There are qualified people being missed.

THIS has become a long email yet there is so much to say. I will close with the following. **CUTTING EDUCATOR PAY OR BENEFITS** at this time would be not only an insult to everyone who has worked diligently during this time but also would cause issues that don't need to happen. JUST hearing that pay cuts may happen will add additional stress to people who are already working above and beyond. The expectations put on educators for the current salary is inhumane. To even think about asking educators to be the ones to "sacrifice" for the good of the system at this moment in time is ill-conceived, will back fire and frankly hurting all of us in our islands.

That you took time to read my thoughts at this time is much appreciated.
C. Burghardt
retired DOE educator

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

Pay deduction

Tim Moore <mooreinfo@please@gmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 2:29 PM

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

Please don't reduce our pay. It's very challenging to save money in Hawaii as it is. I'm 37 with no debt, no kids, not even a GF, and I have to live with roommates in order to have any kind of life.

Imagine what it's like for someone with student loan debt, a family, or a house or car payment.

Further, we have a formal agreement with the state to receive a set pay until July 20th 2020. We are still working. What is the justification for reducing our pay?

Also, if cuts must be made, why can't it be on a month to month basis until tourism reaches a certain level?

How about a tiered system where people low on the scale take smaller percentage cuts than those higher? And why not control for number of dependents too?

We're too sophisticated to make rash decisions.

Thank you for reading,

Tim (teacher)



salary cuts for educators

Paula Paula to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/05/2020 02:34 PM

From: "Paula Paula" <blinks2000@hotmail.com>

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

Aloha,

Please know that cutting teacher salaries in any way, in order to balance the budget, is unacceptable. Teachers have been the go-to recipients of every single financial problem this state has faced and has led to the overwhelming teacher shortage that Hawai'i faces today. Cutting teacher salaries is a short-sighted solution to a long-term problem. It will force experienced teachers, like myself, into early retirement, leaving our keiki with non-highly qualified teachers or long-term subs (if they can even be found). I believe that cuts like this will reverberate within this state for much longer than the duration of the economic downturn that is occurring from this pandemic. It will impact the infrastructure in every sector as teachers struggle to live in this state and, more importantly, will harm our students, who are the lifeblood and future of this state.

Please consider every other option before even thinking, yet proposing, to have your educators pay for this pandemic from their already very poor pockets.

Mahalo,

Paula Evans
STEM Teacher
Mokapu Elementary School
Tireless Teacher for Thirty Years



RE: Cuts to Teachers' Salaries

Sonia Fantz <sonia.fantz.19@tfacorps.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 2:37 PM

Aloha,

My name is Sonia Fantz and I am an 11th and 12th grade SPED science teacher at Waianae High School.

I am reaching out to urge you to reconsider the proposed cuts to teachers' salaries for the following reasons:

1) Teacher pay in Hawaii is already among the lowest in the nation, especially when considering the cost of living. If our salaries are cut, many of us may not be able to maintain living here and might have to leave our positions, causing even more teacher vacancy than already exists, and therefore hurting the potential of our students to feel connected to their community.

2) Teachers are among a small group of professions with consistent pay throughout this recession, and we are one of the only sources of money being injected back into the economy by providing patronage to small businesses. If our salaries are cut, you would be directly cutting off part of small business revenue streams.

3) Many teachers have become the sole providers for their families during a period of astronomical unemployment rates. If you cut teacher salaries, you would cause further damage to the financial stability of thousands of families across the islands, and potentially increase the risk to property owners that rely on our incomes to continue paying rent and managing the property.

4) Teachers already work countless more hours than we are paid for, and even sacrifice part of our income to pay for classroom supplies which are not provided to us by the state. By cutting our salaries and continuing to rely on us to purchase our own resources, you are forcing us to invest less in our students and spend more time outside of school hours working to make up our income in a 2nd or even 3rd job.

Overall, the existence of this proposal is devaluing everything we work to achieve for our children and our communities as a whole, and you are severely limiting our ability to provide a stable and positive learning environment to hundreds of thousands of kids throughout the islands. Please consider how history will look upon a government that chooses to financially handicap the foundational workers of its education system and public services before finding alternative ways to limit funds being spent by the state.

Best wishes,

--

Sonia Fantz
Waianae High School



re: teacher pay reductions

Caryn Fukuda to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 02:47 PM

From: "Caryn Fukuda" <caryn.fukuda@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hello,

My name is Caryn Fukuda and I am currently a language arts teacher at Mililani High School. I teach juniors presently and next year I will be doing a solid line of co-teaching for 9th graders with two other classes of ninth graders by myself. In the integrated co-teaching classes, we have already cut out the educational assistants from our classroom who have been vital in helping us with filing, xeroxing, inputting some grades, and helping us with our overall workload so that we may teach and prepare lesson plans, correct papers and tests, communicate with parents, conduct study hall, etc.

We are already going to suffer greatly with our lack of educational assistants in our classroom due to the budget cuts.

Yes, we are all suffering in some way because of the covid. If we were to take a 19.67% pay cut, as is proposed, we would all suffer somewhere of \$1,500 less per month. How are we to be able to survive? I am a single mom and have been for many years. I have three sons. It will greatly impact me when I have worked so hard in obtaining my masters in education degree which I currently am still paying off. I am also now currently enrolled in the masters of divinity and worship program because I aspire to become a teacher in the youth ministry after I retire from being a public servant as a teacher.

I am speaking on behalf of other teachers who suffer with me as well. I have put forth much time and energy into taking all the pd credits possible to work my way up to the level of pay I am at now.

I cannot handle a pay cut at this point in my life. Please, there must be some financial resources available out there. We are all public servants and we are working with the future generations. We work unseen hours beyond the classroom. Please please do not cut our pay.

Sincerely,

Caryn Fukuda

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cutting teacher salaries would be CRIMINAL
Alicia Allen to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 02:47 PM
From: "Alicia Allen" <alicia.allen@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha!

I serve as a Special Education teacher at Waipahu High School. A desire to be a force for good in society spurs many teachers. Many educators have degrees and certifications that qualify them for more lucrative work; however, they serve as teachers. We cannot afford to lose these awesome public servants! Lowering teacher salaries could drive many teachers out of education because they cannot afford to live on less than they currently earn.

Directed time off without pay is a JOKE. Everyone knows that teachers already spend many more hours than just school hours doing their job. We grade, we plan, we research ideas, we collaborate, we attend professional development, etc.. If you "direct" days off without pay - teachers will still be working! We serve our students and our communities as needed, not Monday - Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

I understand that budget shortfalls must be made up somewhere, but cutting teacher salaries would literally be stealing from the future of our youth. As it stands now, they have missed a quarter's worth of instruction. What is the exponential damage? We will never know. As I type this testimony, teachers are getting savvy with online platforms in case school cannot reopen in the fall. It is completely different. One cannot just offer the same material offered in face-to-face class online. Research and planning time has increased for ALL teachers right now! This transition will be especially hard and detrimental to our most vulnerable students. I am a resource teacher serving 9th grade students. Many of my students respond best to hands-on learning. Of course, I am collaborating with my team and others to ensure we meet the specific needs of each of our students.

Cutting teacher pay would be criminal, in my opinion, because teachers will still be serving with their maximum. Please do not make up budget shortfalls by robbing our children's futures and taking advantage of educators.

Respectfully,

Alicia Allen

alicia.allen@k12.hi.us

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Natalie Yonemura- Waipahu High School (Academy of Health & Sciences- High School Counselor)

Natalie Yonemura to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 02:48 PM

From: "Natalie Yonemura" <natalie.yonemura@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to share the negative impact of a 20% salary cut of how it will affect my family.

I have a family of six. Two of which are in college and 2 of my other children go to private school. Although private school and college is a choice to attend, a pay cut for our family will impact my children negatively with possibly uprooting my kids to new schools due the financial hardship this will bring.

It appears that the DOE is always the state employees that have to cover Hawaii's economy. Educators should be looked at with value. Other professions receive higher pay and their salaries are last to be jeopardized.

Taking pay away from us teachers especially will hurt morale as well as hurt our students' education. As many teachers will be unhappy which will spill over into the classrooms.

There has to be other areas to look at to pull money from. Education is important for our future of Hawaii.

--

Natalie Yonemura

Academy of Health & Sciences Counselor

(808)-307-9622

natalie.yonemura@k12.hi.us

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Teacher testimony

Patricia Gorski <gorskified@me.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 2:50 PM

Aloha, my name is Patty Gorski and I am a high school teacher of special education at Kekaulike high on Maui. I have been teaching students of Hawaii in the middle and high school settings for the past eight years.

I moved here from Connecticut where I earned my bachelors degree in an esteemed teaching program. I graduated summa cum laude at the top of my class. I worked in a classroom for three years in a title I school where I was making \$55,000 a year by my third year of teaching, where they recognized my double major and gave me masters level pay.

I moved to Hawaii in 2012, taking an enormous pay cut in the process. Hawaii did not honor the double major; I made less than \$40,000 a year to start as a 4th year teacher here.

It took me seven years of teaching in Hawaii to get back to my year 3 pay I had in Connecticut. In order to earn my raises, I had to not only pay for professional development courses, but also enroll in masters programs and certification programs so that I could finally become a class seven teacher and maybe be in a position to someday own a home here with the salary I had EARNED.

I'm supposed to re-classify this July, however looking at the potential pay cut, that may not be happening. I doubt I will be able to re-classify after so many years of hard work and personal sacrifice I made to earn a decent living. Instead, I could be looking at a salary not much higher than what I made when I first got here- my reward for sticking though and trusting in the process. All of the hard work and money I spent to earn a professional salary will have been wasted if I choose to stay in Hawaii, where my masters degrees will no longer impact my salary. I won't be able to afford my rent and pay my bills. It is a nightmare scenario.

I have a son who is entering kindergarten this year, and while I was excited about the great strides our union has been making in recruiting and retaining quality teachers, at this point I am fearful if there will even be a certified teacher in his classroom to begin with. I am fearful if he will have a qualified teacher for multiple years of his public school education. That is not the life I want for my child and it is not the future that I want for ANY CHILD IN HAWAII, either. I am not the only one in this position, I am sure.

Should we see a 20% pay cut, it is clear signal that our keiki are not cared about. It is a clear sign that I am not cared about and that my efforts as an educator are not cared about. Should this pay cut happen, Teachers such as myself who have other options outside of Hawaii will more than likely take their families and credentials with them. Should this 20% pay cut happen, teachers will leave the profession in droves, and the ripple effect throughout the state of Hawaii will be crippling to the economy as well as the educational system. The future of the keiki here will be severely impacted, and we have no room for any other setbacks as we struggle to keep up with reading and math proficiency.

WE have options. I am among many dedicated transplant and homegrown teachers who have made a home here in Hawaii, and who have worked hard to be able to stay here and grow roots. My child is Hawaiian and deserves to be able to stay here with his family in this amazing culture, however I know his needs come first in our family. We do not have to stay here and struggle financially in order to have a mediocre education and outcome for him; we will have to choose to leave this state. I am one of many in this situation, teacher or otherwise.

I urge you to reconsider this drastic measure- teachers are far too valuable to this culture and these islands. We love and care for your children 7 hours a day, 5 days a week in person...but that is not all. We continue to plan for their safety and success when we are at home and on our "vacation time." We often worry about them on the weekends. Our love and care for the keiki of Hawaii does not stop when the bell rings. We are Ohana and should be treated as such.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Patty Gorski

Sent from my iPhone



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

Potential Pay Cuts

Monica Collias <monicacollias@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 2:55 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Monica Collias, and I am a fourth-year English teacher at 'Iao Intermediate on Maui. I am writing you today as an individual.

Since word of potential pay cuts went out, I have been contemplating what I would do if they happened. I hear a lot of talk about how teachers from the mainland would leave, but those with strong ties to the islands would stay despite the cuts. Well, as someone born and raised on Maui, who isn't planning on leaving any time soon, I would have to strongly consider leaving the HDOE if they occurred. I can barely afford my expenses as is, a 19.62% cut would simply be too much for me to sustain myself on.

I am saying that not as a threat of leaving, but just so that you consider that there would be more teachers leaving than you might account for if this goes through.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this,

Monica



Pay cut to Teachers

Jennifer Gillette <jennifergillette1@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 2:57 PM

Aloha Board of Education,

I have been a dedicated special education teacher for most of my 14 years of teaching. Currently I reside at a school that is in a hard to staff location where we have up to 10 positions that have not been filled for next year. The bonuses that were going to be filled next year would be incentives for teachers to stay. It seems as though this will not be happening. If these positions are not filled, the teachers will not be hired, impacting education greatly. Filling non-certified teachers to fill positions is going to negatively impact our children's education and social emotional success in which directly impacts our future of the community. This year I took a general education position due to the challenges, stresses, complications of a special educator. I agreed to be a special education teacher next year due to the incentive of special education. A possible cut in salary not only impacts my decision of which position I take next year. It also makes me consider other options including leaving the profession. The cut in pay is an insult to my dedication and qualifications to teach our youth. During this time of economic stresses I have had to put in even more time to reach our children's needs. Cutting my pay does not make me want to work harder, but you know I and many other teachers will for the children because we actually care about the futures of these children's lives. Up until this point, I felt valued, supported and backed by the Board of Education. Unfortunately, even the thought of a pay cut towards teachers is so unbearably depressing.

I am a parent also. I will have two kids going through the DOE school system and I am appalled at the thought that thinking cutting teacher pay will support my children. A decision to cut pay only further hinders my child's and other children's success. My kids will be fine because they have a teacher as a mom,... but this is NOT about ME.. This is about the future of our children. Lack of highly qualified teachers = lack of learning for our children. Let's not make this decision about me. MAKE IT FOR THE CHILDREN.

Please reconsider your thoughts on cutting teachers' pay. PLEASE find a way to balance the budget. Distance learning could help to lessen the economic blow. I don't know the ins and outs, but I know you have the resources to figure it out yourself. Do your job the right way. Thank you.

Jennifer Gillette
Saddened Dedicated
Hawaii DOE Kindergarten Inclusion Teacher from
Holualoa Elementary School



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

Oppose teacher pay cuts

Athena A <kuhiwa@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 2:57 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Athena Anderson and I have taught in Hawaii Public Schools for 18 years. I hold a Masters Degree in Cross-cultural Education and currently teach 6th Grade Transitions to Middle School at Kalama Intermediate (Maui). Previously, I was a Curriculum Coordinator and taught grades K,1,3 at Wailuku Elementary.

I humbly ask you to please reject any actions that will cut teacher pay, including Directed Leave Without Pay. Teachers in the State of Hawaii already have low salaries when compared with the higher cost of living. Also, if pay is reduced, many veteran teachers will retire and those new to teaching will find other professions that allow them a better quality of life with higher compensation.

Ultimately it will be the children that suffer a compromised education with more substitutes and inexperienced teachers that need time to cultivate masterful teaching strategies. I was teaching when our state directed "Furlough Fridays" and the parents suffered when they struggled to find daycare. Many churches and volunteers stepped up to help, but it was not enough. Children were left out of the safety a school provides.

Furthermore, a 20% pay cut is substantial, in fact, imagine a 20% pay raise for teachers.... that would be nearly unheard of.

Once again, please find other options to keep teacher and state workers pay from being cut. Only damage will result and the repercussions of such actions will be felt for years to come in our communities throughout Hawaii. Thank you for taking the time to read this and consider our position in the overall budget plan.

~Athena P. Anderson, M.Ed



Testimony for Thursday May 7, 2020 1:30 pm

Taryn Reiner <tarynreiner@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 3:01 PM

Dear Hawaii State Board of Education,

My name is Taryn Reiner and I am a School Counselor at Konawaena High School, on the Island of Hawaii. I have been a school counselor in Hawaii since 2008, 12 years. Before Konawaena High School I was the School Counselor at Kahakai Elementary for 8 years.

I survived the Friday furloughs but still have not recovered. Before those furloughs, I was bringing home \$1,900.00 per paycheck and now I bring home \$1,600.00 per paycheck. I am a single mom of two teenage boys and to a Hanai son, who is now 20-year-old. I have contributed to our community by coaching soccer in AYSO and at the high school level, was a resource parent to two girls, licensed and trained resource families, President and Vice President of PTSA.

Superintendent Christina Kishimoto has been the first superintendent to support teacher raises by coming up with a recruitment and retention plan. I fully support her plan and did you and the Hawaii congress. It is unthinkable that we are in this predicament again.

Hawaii is already ranked 49th out of 50 states and District of Columbia. Due to,

"Average salaries for teachers are the lowest in the nation when adjusted for cost of living.

But the ranking also looked at other factors, including salary growth, pensions, teacher tenure protections, quality of the school system and per pupil spending."

[Hawaii again ranked among worst states to be a teacher](#)

<p>Hawaii again ranked among worst states to be a teacher</p> <p>HNN Staff</p> <p>The analysis put Hawaii 49th in the nation for teachers out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.</p>	

This is not just a COVID-19 issue, it is an accountability issue. From my perspective as a parent, community member, and school counselor there needs to be **accountability regarding the effectiveness of programs**. For example;

- A school with ~760 elementary students has 3 administrators. 1 Principal and 3 VP.
- A high school with 860 students has 3 administrators. 1 Principal and only in the last two years has 2 VP.
- Each complex has numerous resource teachers and counselors. Along with some schools have resource teachers as well. These are trained, certified, and tenured teachers and counselors.
- Principals expenditure of monies; ie spending \$100,000.00 on an outside agency when the majority of teachers do not find it effective but is overruled.
- Each complex has District Educational Specialist's for SBBH and SpED with resource teachers and counselors under them.
- School bought buses that are rarely used and instead monies are spent on renting buses and rental vans.
- Athletic Directors are paid an administrative salary and considered administration.
- Training on Oahu being online instead of travel expenses being paid. Right now, classes are online, why can't training and conferences?

Instead of hitting the biggest union in our state and drastically hurting a profession that makes all other professions possible effectiveness of monies already being spent should come first before cutting salaries. I hope you consider my perspective because **BU5 produces contributing members to our communities and state, are already struggling to live, gives back to our communities by volunteering, supporting our students family businesses, financially supporting our student's needs, and who desperately wants to encourage students to become teachers because they will be able to survive off a teachers salary.**

Sincerely,
Taryn Reiner



Testimony for Thursday, May 7, 2020 at 1:30 p.m BOE meeting

HI School Psychologists <hasp808@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 3:06 PM

Aloha Board members:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Hawaii Association of School Psychologists (HASP) to urge the Department of Education and the State of Hawaii to establish a credential for school psychologists as soon as possible in order to meet the growing mental health needs of Hawaii's keiki during these unprecedented times.

HASP sent the attached letter asking for the immediate credentialing for school psychologists to Superintendent Kishimoto, Governor Ige, Lt. Governor Greene, Hawaii Teacher Standards Board (HTSB), Assistant Supt. Armstrong, and HGEA's Executive Director on April 22, 2020 and have yet to receive a response from any party. Hawaii remains the only state in the nation without credentialing for school psychologists, which limits the ability to aide the state in all of the ways we are trained. If we are to move forward with providing crisis counseling, as the superintendent announced in a live news conference, there could be potential harm and/or liability to both the school psychologists in Hawaii as well as to the children being served. It is important to have an accountability system in place prior to delivering this nature of service.

As of May 5, 2020, school psychologists are still listed on the Department of Education's website as one of the possible providers for Telehealth services: <http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/MediaRoom/PressReleases/Pages/Hotline-available-for-HIDOE-student-related-health-questions-and-telehealth-visits.aspx>

I will be testifying in person as well, and am available for questions. Thank you for your consideration,

Leslie A. Baunach, NCSP
NASP Delegate--Hawaii
HASP Legislative Chair



 **HASP -- Establishing Credentialing for School Psychologists 04_22_2020.pdf**
127K



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

Help us provide the best for our learners

Cathy Knowlton <cathy_knowlton@baldwin.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 3:23 PM

Please BOE, Don't reduce teachers' salaries!

We already have students suffering with substitute teachers in teaching positions. Reducing teacher pay will certainly push some teachers to other careers or early retirement. It is so painful to listen to students struggle with substitutes who are good and caring people but do not have the training or experience to teach a subject well.

Furloughs or a similar less-money less-time arrangement will hurt both students who have already lost 10 weeks of learning and teachers and their families trying to survive in this state.

Instead we need all minds on creating equitable learning opportunities through the challenges ahead. Support for distance learning training, support with internet access for many students. We teachers work 50-60 hours a week and more and we must so that we provide the best for our learners.

Mahalo,

Cathy Knowlton
Science Teacher
H.P. Baldwin High School
[1650 Kaahumanu Ave.](#)
[Wailuku, HI 96793](#)
school 808-727-3200, our classroom 727-3234
cathy_knowlton@baldwin.k12.hi.us

Mission The mission of BHS is to develop a community of learners who have the competence and confidence to achieve personal goals and who are responsible stewards of our global community.

Our website for Marine Science and Biology: mrsknowlton.weebly.com



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

RE: No paycuts

Claire Kawagishi <swimcoachclaire@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 3:23 PM

Even with the recent crisis and stay at home orders, special education teachers as well as other staff and faculty have been working daily to provide students with distance learning opportunities. I have personally created lessons that are easy to use for students with severe disabilities. I have also conducted WebEx meeting lessons coordinating small groups of student learners. Meanwhile, I have kept up with all the IEPs, ReEvaluations, SOPs, ESY preparation and applications, lesson planning, faculty meetings, special education meetings, care coordinator meetings, and teacher collaborations. Please do not cut my pay. I am a divorced mom of 3 school age students and barely get any child support payments. Over the last 10 years, my debt has skyrocketed to over \$45,000. In the past, I had 2 other part-time jobs to support my family. However with this pandemic I will not be securing my summer job and have already lost one of my part-time jobs. I am unable to collect unemployment for part-time income loss. PLEASE DO NOT cut my pay. This past January, special education teachers received a 20% increase in pay- this was such a momentous occasion where I had hopes of lowering my debt. Now, I can only worry and not pay off debt just in case there is a pay cut.

Worried and possibly might be better off on welfare

Claire A. Kawagishi,
Ala Wai Elementary School-Special Educaiton Teacher K-2



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

Pay cuts for teachers!

Kathleen Booth <kathleenbooth4@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 3:26 PM

Dear Board Members,

Let me begin by saying I do not support pay cuts for teachers. I have been teaching at Connections Public Charter School for 13 years as their first grade teacher. The responsibilities of a teacher have only increased during these years. The shortage of teachers, during my time in the profession, has never been this bad. We already have several unlicensed teachers in our school due to the shortage. These teachers, as emergency hires, do not get paid very much. If their salary decreases, they will probably choose to leave the profession. Teachers who are close to retirement will retire early if there is a two year pay reduction made.

This would be a disaster! Please do not cut teacher salaries.

Please be safe,
Kathleen Booth



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

Teachers Matter

Kaitlyn Aure <k_aure@lahaina.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 3:32 PM

To the BOE,

Pay cuts for teachers would have a rippling effects. It's more than the personal impact affecting each teacher and our families financially, but a 20% cut would make it impossible to stay and teach in Hawaii. Many teachers throughout the state barely make it by and with a nearly \$10,000 dollar decrease, we could never make ends meet. Many teachers are already working 2-3 jobs and, at this pace, we would have to leave the workforce. Pay cuts will lead to further teacher shortages (from which we already suffer) and that would lead to the kids being taught by unqualified personnel. Every kid deserves a licensed teacher equipped to help them reach their greatest potential and who truly wants to be there every day helping them learn, grow, and develop individually. Teachers are the backbone of our nation and we help create every single profession. Not only do we provide them with academic lessons, but we teach kindness, compassion, and care. We help the students learn that their voices matters and they can achieve whatever they set their minds to. We help them learn that they can and will make a difference no matter their age and we teach them that they are our future. Our future is in their hands and they deserve a quality education. Help keep Hawaii's teachers in the classroom with our keiki. We already have so much room for improvement regarding education and we need your help.

Best Regards,
Kaitlyn Aure
5th Grade Teacher
King Kamehameha III Elementary School



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

Cut my pay

heather sokei <heathersokei@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 3:35 PM

Aloha,

My name is Heather Sokei and I am a kindergarten teacher at Kapaa Elementary School on the beautiful island of Kauai. Being a newly tenured teacher the idea of getting my salary cut is absolutely scary. I have a family of five and an elderly Grandpa at home to take care of. So when I heard about the possible salary cut of 20% I started to freak out. I understand we are in a unique situation and I am grateful to be employed. \$36,000 that's how much I would have to live off of. I have to support my family as well as provide materials for my students. I love what I do and I never went into it for the fame and glory, I went into it for the love I have for the children. It broke my heart to think that I would have to give this up because I need to support my family. We already have a staffing shortage and are constantly looking for teacher on the mainland. I am born and raised on Kaua'i I am lucky enough to have a support system that helped me go back to school and get my degree in teaching. A lot of local students do not have that support. Cutting our salary would only determine more students to not want to become teachers. I really don't want to choose between something that I love to do and being able to support my family.

Stay safe

-Heather Sokei



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

Testimony for Thurs 5/7

Lisa Yamagata <lnishizuka@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 3:37 PM

Hello, my name is Lisa Yamagata. I'm a 6th grade science teacher at Waimea Canyon Middle School on Kauai. I am finishing up my 13th year of teaching, all at WCMS.

I am submitting testimony to urge you not to approve any severe pay cuts for teachers due to the COVID budget shortfall. We are already aware that there will be school budget cuts for the next school year which will already make the year more difficult than it needs to be for our working conditions. Please don't extend that difficulty by also cutting our pay. A pay cut will severely affect me as both my husband and I are teachers. We have already had to experience financial strain during the furlough friday years. We were supposed to be receiving the adjustment for salary compression this coming school year to partially make up for those furlough friday years. I completely understand if we're not able to get that now due to this situation. But please I ask that you not cut our pay.

In addition to personal consequences, this pay cut will severely affect our students. A pay cut will most likely push many veteran/qualified teachers into retirement, as well as make it hard to attract teachers. This will all lead to more classrooms with long-term subs. At WCMS, we know how bad things can get when you have a big shortage of teachers (about 1/4 of our teachers left at the beginning or middle of this school year). Students were not able to receive a consistent and high-quality education that they so deserve. This may become the case statewide if pay cuts are instituted. With things being so uncertain for the reopening of schools next year, one thing that students will need is a highly qualified teacher to help them transition into whatever the situation will be.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Lisa Yamagata

Sent from my iPhone



Oppose state salary worker cut by 20%

Ellen Cachola to: testimony.boe

05/05/2020 03:42 PM

From: "Ellen Cachola" <ellenrae@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Board of Education,

My name is Ellen-Rae. I am an educator that works 2 jobs to survive in Hawai'i. I work as a library worker and lecturer for UH Manoa. I am a local Filipina that was born and raised on Maui.

I am sending in testimony to demand that you oppose the cutting of the salary of state employees by 20%. This will affect teachers and educators of our state, particularly those of us in public education.

- * Decreasing teacher salaries will exacerbate already challenging work conditions for Hawai'i teachers.
- * With cost of living adjustments Hawai'i teachers already rank as the lowest paid in the nation.
- * Hawai'i state and local expenditures on education already rank among the lowest in the US.
- * Each year Hawai'i DOE already has approximately 1,000 vacancies and emergency hires to fill. Decreasing salaries will likely lead to more quality teachers retiring, making teacher vacancies even higher.
- * Teacher turnover is expensive. It can cost up to \$20,000 to replace each teacher.

Educators like myself have been working throughout this pandemic. This action to cut our salaries tells me that my government does not really thank me for the work that I've done to try and keep our education system going. At the same time, it is not a secret that teachers and educators like myself ARE THE LOWEST PAID IN THE NATION. Please find another way to address the short fall in tax coffers by finding funding in other places that have more financial privilege that they can sacrifice.

Sincerely,
Ellen-Rae Cachola

[Ellen-Rae Cachola, Ph.D.](#)

*Evening Supervisor & Archives Manager
Lecturer, Department of Ethnic Studies*

P (808) 956-2867 | **E** ellenrae@hawaii.edu

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kimo.jpg



Teacher Salary Reduction

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

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 3:49 PM

Position: NO to teacher salary reductions

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

I strongly encourage you to reject the state Office of Budget and Finance's Re-Balancing Framework suggestion to reduce teacher salaries by 19.62%.

Being an English teacher at the high school level is not an easy job at all, but I chose this content area because of my experience with English teachers at my high school. When I went to college, I was not equipped with the necessary writing skills that I would have hoped to have learned prior, so this is what drove my motivation. I knew that students weren't receiving the basic reading and writing skills because the percentage of college students in remedial English was high back in the 1990's and has only recently decreased according to the UH Community College data. It wasn't until I attended college that I knew reading, comprehending, & writing were very important skills to have no matter if one was college or career bound. At that moment, that was when I said, "I am going to go back to my community to teach and guide students to find comfort & joy in reading & writing." I reflected on my teacher's actions, and forced myself to think outside of the box, so I wouldn't be making the same mistakes. Here's what my list looked like:

1. Build the relationships FIRST
2. Introduce current, exciting, & relevant texts to create whole class discussions, writing prompts, presentations, art, song, poem, etc.
3. Student choice texts to create small group discussions, presentations, analytical/exploration writing
4. ALWAYS discuss the WHY & RELEVANCE of how the curriculum texts connect to our current situations (college writing, professional emails, understanding the past to inform decision making, etc.)
5. Most importantly, GIVE SPECIFIC FEEDBACK on their writing

During the past five weeks, I have been reflecting a lot on how this distance learning has affected students, teachers, and families because there are positives and negatives. Having three of my

own children in the public school system, I see it from all three perspectives, and I wish ALL Hawai'i residents could see it as well.

If there is a pay cut for teachers, there will be more vacancies than we already have because they won't be able to live off of a teachers salary, but most importantly, our students will be the ones to feel the most impact. ALL STUDENTS deserve to have qualified and passionate teachers, not just the ones who can afford to attend private school, so we don't want any Tom, Harry, Jane, or Lisa to fill these positions because it's a paycheck, but we want those qualified and passionate teachers, who will take pride in creating a better future for our communities. Our children matter, and if we believe so, then we will stand up for them by saying NO to the teacher salary reduction!

Mahalo nui,
Lauren Pokipala



Virus-free. www.avg.com



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

Please do not reduce teacher pay.

dthomas440@aol.com <dthomas440@aol.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 3:53 PM

Reply-To: dthomas440@aol.com

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

Please do not reduce teacher pay. Cuts would devastate our teaching shortage. I have children here as well as nieces and nephews.

My friends have kids in high school where (since last year) there has been no honors English teacher. We cannot even get enough substitutes. The cost of living in Hawaii nei will cause people to quit teaching and move to the main;and.

More students will go without qualified teachers and subs. We need to give our Keiki the support they need to grow and develop and have a chance to compete in the world economy.

Mahalo, Malama Pono,

Donell Thomas

Lahaina Intermediate 6 grade PE, 8th grade Health



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

No pay cuts for teachers

MD Thomas <mdonell.thomas@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 3:55 PM

Please do not cut teacher pay. Our students will suffer as this will cause extreme hardship and many teachers will leave or quit or retire.

Mahalo
Maria Aure



Reject Paycuts

Laura Phillips <auraphillips909@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 4:03 PM

Dear Board of Education:

We are currently living through a global historic event that is changing the world on a daily basis. This pandemic has greatly impacted our state's economy and our well-being.

Cutting teacher's salaries is not the best way to help our state and economy. This may seem like an easy, quick solution to the problem. However, this is not the best way to help our state, Keiki, or economy. Investing in our children so they have a bright future and can bring a diverse economy and more businesses to Hawaii is what is needed.

I am a Special Education Preschool Teacher at Hilo Union and worry that our family may not be able to stay in Hawaii if I had a 20% pay-cut. My family and I were making it prior to the current pandemic (but not by any means rich). However, just today my husband found out he has been furloughed. We are hoping to survive on just my income until he is able to return to work. I am not sure we will be able to pay bills with 20% of my salary gone as well. If we are not able to pay bills we will seriously need to look at all other options, including moving out of state.

Hawaii's keiki deserve more than this. Education is the key to the future. We can't keep devaluing our educators and expecting quality education. Prior to the this pandemic, Hawaii was already having difficulty getting teachers. Lowering the pay will only worsen the situation. Teachers that are able will retire will, others will leave the profession, and some will leave the state. Research tell us, that a teachers with experience and credentials are much more effective teachers than teachers without. We say we want quality education (good academics, social skills, empathy) and that our children are our future. It is important for us not to just say this but invest in it, even in the hard times. Hawaii's children are our future, we owe it our children to give them a highly qualified, credentialed teachers.

I want to send my child to school with teachers that feel valued. My own children can be hard to deal with, even for me. I don't want their teachers to have the extra burden of wondering if they will be able to pay their bills or having to get a second job. This would only compound the stress of having my child in their class.

I realize that Hawaii is experiencing an extreme economic hardship. Everyone is making sacrifices. However, cutting education cost is the last think Hawaii needs. We need educated workers to diversity our economy and we can only get this when we invest in education.

Please do the right thing for Hawaii and reject pay cuts.

Mahalo nui loa,
Laura Phillips
Special Education Teacher, Hilo Union



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

Do Not Reduce Teachers' Salaries!

Kelly Sakai <kelly808sakai@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 4:05 PM

Aloha Members of the BOE,

My name is Kelly Sakai, and I am a fifth grade teacher at Nu'uuanu Elementary School. I grew up in a family full of educators (my dad, aunty and uncle were all teachers), and I attended public school from kindergarten through twelfth grade. I had some of THE BEST teachers in my elementary through high school years, and it was because of their influence, I decided to become a teacher. I have been in the field of education for over twenty years, and I wouldn't change a single thing about my choice to be a teacher and teach in Hawaii's public school system.

Not only do I believe that all students deserve an education, but I truly believe that ALL students deserve a GREAT teacher. Cutting teachers' salaries would be catastrophic. Veteran, experienced, and beginning teachers would all search for other employment options, whether it may be in another institution, company, or state. Where does that leave our keiki?

Please do not take life-changing teachers away from our students. Our students need us. They deserve us.

Thank you for your time.

Mahalo,
Kelly Sakai



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

Teacher Salary Cuts

Leah Brembeck <leahbrem@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 4:05 PM

Aloha,

My name is Leah Brembeck and I teach 6th and 7th grade ELA and Social Studies at Wheeler Middle school. When I heard there was talk about cutting teacher salaries my heart sank. I just moved here from Ohio after completing my bachelors and masters in middle school education. I moved here to help the teacher shortage and give back to the community. I have only been a year and I am scared that it will be cut short. I live with 2 other teachers from the mainland and we already live well within our means and still live paycheck to paycheck. If this salary cut happens, all 3 of us, licensed and certified teachers, will have to move back to the mainland. Please think about the keiki and their needs as well. If we all leave it would mean over 200 students would be shorted licensed teachers and not be provided the best education. If the cut happens there is a good chance we will never see our students again because we will have to move back to the mainland before July in the hopes that we can land a job there. I understand the amount of pressure you are under right now, but please spare the teachers, nurses, and first responders. We have been on the frontlines since day one.

Sincerely,

Leah Brembeck



Testimony regarding teacher pay cuts

Katrina Karl to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 04:06 PM

From: "Katrina Karl" <katrina.karl@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

My name is Katrina Karl and I am a teacher at Waipahu High School. I am submitting testimony against pay cuts for teachers that may be considered at your May 7th meeting. It is absurd that pay cuts are once again being considered after Governor Ige's proposed pay cuts for all state employees were rightly met with intense backlash and are now said to be a "last resort." A pay cut of nearly 20% would cause me, as a teacher who is in the second highest class of our pay scale, to be living paycheck to paycheck once again. If pay cuts would so drastically impact teachers making relatively higher salaries, they will devastate those who are not earning as much. As we still face a teacher shortage, how will new teachers who already barely earn a livable wage be incentivized to join or remain in this profession? Teachers simply cannot fulfill their roles and prepare future generations for success if they will barely be able to afford the essentials, or be unable to support themselves at all.

Katrina Karl

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

Aloha

Noel Kent <noelk@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 4:12 PM

I have taught at the University of Hawaii at Manoa for forty-eight years. Our public education system in Hawai'i is one of the foundations of our society and our economy. We are experiencing great problems with the quality of education in the K-12 area and much of that is due to the acute shortage of teaching staff and their lack of preparation. Much of this is due to low remuneration in an extremely high cost economy. The idea of reducing teacher salaries further will only serve to intensify the shortage and create more chaos in the school system. To invest in our islands' future we should be raising our teachers' salaries and benefits.

Noel J.Kent Professor



Proposed budget for SY 20-12 and onward

Natalia Gamarra <nataliagamarrahawaii@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 4:14 PM

Aloha e BOE members,

I respectfully ask that you consider teachers as an integral part of the community and builders of our future. Please use the data and numbers presented to you, but don't forget that each of those numbers is an 'ohana of Hawaii. As you help lead our entire department through this difficult time please remember that balancing budgets at the expense of educational outcomes and teachers is only moving us further from our goals as educators.

I have been a teacher in HDOE since 2005, I am a licensed math, special education, and general education bilingual teacher with a master's degree and currently in the process of completing my 2nd M.Ed in Educational Leadership.

Growing up on this island, from a family of immigrants, being the first generation to attend college, I was raised to believe that education is the most valuable investment. Not in the state of Hawaii.

During my early years in teaching at Chiefess Kamakahalei Middle School I never thought I would ever own a home on Kauai due to housing costs and my salary given my career. Then the furloughs proposed by Gov Lingle came in 2009 to 2011. To my surprise from losing 14% of my income, I found greater income by cleaning vacation rentals during furloughs, which allowed me to save for a down payment on my first home, that I bought from a bank during the housing market crash in 2011. I eventually left the island and teaching in 2013, to work as a deckhand/crew on private boats because my salary would actually be greater and my expenses, the liability, stress, and responsibilities much lower.

I returned to Hawaii in 2016 to start a family and return to my career, as the political climate in the country made me feel that education was more significant and necessary in our society than ever. My faith was renewed on seeing leadership that supported education and valued the profession, I became involved in HSTA, returned to the classroom, was surprised to see for the first time ever talks about differentials for special education, programs to support local students to join the profession, and I received a pay increase for the first time in teaching for two years in a row, and then COVID-19 happened.

It seems like it was all too good to be true, here we are again, regressing and asking if fully funding education is really a priority and worth it?

How are the proposed furloughs and pay cuts meant to help us recruit the over 1,700 vacant teaching positions?

How are we to provide our keiki with a quality education that will help empower them, allow them opportunities, and lift them out of poverty, when the first item on the budget to cut is always schools? How will Hawai'i's families afford the added expense of feeding and caring for children as a result of furloughs given the current economic crisis? Can we look for creative ways to balance this budget that actually empower and support our local communities?

I know these are challenging and unprecedented times, so let's look for a new solution, not old failed policies that have hurt Hawai'i before.

Respectfully,

Natalia Steinhorst-Soler



Proposed Teacher Pay Cuts

Derek Bishop to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 04:20 PM

From: "Derek Bishop" <derek.bishop@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Hawaii State Board Of Education,

My name is Derek Bishop. I've been a special education teacher for the past 30 years. I am currently employed at Paaulo Elementary and Intermediate School on the Big Island. I taught in Hawaii initially from 1990 to 2005. I left for California in 2005 due to family as well as financial reasons. It was hard for me to save for a home and keep up with expenses on my Hawaii teacher salary. In California I earned 30% more and had a lower cost of living. In the following 15 years, from 2005-2020, the gap between Hawaii and California pay only grew. I decided to return to Hawaii this past Christmas when I learned of the special education and geographic stipends that began in January. I understand that these stipends are already planned to be phased out in July, after only six months of implementation. But they showed me a commitment to retain teachers that I had not observed before. I have debts that I am repaying and financial goals that I am pursuing. Without the stipends I will be at break-even, with little hope of home ownership here. But if there are additional pay cuts, for example the 20% across the board salary cut that Governor Ige has spoken of, I will not be able to meet my most basic expenses and I will be forced to consider strongly returning to California. It is beautiful and fulfilling in many ways to live and work in Hawaii. Even with the soon-to-be phased out stipends, I still took a \$20,000 pay cut to assume work in Hawaii. But I thought that the loss of income was doable, and that there would be an overall net gain to my quality of life by returning to Hawaii.

I know that the State is under unprecedented pressure financially. I am not sure what is the best path forward. The State must balance its many obligations. However, I am a real data point in the equation, and it is likely that further pay cuts would drive me to return to teaching on the mainland. I wish you the very best in solving the very difficult problems faced by the Aloha State.

Sincerely,

Derek Bishop

1-808-775-9111

derekbishop@hushmail.com

derek.bishop@k12.hi.us

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

Pay cuts

Lara Mangieri <lamangieri@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 4:26 PM

If the state decides to cut teacher pay by 20%, I will be looking to leave education all together and find a job in the private sector, or move to another state where funding will not be cut for education. My family cannot exist on a pay cut that dramatic. It seems to state always puts education and our keiki as a last priority. Education should be the utmost priority if we want to live in a better world.

Lara Mangieri



Testimony for meeting on 5.7

Elissa Gathman <el.gathman@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 4:26 PM

Aloha, my name is Elissa Fiedler. I teach Kindergarten at Kahakai Elementary School. Fun fact: my friends who are currently on unemployment due to COVID-19 are getting paid MORE by the government than I am as a 4th year teacher with a master's degree. This is not right. Cutting our salary by an additional 20% should not even be considered as an option. You are not giving teachers any incentive to choose to continue teaching, when unemployment is somehow a better paying option. I already personally know teachers who have packed up their things and bought their tickets back to the mainland as soon as they first heard about a potential paycut. We simply cannot afford it. We are single moms, we have college debt, we have mortgages, we need to be able to feed our family - and many of us already spend part of salary on our students and our classrooms. We are dedicated to our students and our communities, and the success of our students leads to the future success of the economy! If teacher salary cuts are implemented, we will lose so many more teachers. The shortage that already exists will become worse. If you want to help our economy, if you want to plan at ALL for the future, cutting teacher salaries is a very bad idea.

Sincerely,

Elissa Fiedler, M.S.Ed

Kahakai Elementary School, Kindergarten Teacher



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

Do not cut educator's salary

Melissa Kikkert <just4kikkz808@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 4:40 PM

To whom it may concern,

Our teachers should not have a salary cut. We need to have qualified educators teaching our children and be able to afford living on Maui while doing so. The future depends on our children and educators are vital to the proper development of these young minds.

I am not an educator myself but I feel that I need to make a statement standing with our teachers for the sake of our future.

Mahalo,
Melissa Kikkert
Mother



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

No paycuts for teachers

Jeenna Canche <jeennacanche@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 4:40 PM

Aloha,

Please do not cut pay for teachers! Students have already suffered enough this school year missing an entire quarter of face-to-face school. Cutting teachers pay in the form of Directed Leave Without Pay will cut schooling even more. Further cuts in pay will force teachers into making difficult life choices which may include working multiple jobs or even leaving the teaching profession altogether just to be able to support their families.

Teachers in Hawaii are already suffering enough with large class sizes and long hours to meet the increasing requirements for other imposed mandates. A 20% pay cut for some teachers will mean the difference between paying the bills or putting food on the table. Teachers are professionals who have worked hard so that they would not have to make these kinds of choices for their families. Please don't make a difficult situation even worse!

Mahalo,
Jeenna Canche
Spanish Teacher
Maui High School
808-280-4720



Teacher Paycuts

Melissa Montoya <miss.melissa.montoya@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 4:45 PM

Aloha,

I wanted to express my concern for ANY paycuts. I was a classroom teacher for 7 years at Waipahu HS and I am currently an instructional coach in Wai'anae at Kamaile Academy.

I'm disappointed in the constant threats that educators have against them. I have stayed in this profession to show how intelligent, capable, and dedicated educators can be successful. I truly thought when I graduated in 2011 that I could make a difference and understood the "pay cut" I took when I transferred from the College of Engineering to the College of Education. I wish to stay at this level or go back to the classroom. I knew I had to stay competitive and get degrees to maybe consider being an administrator, but I realize over and over that admin is not the answer—it's on the frontlines in the classrooms. I will not be able to live in Hawai'i if I take this pay cuts.

My students have always been my biggest inspiration. They are so important to me that my dissertation is looking at student perspective. Why? Because I have had students ask me, "Miss, why don't you teach at a school in town or a private school?" They thought they didn't deserve "good" teachers. There's already a serious deficit of capable and highly qualified, even certified, veteran teachers on the leeward coast. This is only making it worse with so many teachers leaving because they are mainland-bound after COVID. No shade to them that the BOE cannot be consistent with the message of supporting educators in Hawai'i.

I urged you to dismiss this plan of pay cuts and problem solve as the most intelligent agency in the state, the educators.

Mahalo,
Melissa Montoya

--

Melissa Montoya

Z dlsdkx#K ljk#7fkrro

Vf.hqfh#Whdfkhu

+;3; ;8<0654;

missmelissamontoya@gmail.com



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

DON'T Reduce Pay

Francesca DePasquale <francescana@gmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 5:23 PM

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

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a former Hawai'i DOE teacher (nine years) and I implore you to consider how absolutely and devastatingly ridiculous your proposed DLWOP is. How dare you "solve" your financial issues related to COVID-19 by victimizing teachers (and nurses, firefighters, institutional workers) and essentially cutting their pay. You should be ashamed of yourselves. This is a downright reprehensible plan. Are you assuming that teachers aren't working during this quarantine and so they shouldn't be paid their fair share? Look high and low and you'd guaranteed be hard-pressed to find a teacher that isn't toiling and exerting him/herself for the benefit of his/her students. Don't you dare take advantage of teachers, who have clearly demonstrated their essential, flexible, crucial, and extraordinary skills in spite of hardship and adversity, like what they're facing from your proposed plan. Don't you dare minimize the remarkable contributions that they have been making within their communities, like ensuring students can still feel prepared for AP exams, enjoy virtual graduation ceremonies, and have access to high-quality learning experiences. Don't you dare take out your own problems on teachers.

Sincerely,

Francesca DePasquale, MEd-T



don't cut my pay

Tammy Jones to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 05:31 PM

From: "Tammy Jones" <tammy.jones@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

I have been a teacher in the state of Hawaii since 2008. I am a single parent who works diligently for the children of Hawaii. I work beyond my contracted hours reviewing data and building lessons to provide the best educational experiences for my students. Additionally, I have done course work to move up the pay scale. If you cut my pay by 20% you return me to the rate I started at. Unfortunately, you are not cutting my rent or utilities. Nor are you reducing the amount I have to pay just to live in Hawaii.

I enjoy teaching in Hawaii and do not want to leave. However, I can move back to the mainland, get a teaching position that pays what I make now and have a much lower cost of living.

The children of Hawaii deserve the most qualified, dedicated teachers available. This will not happen if you reduce our current salaries. Hawaii's Department of Education already has a teacher shortage. This will not be the recruiting tool to encourage new teachers to teach here.

There must be a better way.

*Tammy Jones (Master of Arts in Teaching)
Reading Readiness to Learn Coordinator
English Language Arts Coach
Solomon Elementary School*

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

Teacher salary cuts

Katelyn Timmerman <katelyn.timmerman@wheelermiddle.k12.hi.us>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at
5:44 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hello,

I would urge the BOE to not consider cutting teacher salaries. Hawaii already suffers from a teacher shortage, if salaries are cut then few people will be willing to move here and many of the teachers that do live here will be forced to move back to the mainland. Hawaii is already a state with pay that is not consistent with the high cost of living. With a pay decrease or furlough days, then it will be even more difficult to update an education system to produce citizens who are able to be active and positive members of society.

Thank you,
Katelyn Timmerman



DOE Salary Cuts

Margarita Alo-Chu <alochu@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 6:07 PM

Aloha kakou

I'm writing to voice my concern over teacher salary cuts. I'm a veteran public school teacher of both DOE and Charter schools for the past 25 years. It's been a blessing and my kuleana that I've been given since I've graduated twice from the University of Hawaii at Manoa as a native Hawaiian Daughter and product of a native Hawaiian community, Nanakuli DOE schools. Something that I've never dreamt of becoming because I was never taught by a native Hawaiian teacher.

As a veteran teacher my mission has been to educate the next set of Hawaiian educators to stay the course for the benefit of our Hawaiian haumana and the future of Hawai'i. Majority of the students that I've taught have been recruited to private schools because of their love for learning the opportunities for furthering their education that would help their families greater than attending a public school especially in Nanakuli.

This ripple effect of our "Ace" Hawaiian students and leaders all advancing in a private school system leaving our public schools in Native communities at great deficit. A deficit means a ripple effect into the future of Hawaii whereby the vast majority of native Hawaiian students that are in the DOE schools are left with less and less. Less student role models and leaders to help lift up those that need the extra boost of confidence to make it through school. The lack of native Hawaiian graduates that would replenish native Hawaiian public schools to raise expectations and promote identity to a race that desperately needs to know their purpose, kuleana left by their kupuna and ancestors. Why do we continue to take away from the very ones that could save our future as engaged kanaka that understands malama kanaka, malama aina, malama ka honua? Who will teach them? Teachers like me are dedicated to stand together and see Hawaii for what it can be with our students actively working on the aina for its sustainability.

Please stop taking away from us what little we have in monetary to sustain our own homes and families so we can go to work without worrying about pay cuts. Pay that has already been cut for those of us that have been working for over 20+ years. Waiting patiently throughout to receive the pay we deserve through an increase to catch us up years of service and pay.

Now you are considering taking that away and more. I understand about the current economic impacts but taking it away from education is wrong and will be a huge regret on our future, keiki and economy. Let's find another way!

Restructure our economic system in Hawaii. Less tourism and a focus on export instead of import. Relaying our natural resources to export clean energy as a product, less development and more agro-forests, farmlands, cattle ranches, small businesses of unique products exported from Hawaii. Tourism only in the Waikiki area and outside resorts for kamaaina vacations. Open up larger venues for the mega talented Sports and Entertainment we have facilities for weekend vacation trips. Restaurants reasonable for all local families to enjoy on the weekends. Less transportation, more scenic walkways and bike paths. State of the art medical centers for professional doctors and nurses for the Pacific. The best schools and University of the Pacific as well.

If the people of Hawaii can work together and keep Hawaii a place for Ohana first in homeownership and less foreign capital including out of state. The people of Hawaii would work hard to take care of each other and keep a vibrant sustaining lifestyle.

Please think about it, it's how I'd like to see Hawaii go.

Thank you for your time.

M. Leilani Alo-Chu
Kumu - Papa Ehiku
UH Manoa PH.D Student
Nanakuli, Hawai'i

"A`ohe pau ka ike i ka halau ho`okahi"
All learning is not done in one school
"Kulia i ka nu`u" -Strive for the summit.

Dear BOE Members,

May 5, 2020

My name is Maria Guardino. I am a Teacher at Kawananakoa Middle School in Honolulu on Oahu. I have been a proud public-school teacher in Hawaii for 16 years.

My message, simply stated is: be sure to exhaust every option during this afternoon's discussion of "potential expenditure adjustments to rebalance the state's general fund budget".

Eduweek's, May 5th, 2020 article shares that although many states are freezing pay proposals, there are still nine states providing teachers pay increases. <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/03/26/how-coronavirus-is-jeopardizing-pay-raises-for.html?cmp=eml-contshr-shr>

I ask the BOE to consider crafting a comprehensive teacher survey which would help to further understand the consequences of pay freezes, furloughs and/or pay cuts so that the State has a better picture of the consequences on teacher retention. The findings would also help Hawaii understand the affects of these proposals on our future leaders, our children.

The DOE, BOE and Union's focus this year has been to increase the retention of qualified teachers who serve students who have the rights to special education services, Hawaiian language classes, and/or English Language Learner Programs. Are we fiscally prepared for lawsuits similar to Felix Decree? According to Star Advertiser's Dec. 15, 2010 article, that lawsuit cost Hawaii one billion dollars of special education reforms. We need to continue to focus on retaining qualified teachers. Frankly, when considering our students' right to a quality educator, retention is cost effective.

As a Nationally Certified teacher of English Language Learners, I know my value AND the cost of living in other states. My cousin, a teacher in California, with fewer qualifications (degree and NBCT) makes almost twice as much as I do.

I am a highly qualified teacher who planned to remain in Hawaii, but honestly, if there is a pay cut, I will have to consider leaving. It's a thought I believed I'd never have to make. I love teacher in Hawaii.

Please help me and the many other passionate educators similar to me remain in Hawaii.

Thank you,

Maria Guardino



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

teacher pay cuts

Nancy Usher <jinglesusher@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 6:25 PM

Dear B.O.E.

I am writing you to plead that you do not cut teacher pay. My take home pay is only \$1800 twice a month. I already can not make it financially on that amount of pay.

After paying my regular monthly expenses I am in the red every month by \$1200 and so I have to put my expenses on charge cards in order to survive. That does not include the student loans which keep accumulating as I am unable to pay them on my present salary.

Last year due to poor working conditions, specifically a lack of air conditioning in my 90 plus degree hot classroom I developed a medical condition that required me to get treated on Oahu, which ended up costing me over \$4500 out of pocket after insurance. To try to avoid experiencing this same horrible experience I spent \$400 of my money to buy an air conditioner for my classroom to try to mitigate the heat for myself and my students. Of course I had to put these expenses on a charge card as I can not afford to pay for them with the amount I am paid now. On top of that I have to spend at least \$600 more for supplies for my classroom every year.

Honestly, I don't know how I can continue to work here on my present pay. If our pay is cut I don't know what I will do. I know many veteran teachers will retire and some will relocate to the mainland. The schools will be stuck hiring inexperienced emergency hires and long term substitute teachers. For the past two years I have witnessed long term subs who fail to control their students, and don't show up on time for classes so that I and other teachers must leave our classes and intervene as well as supervise these other students. It's ridiculous.

Hawaii can't afford to lose any more certified teachers. If you cut teacher pay the state will have a harder time recruiting new teachers without a doubt given our very high cost of living.

I work at Hilo High School.

Sincerely,
Nancy Usher



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

Testimony

Karen Kojima <karenkoji277@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 6:50 PM

My name is Karen Kojima, and I am based at the Leeward district office. I have been a teacher of the blind and visually impaired for over 30 years. This is an area of critical need, as it is difficult to fill since it requires specialized training.

Please consider that teachers are dedicated and go well beyond what is needed to benefit their students. This cannot be said of many professions. We value learning, and fully believe that our future depends on the quality of the current generation's education. Being a veteran teacher, I have seen many changes throughout my career, and the current proposal of cutting the teachers' pay by 20% would be morally and financially devastating to teachers now, and in years to come. I thoroughly enjoy teaching this special population, but with the proposed pay cuts looming, retiring earlier than planned is a realistic option for me.

It's ironic that I am having to write this testimony on Teacher Appreciation Day with the proposed pay cuts to be discussed in two days. It is very alarming that teachers' salaries are used to mediate budget shortfalls!

Please re-consider other alternatives before compromising the education of Hawaii's children.

Thank you.
Karen



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

Please do not cut our pay

Tammy Holt <tammyholt@waikikischool.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 6:57 PM

Dear Board of Education,

My request is simple. Please do not cut our pay. As a nine year general education teacher with a Masters degree I simply cannot afford a pay cut. Our state is an expensive state to live in. As it is, teachers are barely surviving. Between medical expenses, car payments and mortgages we are living check to check. A pay cut of any kind will take away grocery money for my family and as a state educator, I simply do not deserve that.

As it is, we pay to advance in step. The classes are expensive and have become limited.

Please do not reverse the progress made by the advancement of our last contract.

We should be able to survive on ONE job. Our energies must be used to create engaging and effective curriculum so that our children will lead this state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tammy M. Holt



Testimonial for Teachers

Lindsay Kawano <lnnkawano@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 6:58 PM

To the Board of Education,

My name is Lindsay Kawano and I have been teaching for almost 5 years. I moved to Hawaii from California as a Teach for America Corps Member and after my required two year commitment to the program, I decided to continue to teach. I am a 6th grade middle school teacher and I love what I do in spite of the financial challenges I face from the high cost of living in Hawaii and very low teacher salary. Year after year, I find myself juggling with the idea of leaving teaching altogether because I know I could make more money in another field.

After I earned my master's degree from Johns Hopkins University, I thought about how many career opportunities I would have and how I could choose to earn more than a teacher salary. However, every year I've come to the conclusion that I can't ignore my passion for education. I return to the classroom each year and have never regretted it. I love every part of my job, even the most challenging situations, because I know that what I am doing will make a difference in a child's life and it will contribute to the tremendous efforts to improve Hawaii's public education.

It is absolutely devastating to me that I might not be able to pursue this career path if I have to take a salary cut. This pay cut would mean that I will not be able to afford to continue teaching. I will need to move back to California to live with my parents and I will be forced to reconsider every decision I've made in the past several years and every sacrifice I've taken to stay in the classroom.

The teacher shortage crisis, as you are aware, is detrimental to this state. There are tens of thousands of students who are suffering as a result. Without a permanent, highly-qualified teacher, students disengage from their education. Why should they think school is important if there isn't even an adult showing up to let them in the classroom?

The transition to distance learning because of the COVID-19 pandemic has been yet another tremendous challenge for students and teachers alike. My group of students has been without a permanent math teacher since August, and since they don't have a math teacher to provide them with "enrichment activities", I have taken up that responsibility. The students have very little accountability to do any work right now and several do not feel the urgency to try to engage with the academic resources we are providing because they are either extremely stressed or apathetic because they will not be graded.

Parents are overwhelmed and confused, especially families with multiple children. I spend all day planning a new online curriculum, which also needs to be available for students without access to technology or the internet. I respond to parents whose concerns range from "Will my child be prepared for 7th grade?" to "My child has stopped eating and I don't know how to get them to talk to you about school." When I'm not talking to families, I'm having meetings with other teachers. We are problem solving, coming up with ideas for curriculum, attending professional development classes, and coordinating letters and gifts to send to our students and their families.

Aside from the stresses of our job, we know that the budget for schools is getting cut, so our jobs are not safe. Some of my colleagues have confided in me that their spouses have been laid off and they are unsure how they are going to support their own children. Some teachers have already been informed that they have to be released from their position for next year. We are scared and uncertain what the future holds. Needless to say, this is an unprecedented crisis and I urge you to consider another alternative that will not affect the salaries teachers earn today. This decision can only aid in the support of the educational needs for Hawaii, and provide an opportunity for our communities to sustain itself during these times.

Respectfully,

Lindsay Kawano, MEd
Wheeler Middle School



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

please do not reduce teachers' salaries

Mrs T <itoth@dms.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:02 PM

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries, especially for the following reasons:

-
- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Thank you,
Ingrid Toth
Dole Middle School
grade 6, social studies



Teacher pay cuts.

Daniel Johnson <dbj999@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:06 PM

Dear Dedicated servants of, and designers of Hawaii's future,

While I realize that many people may be taking a pay cut at this time due to the problems foreseen in the economy, now is not the time to cut pay for Hawaii public school teachers.

The pay Hawaii teachers currently receive does not go far in our economy. Here it is compared with teachers from other states (in 2017).

<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2017-06-01-graph-where-do-us-teacher-salaries-really-go-the-furthest>

States where teaching salaries go furthest	States where teacher salaries go least
Michigan	Hawaii
Illinois	South Dakota
Pennsylvania	Maine
Wyoming	Arizona
Ohio	West Virginia

Notice we are at the top of the list where pay goes least, for teacher pay in relation to the Hawaii economy. The only realistic measure.

But salary is not the only factor in teacher satisfaction. Looking at the other contributing factors, Hawaii is still not ranked well

<https://wallethub.com/edu/best-and-worst-states-for-teachers/7159/>

Overall Rank (1 = Best)	State	Total Score	'Opportunity & Competition' Rank	'Academic & Work Environment' Rank
1	North Dakota	61.69	11	3
2	New Jersey	60.15	17	1

Overall Rank (1 = Best)	State	Total Score	'Opportunity & Competition' Rank	'Academic & Work Environment' Rank	
3	Pennsylvania	59.67	2	10	
4	Wyoming	56.98	20	4	
38	Alabama	46.13	28	41	
39	Missouri	45.92	40	31	
40	Colorado	45.49	47	8	
41	Tennessee	44.79	43	29	
42	Maine	44.72	48	11	
43	District of Columbia	43.49	42	36	
44	South Carolina	42.20	38	49	
45	Oklahoma	41.92	37	50	
46	New Mexico	41.07	44	42	
47	West Virginia	40.71	45	37	
48	Louisiana	37.87	46	46	
49	Hawaii	37.51	49	40	
50	New Hampshire	35.47	51	13	
51	Arizona	33.95	50	51	

In this look at Hawaii's teaching environment and mobility, Hawaii still ranks near the bottom.

And that's not the only site where Hawaii does not do well. This is what the USA today said about teaching in Hawaii. We are their 4th worst place to teach, out of the 50 states and D.C. in 2019.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2019/07/09/the-states-where-its-best-and-worst-to-be-a-teacher/39647529/>

The states where it's worst to be a teacher

"4. Hawaii

- **Average teacher pay:** \$84,883 (7th lowest)
- **Student-teacher ratio:** 15.4 (4th highest)
- **New teachers expected to qualify for a pension:** 83% (8th lowest)
- **High school graduation rate:** 51% (4th lowest)

Kingman, the state's largest city, has the lowest average teacher pay in the state. The state's average teacher pay is \$84,883, which is 7th lowest among all states. The student-teacher ratio is 15.4, which is 4th highest among all states. The state's high school graduation rate is 51%, which is 4th lowest among all states. The state's pension qualification rate is 83%, which is 8th lowest among all states.

Kingman, the state's largest city, has the lowest average teacher pay in the state. The state's average teacher pay is \$84,883, which is 7th lowest among all states. The student-teacher ratio is 15.4, which is 4th highest among all states. The state's high school graduation rate is 51%, which is 4th lowest among all states. The state's pension qualification rate is 83%, which is 8th lowest among all states.

This is not the time to lower Hawaii teacher salaries. Instead, if we just keep them the same, while everyone else is lowering theirs, then we have a chance of moving to near the middle of the pack (not even the top), at least for pay.

What "real" effect does all of this have on teaching here?

I personally have been teaching at Castle High School for 10 years. In that time we have had very high turnover. We have 8 regular ed positions in the Math Department, and 6 SPED positions. Since I began at Castle we have only 1 SPED math teacher remaining, and 2 regular ed math teachers (if you include me). All the other teacher positions have turned over. Most multiple times. We counted recently and there have been a total of at least 14 new hires since I began. And this is in the math department alone.

While teacher pay is not the only reason teachers leave (total student load is also a factor), it is still important. Many teachers, especially new teachers, work multiple jobs to be able to afford food and rent. Lowering teacher pay will be the last straw. That will make it impossible for many more teachers to continue work for the DOE. I personally know several teachers who are going into debt teaching because they spend too much time at school, and not enough time at their other jobs. Lowering their pay would be kicking them when they are already down.

All of this is highly detrimental for our students at Castle. We had to hire another emergency hire teacher in the Math department this year. This teacher has no math background, and little teacher knowledge. Is this who you want teaching your children? Better pay would mean we could start to attract more people to the field, and have better prospects for putting qualified teachers in front of Hawaii's Keiki.

If the constituents of the Board of Education (yourselves) were actually connected to what is happening with teachers in the trenches, you would not even be considering this alternative. If you are really interested in helping our Hawai'i Keiki, you will instead look into increasing teacher salaries, and decreasing total student load on teachers (hiring more qualified teachers).

What do I mean by total student load? Under our current plan most Castle teachers teach 3 to 4 different classes, during 6 out of 7 different periods, to approximately 150 students each, and have on average less than an hour a day to prepare for all of that. And that's not counting advisory which makes it 4 to 5 classes during 7 out of 8 periods, to about 165 students. However, some teachers have as many as 180 students. This makes it extremely difficult for them to help each of our children reach their potential.

Please, if you think this is easy, or that I am exaggerating, come down to our school, and I will show you what I mean. I seriously ask you to try carrying this burden for a week, and then talk about what should and should not happen with teachers salaries.

There are other places that budgets can be cut. Please do not sacrifice Hawaii's hope for the future.

Thank you for your time.

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Mdp hv#E #dwdh# ljk#fkrrc
45-386 Kaneohe Bay Dr, Kaneohe, HI 96744
#####b#####



Virus-free. www.avg.com



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

Please don't cut teacher salaries

kristen tanski <ac2dburns@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:15 PM

Hello,

I am a new public school teacher with the Hawaii DOE. I am fully certified in the state of Hawaii for elementary education and tesol, and I'm in a program to become certified in special education. I love the school I teach at and my students. However, I don't make enough money to save anything with my current salary. Rent, food, student loans, and a variety of bills that can't be cut only allow me to save maybe 100 dollars a month. If my salary is cut, I will be forced to leave a job I love or get a second job which will take my focus from my students. I don't have any family that live on the island and I already have roommates, so my options are limited. I know the budget is strained, but there has to be a better way. Don't force teachers to leave the profession.

Kristen Tanski
Mililani 'Ike - 2nd Grade Inclusion



BUDGET CUTS FOR TEACHERS??? ARE YOU KIDDING?

Jennifer Lund <lotuslola9@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:33 PM

Dear Whoever is in Charge of this Asinine Proposal:

I grew up on Maui in the 1970s. When we moved back to the Big Island in 2014, I was astounded at how the school system (and library system, and public park system) HAD NOT CHANGED HARDLY AT ALL IN THE LAST 45 YEARS!

Hawaii is already at the bottom of the barrel in terms of finding and retaining GOOD teachers and GOOD healthcare workers and you want to cut their pay even further? (note: I said good, not even great).

You obviously want our children to be the poorest educated kids in one of the richest, most beautiful States?

Why?

Where is all the tax money going?

I lived in Washington State for 30 years in between and saw what a well budgeted tax system can do:

Beautiful, new schools with updated EVERYTHING including technology, gymnasiums, pools, and outdoor play areas (when was the last time we built a new school? yet we have a new Courthouse?)

*Beautiful sidewalks, and safe places for kids to walk or ride their bikes.

*Incredible library systems, with beautiful new libraries and all kinds of education tools.

*Teachers who are paid well for the work they do, and who STICK WITH THEIR JOBS because they afford to live in Washington State (another expensive State) and still buy a house and retire.

And every year I have lived here since 2014 I am astounded by the LACK of our PUBLIC EDUCATION especially with the amount of tax revenue that comes in for the OVER-MARKETED, OVERSATURATED tourism market. And where in the hell does all the money go? Why isn't any of it saved for a rainy day? LIKE TODAY????

PLEASE: Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. You are going to destroy a fragile eco-system.

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.
- Our state would suffer in the long run, our kids suffer, don't have opportunities, don't have a decent education and are behind the rest of the world (which Hawaii, by the way is already at least 20 years behind WA state)

You want Hawaii to stay relevant? You need to pay teachers and healthcare workers AND furthermore start putting money into parks and sidewalks and SUSTAINABLE ECO-TOURISM!!! Let's us this opportunity to bring Hawaii into the NOW be being global leaders in sustainability, education, environment.

Our teachers are not going to even be able to afford to teach, as they are already paid less than regular teachers because we are a public charter school. And guess what? They are the BEST DAMN TEACHERS I HAVE SEEN SINCE I'VE BEEN HERE. MY KID IS THRIVING AND LEARNING LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

WHY? Because they have stepped into the 21st century and are teaching kids RELEVANT UPDATED WAYS OF THINKING and LEARNING so they will be ready for the world they live in, not the early 1900's crap that is taught in public schools for kids that were going to grow up and work in manufacturing. Hawaii needs a total public education rehab and your budget cutting are dragging us into the past. **THE OUTDATED TEACHING METHODS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM IN HAWAII IS ALREADY HORRIFIC AND YOU ARE GOING TO MAKE IT WORSE!!!!**

From my 12-year old son:

I don't get why somebody would decide to cut a teacher's salary. They get underpaid already. They are helping hundreds of children learn. Knowledge is power. They obviously don't teach for money or because it's an easy job. There are so many kids who need extra attention and need help.

I don't know about other schools but at WHEA the teachers are actually doing something. Holualoa is awful. The teachers don't care. They didn't do a thing to educate me. But, finally, I got to have a good teacher here at WHEA. If you expect me to see the already scandalously small amount of money go down even, more you don't know your people.

I want other kids who came from the public education system, to be able to experience the best. To get a chance to really learn something. To learn something that will help you in the real world.

Our school systems haven't changed for the past 200 years. From the textbooks to education and rules. If you are such great power you know you have to collaborate and be creative to meet your goals in life. How can we educate if continue to cut teachers salaries? You are going to take the only step in the right direction (our public charter school WHEA) and let it go down in flames? WHEA cannot survive as our teachers are already paid less. I am not asking for much, but I am asking for you to take some of the zeros and ones out of your paycheck and help our education systems and teachers.

Sincerely,

Pukar

&

Jennifer Lund



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

Do not reduce pay for my son's teachers

Matāpuna Levenson <matapuna@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:39 PM

Aloha,

I am a resident of Waimea/Kamuela on the Big Island and I am contacting you in regards to recent news I received that teachers across the state will have their pay reduced. This is unacceptable. My son Ben is a third grader at Waimea Elementary School. His teacher, Mrs. Carvalho is an exceptional educator and beloved by all her students.

Ben's education from qualified, well-supported teachers and staff is critical to his and our community's success. Do not reduce their pay, it would be devastating to all keiki and the people of Hawaii.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Matapuna Levenson
Kamuela, HI
808-430-8488



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

Testimony for May 7 Agenda Re: Teacher Salary

Ayesha Ishihara <ayeshakishihara@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:53 PM

Aloha Board Members,

I am Ayesha Ishihara, a high school English teacher in the Campbell-Kapolei complex area. There's not much I can say about the hard work a teacher does that has not be said already. True, there are other jobs that have difficulties of their own and each field is filled with those who can withstand those difficulties. Financial difficulties, on the other hand, are not something easily overcome. A 19.62% pay cut for me amounts to around \$302 a paycheck - just over \$600 a month. For some, this may seem like a minor sacrifice. For me, it determines whether I can pay for my car, or my loan, or a combination of my utilities, phone, and internet. For teachers, for anyone really, that lives paycheck to paycheck, the effects are immense. The pay cuts will have a butterfly effect. It means that many of us in the public education field cannot contribute to the economy more than our bills and groceries - if that. A significant pay cut like this may be the thing that pushes public school teachers out of the profession - it isn't a sign of our feelings toward the profession, but rather of our struggle for survival in the state.



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

Please do not agree to cut our pay!

Jennie Matsuda <jennie.matsuda@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:54 PM

My name is Jennie Matsuda. I teach Kindergarten at Mililani 'Ike Elementary School. I've been teaching in Hawaii for the past 12 years. I arrive at school at 7am and don't leave until 6pm. I go in every weekend for at least 4 hours to prepare for the week. I know I am not the only one. MANY teachers put in well over the time required to make sure we give our keiki the best education...and we do all this while receiving some of the lowest pay in the nation. Please do not agree to reduce our pay. I know of teachers that will retire if this happens. These are veteran qualified teachers that we so desperately need. I know of many teachers who will not be able to support their families (including myself). I know of teachers who work at Times supermarket and shops at Ala Moana in addition to teaching just to make ends meet. Please, find alternative ways to support the deficit.

Sincerely,
Jennie Matsuda
Sent from my iPhone



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

Don't cut teacher salary

Grey Issel <greycatmiau@gmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:57 PM

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

Hello Hawaii BOE!

Teacher salary shouldn't be cut. Teachers don't earn enough as it is.

I've personally pursued teaching, but decided that the work is too demanding for the pay.

Teacher quality will suffer if you cut pay, as talent will be driven elsewhere. Consequently, children's learning will also suffer. To cut teacher pay would be a disservice to the people and future of Hawaii.

Grey Issel
Davis, CA



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

Re: Board of Education reject salary cut options

Joann Donnelly <jdonnelly@aieahs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 7:58 PM

Dear Board of Education Directors:

How are you and your families? I hope all is well with you.

I have been a teacher for the last 29 years in the State of Hawaii. I have endured many changes in education including Furlough Fridays, strikes, and a salary that is far lower than most educators in the United States of America. However, I continue to be a teacher because I truly believe and care about the young people I teach as our hope in making a positive difference in the future of our society.

How can I teach my students to respect what they are worth, if I do not respect what I am worth as an professional educator with a masters degree and 30 plus credits to my credentials. Teachers are professionals in every facet of their lives. We work long hours beyond the classroom schedule to ensure that our children receive the best of education. We do it willingly and without complaint even though our own families sacrifice both financially and personally due to teachers giving of themselves to their students and school community 110%. Recently, parents have told me that the job we do is worth a billion dollars because the pandemic has placed them in our role as a support system for distance learning. Therefore, it is unfair to ask us to sacrifice even more when all we want is to be paid our due diligence. It is not an option because of the dire straits that this financial loss will place on our lives as individuals. Even after 29 years as a teacher I am barely surviving on the present salary.

If you value education as the key to our future with our children, the BOE needs to be our "voice" in placing our profession as essential and paramount importance in our state budget. Do not risk the assets we have in place at this time -- teachers who work tirelessly to provide the best opportunity for our students as citizens of tomorrow. We play it forward everyday in the classroom -- to place teachers in a predicament where we will have to choose between survival and profession is unreasonable. To cut teacher salaries will have major repercussions in creating another crisis in our wonderful State of Hawaii -- where intelligent, talented and diligent individuals will have to leave the teaching profession that will negatively impact our education system.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to share my wisdom as a veteran teacher. It is important that **Board of Education reject salary cut options**. I trust in your own wisdom as the Board of Education Directors to listen to our "grassroots" voice in this important next steps forward for the State of Hawaii Department of Education.

Take care.

me ke aloha,
JoAnn Donnelly
Aiea High School
ELA teacher



Testimony

Holly Sullivan <holsullivan@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:06 PM

Aloha,

I am disheartened, discouraged and feel like we have been slapped in the face for all the hard work we, the educational teachers and staff have been doing to support our keiki in these difficult times.

It is my understanding that you are continuing to plan to cut our pay almost 20% by implementing a 10% pay reduction and directed leave without pay or supplemental time without pay.

I am concerned that:

... Students will not receive qualified education or services as there will be less licensed teachers due to retirement, leaving the field, not going into the field due to low pay, and not moving to Hawaii to teach as our pay is already low income in this high cost of living environment. In fact, despite having two masters (only one counts for the DOE) my salary is considered low income in Honolulu. Heaven help those teachers just starting out and our supporting staff members.

... Deficits in qualified Special Education teachers and staff would adversely affect our special needs population.

... Low morale will be prevalent as employees leave work they love so they can work at a job where they can feed their families, pay their rent and, maybe, just maybe, not work 20% more than the 2-3 jobs they already work to survive.

I urge you to reconsider your plan, not just for the employees but also for our keiki who need stability and positive, excellent education even more in these trying times.

Thank you for your consideration.



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

Please don't cut teacher salaries

Theres Gruter <theres@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:14 PM

Aloha,

There has been much depressing news over the past couple of months. Yet the only news item that truly brought tears to my eyes was when I read that Governor Ige had proposed cutting public school teachers' salaries by 20%. This came just days after my son's middle school teacher had notified his students and parents that he would have to reschedule his regular videoconference meetings with all his classes because he was taking up an additional job at Safeway to make ends meet. How much more disrespect can we show to those whom we trust with our children's education? We are already not paying them enough to make a modest living in this state. Tough budget decisions will have to be made, we all understand. But please do not make them on the back of those who are already shamefully underpaid.
Respectfully,

-Theres Grüter, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Second Language Studies, UHM



teacher salaries

Cid Chun to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 08:36 PM

From: "Cid Chun" <cidchun@gmail.com>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern,

This is testimony concerning the proposed pay cuts for teacher salaries. You can't be serious. I have been an educator in Hawaii for 23 years. In all 23 years, I was either going to school and working on my Master's degree while working full time as a teacher, or working a 2nd part time job. Taking home hospital tutoring. Picking up catering jobs on the weekends. Working a side online business. I feel robbed of time spent with my own children while they were growing up. But you may not be concerned about me, as I am only a few years shy of retirement. I may feel undervalued and under appreciated, but I will stick it out.

What you should be concerned about is the big picture. I spent five years as a curriculum and IB coordinator at Kaiser HS, working closely with teachers, especially new teachers, on building their curriculum. These young and passionate educators become disillusioned when reality sets in. College is much more expensive than it was 20 years ago, they have big loans to pay, and teachers are so, so, so undervalued in Hawaii. Recently I had some medical work done, and the technician shared with me that he used to be a teacher. He is brilliant and thoughtful. He left education and went into a medical position because he couldn't make it on the salary of an educator. When combined with the high cost of living in Hawaii, teachers in Hawaii are at the bottom of the US pay scale. Add to that the cost of benefits are ridiculously put on teacher's backs. This man told me if his family's medical insurance had been covered, he might have lived with the low salary, but the combination of low salary and lousy benefits just could not cut it with his being the head of family and having two young children.

This year I went back to the classroom on Oahu's North Shore - Wailaua. I am teaching 8th grade English and was working with a 7th grade English teacher who was fresh out of college from New York state. She is brilliant, hard working, and loved by the students. She is moving to Iowa where the cost of living is low and the starting salary is \$6,000 more a year than she made here. These are just two antidotal stories. I know of more. Then multiply that times 1000's across the state.

The state needs to be more accountable for how it spends money. I believe the governor and his administration needs an audit. How he can allocate millions of dollars for TNT on the Big Island, how he can do the same to protect windmills on the North Shore dangerously close to homes and schools, and then cut teachers' pay. Something is morally and ethically wrong here.

It is time for thoughtful decisions that represent what is best for Hawaii's youth and for Hawaii's future. There is already so many teacher positions filled with emergency hires. Teachers are already overworked and unpaid. There has to be a better solution than cutting teacher salaries. If we want to have young people coming out of schools with critical and creative thinking skills who contribute positively to society, not just become rodents on a wheel, but who help to create a better society, then let's model our best intentions. Let's show them we value their education and their teachers.

Warmest aloha,

Cynthia Chun

808 206-3071

cidchun@gmail.com



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

COVID Re-Balancing Frameowrk

Merrill Ranken <merrill.ranken@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:36 PM

Aloha,

My name is Merrill Ranken. I am a STEAM teacher at Pomaika'i Elementary school in Kahului, Maui. After working in the non-profit marine conservation sector for over 20 years, I began teaching in Maui's public schools.

I urge the BOE not to balance the budget shortfall from COVID-10 economic impacts by cutting teacher pay.

I am unique in bringing a MEd. to the public school arena rather than maximizing my salary by staying in the private sector. Highly qualified, experienced educators will surely leave our DOE system if pay cuts are enacted. Our teacher shortfall will get worse and the teachers we are left with will come from a less skilled pool- those with few other options.

I want to add my voice to those of my fellow teachers who are working hard to maintain contacts with students and families and planning for the return to direct instruction as soon as possible.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Merrill L. Ranken

--

"Always do your best. What you plant now, you will harvest later." Og Mandino



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

teacher pay reduction

Debra Sanbei <olih76@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:41 PM

Hello,

My name is Debra Sanbei. I am a social studies teacher at Hilo High School. I have lived here in Hawaii all my life. I recently became a teacher because of a desire and passion for educating our young children. Teaching is not 8 hours per day career. Great lessons that inspire require a lot of preparation every day. Differentiated instruction that engages all students at all levels is created for students in preparation for challenges and competitiveness in their career, civic, and college life. Don't reduce teachers' salaries - for the sake of the children. Mahalo!

Debra Sanbei, Teacher
US History
Modern History of Hawaii
Hilo High School



Teacher Pay Cuts Due to COVID-19

Cheryl Caffrey <ccaffrey2019@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 8:48 PM

Dear Board of Education,

Due to the economic hardship that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our state's economy, we know that State of Hawaii's budget has been greatly impacted in a negative way. Thus, it has been brought forth that one alternative to alleviate this is to cut teacher salaries by 20%. I am hoping that this will not happen because it will also have several negative repercussions:

1. We are facing a teacher shortage, any salary cuts will have future educators think twice about entering the profession, and teachers that are ready to retire will retire, since the pay cut will decrease their "High 3". There already is a teacher shortage, how will we be able to replace the hundreds of teachers that decide to retire?

2. A cut in teachers pay will mean less spending on the part of the teachers when the economy is beginning to reopen again. That is about 15,000 teachers who will not have the disposable income to spend. Also, many teachers are already struggling to make ends meet even before the possible budget cuts.

3. Teachers are deemed "essential" during this time. We are not on the front lines like the medical workers, but it has been stated that one of the first things that the government wants to reopen are schools so that parents can go back to work and not have to worry about child care. In my opinion, no workers that are deemed "essential" should take a pay cut. Pay cuts should be reserved to non-essential or to possibly lay off non-essential employees temporarily.

Please consider these various points before deciding to support a pay cut to teachers.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Caffre
Mililani 'Ike Elementary
Grade 4



BOE: Do not reduce teachers' salaries

Liana G <poohbear4554@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:06 PM

Hello!

My name is Liana Garma and I teach at Mililani High School. I'm a special education teacher and teach Algebra 1.

I'm writing to ask you to please not reduce teachers' salaries for a few reasons:

1). Our schools are already struggling to keep schools staffed with qualified teachers. A cut in our pay which definitely make this situation even worse as teachers will retire early.

2). Since our schools are already struggling to keep teachers, new teachers will most likely either leave the state or look for another career, which means our students will then be taught by long term substitute teachers who have no knowledge about the subject(s) they are teaching.

3). Current teachers could possibly leave the state to teach elsewhere because they can no longer afford the cost of living here which again would leave our students with long term substitute teachers who again will have no knowledge of the subject(s) they are teaching.

4). We are a 2 teacher household, and if this huge cut in pay happens for both of us, we may have to think about leaving the state as we don't only have ourselves to think of, but also our kids. We need to make sure we can provide for them and prepare for their futures. We were both born and raised here and planned to live here the rest of our lives. We have loved raising our children in Hawaii as there really is no place in the country like it, however, as much as it would pain us to leave, these possible pay cuts may leave us no choice. And I'm sure we are not the only ones.

Please take these points into consideration as you meet to discuss this matter. Cutting teachers' pay would not be in the best interest of Hawaii's keiki.

Sincerely,
Liana Garma



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

Teacher's Hardwork

Beth <bethnrod@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:10 PM

Hi, I'd like the BOE to know that we are working harder than when we were in session due to the immense transitioning to online teaching. It takes many hours to meet with our grade level teachers to plan activities and new learning for our students. Additionally, we have to continuously contact our families to make sure that communication is open and that the parents, staff and admin work together to make learning as accessible as possible.

Sincerely,
Beth

Sent from my iPhone



My Testimony

Jenny Au to: testimony.boe 05/05/2020 09:35 PM

From: "Jenny Au" <jenny.au@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern,

My name is Jenny Au, and I am a fourth-grade teacher at Pearl Ridge Elementary. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to reducing teachers' salaries.

With the school closures, I have been working around the clock to provide learning continuity for my students. This is my 15th year of teaching and I have spent countless hours improving my practice through professional development classes so I can move up the pay scale. A reduction in my salary will set me back after all those years of hard work.

Cuts to teachers' salaries would negatively impact our teacher shortage. I am a mother of two kids who attend a public school. They, along with all our keiki of Hawaii, deserve to have a qualified teacher in the classroom. A reduction in salary will encourage our veteran teachers to retire early, leaving more vacant positions. Without a competitive teaching salary, it will be harder to attract new educators into the field with Hawaii's high cost of living. The vacant positions will need to be filled with long-term subs and unqualified teachers. We cannot afford to take the chance of jeopardizing our children's right to a good education.

I strongly urge you to make the right decision and avoid reducing Hawaii's teachers' salaries. The teachers and students of Hawaii are counting on you.

Thank you,
Jenny Au
Grade 4 Teacher
Pearl Ridge Elementary

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Teachers deserve respect

S Grande-Misaki <mrsmisaki@gmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:45 PM

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

Aloha,

I have been a teacher for 23+ years. I am currently a teacher at Mililani High School. In addition to teaching 11th and 12th grade AP English Language and Expository Writing, I am the department head, graduation advisor, blood drive advisor and school level mentor. I wear many hats at our school and I love it. But I am tired and exhausted and even more so now with the threat of a pay cut.

The proposed pay cuts to teacher salaries is an insult not only to our profession, but to what many of my fellow colleagues provide for students. Many of us provide extracurricular opportunities that is NOT compensated by the DOE. I know that many of my colleagues would have to curtail these opportunities for students if a pay cut was approved. Students will miss out on these experiences in leadership and community service. Teachers would need to take on a second job to survive.

As an AP teacher we have added expectations to prepare students for a college experience and ultimately the AP exam. We put in countless, unpaid hours to give practice exams and reviews, in addition to round the clock feedback to students. Many of us will no longer be able to put in this extra unpaid time. Students will suffer. Many of the beginning teachers I currently mentor are barely surviving paycheck to paycheck. A cut would surely be debilitating and perhaps what pushes them out of the profession.

Please consider supporting teachers. We work hard. We are passionate. We love what we do, but we can't be beaten down anymore. We deserve more. I don't want my last 7 years of teaching to be even more challenging financially, especially with my two children in college. Nor do I want to see many young, innovative and fresh teachers burn out because they have to work multiple jobs or because they don't feel valued or respected. This will no doubt have a ripple effect on our students as well with courses that may be potentially taught by inexperienced and ill-equipped long term subs.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Stephanie Grande-Misaki



Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Lisa Ebinger <lisaebinger@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:48 PM

Dear BOE,

I am writing to tell you to please DO NOT REDUCE TEACHERS' SALARIES!

I get it. COVID-19 came and severely impacted our economy negatively, but reducing our salaries will be even more detrimental for our keiki and for the future generations.

I am a 3rd grade teacher at Mililani Ike Elementary School. I have been part of the DOE since 2005 --> that's 15 years vested into making a positive impact on our children. That's 15 years of shaping children to be responsible and respectful citizens in this world today - isn't that what we want our future generations to be? That's 15 years of finding creative ways to reach out to individual learners and help them succeed to their fullest potential. Today a bunch of my former 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students have already graduated and are community contributors in society. Some of these human beings could possibly be your own children.

If salary reductions happen, teachers will leave the profession - veteran teachers would retire earlier than planned and young, vibrant, and innovative teachers who are also trying to build a family will not be able to teach with the income that is projected. I am an NYU graduate with my masters and still have a long road ahead with college debt because of my pay. Reducing salaries would make me reconsider my profession so that I can provide for my family.

Think about it. Would you want YOUR keiki to be in a classroom with a teacher that is not certified to teach? Would you want YOUR keiki to waste a year of learning with long-term subs switching out throughout the year? Keiki today have gone through a lot these past weeks during quarantine. Their social-emotional and academic needs are not fully met when qualified teachers like myself are not teaching them directly.

Prior to COVID-19, HSTA worked so hard to get the ball rolling to increase pay to stop the teacher shortage. We were on a roll and now things have come to a halt and it feels like we are starting to go backward. What a disappointment. We need to keep our teachers for our children - THEY need us the most.

Do it for the keiki.

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Sincerely,
3rd Grade Teacher



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

Do not cut teachers salary

Malia Ribeiro <malia.ribeiro@gmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:50 PM

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

Dear Hawaii Board of Education,

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries! Hawaii already has a high teacher shortage & lower pay with higher cost of living. I am so grateful for my son's teachers who have helped him tremendously.

Thank you!



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

TESTIMONY

Brandon Cha <brandoncha3@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 9:53 PM

Hello,

This testimony is in regards to:

May 7th BOE General Business Mtg

Agenda Item: Discussion Item: "Presentation on potential impact of..."

Oppose/Comment

Testimony below:

My name is Brandon Cha and I am a 9th grade science teacher at Pearl City High School.

Please reconsider acting against the 19.62% salary reduction mentioned on page 6 of the meeting attachment for this discussion. As a new teacher, I do not make enough to financially withstand such a blow to my finances. I do not want to have to take up a second job when so many others in the economy are unemployed; doing so will only limit my time I can devote to my students, who will undoubtedly have pressing emotional issues on their minds when they return to work with me at school. Our schools can not stand to lose quality teachers at at time like this.

Thank you for your time.

- Brandon Cha

May 5, 2020

To Whom it May Concern,

I'm an educator and am very concerned about the possible plans to cut teachers' pay. The thought of it makes me feel undervalued and unappreciated, like what teachers do go unnoticed. Teachers already feel as if we are underpaid and the cost of living in Hawaii is so high that many of us are barely surviving here. I went into education because I loved the idea of positively influencing kids and preparing them for a successful future. However, I am divorced and living paycheck to paycheck while renting a small townhouse. If we took a pay cut, I may have to move back in with my parents, but that would not be ideal with two kids, or I may need to reconsider finding a different career. I do have a business degree and business background, as well. However, I love being an elementary school teacher and I want to continue teaching in Hawaii until the day I retire. I just need to be financially stable and able to support my own little family.

I also believe cutting teachers' pay will drive away quality teachers and increase the shortage. Teachers, parents, and students will become frustrated with overcrowded classrooms, a lack of quality education, and will be unhappy with our public school system. It will have a negative impact on our state's economy and ultimately, our state's future.

If you believe that the teachers in Hawaii are doing a good job, please support us. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
A Concerned Teacher

TESTIMONY to the HAWAI‘I BOARD OF EDUCATION
RE: TEACHER SALARIES-COVID 19

Aloha mai Chair Payne and Board of Education Members,

My name is Rebecca Kapolei Kiili. I have dedicated my career to public education for the past fifteen years in the Hawaiian Language Immersion Program (HLIP) on Maui. I am a proud product of Hawai‘i’s public school system and the public education sector is where I believe I can make the greatest contribution to my community. I am writing to urge all of you to **not** reduce teacher salaries during this unprecedented time and to find alternative solutions to balancing the state’s budget through other avenues.

As you all know, public school teacher salaries in Hawai‘i are amongst the lowest in the nation. Most of us work a second job or a summer job just to ensure that we can live comfortably here in Hawai‘i where the cost of living is so high. I personally have worked every summer since beginning my teaching career in 2005 in order to supplement my budget and to make basic ends meet. I don’t think that it’s fair that Hawai‘i constantly targets public education to balance our state’s budget every time we encounter tough situations. Examples include the furlough Fridays instituted under previous Governor Linda Lingle and the lack of consistent pay raises for teachers historically.

Prior to the covid-19 pandemic, the Board of Education, the HiDOE, and the HSTA were united in advocating for fixing the compression issue for our veteran teachers, instituting differential pay for Hawaiian Language Immersion Program teachers for the first time, as well as incentivizing Special Education positions. I hope that these initiatives are still at the forefront of your minds and that you are all still committed to not let these efforts slip away even though we are facing an entirely different situation at the moment.

As a teacher, hearing that Governor Ige entertained the idea of a 20 percent across the board pay cut for state employees like teachers made me feel devastated and extremely devalued. It was also disappointing to feel like all the hard work I completed over the years with taking professional development courses to make my way up the salary schedule in a steady and consistent way could get slashed and taken away so abruptly. To lose the pay that I have rightfully earned because of the need to balance the state’s budget is unfair and feels like a slap in the face.

Please consider other options to this dilemma. I know that we are all experiencing varied challenges because of covid-19 and that ultimately “we are all in this together,” but I also believe that other sectors of government should shoulder some of the burden and be the first to offer up a slash in their salaries. Let’s start at the top and work our way down instead of starting at the bottom and pushing those of us that are at the bottom already, into a deeper hole. Other leaders in other parts of the world have demonstrated true leadership by taking this action, slashing their

own salaries first. Unfortunately, the leadership in Hawai'i is not as bold and compassionate to the working class.

Again, I urge all of you to **not** cut teacher salaries at this time. This will lead to a greater teacher shortage because the state will lose its veteran teacher workforce and will have an even harder time with being able to attract or retain new teachers. Please do not balance the state budget on the backs of teachers and the keiki of Hawai'i. We deserve to maintain our dignity in this profession and our keiki deserve a qualified teaching workforce. Don't let go of the teachers we have now.

I hope that if we have learned anything through this pandemic, we have learned to value the working class professions who are essentially the "boots in the ground" that keep our communities safe, educated, and cared for. We are the infrastructure of the state--we cannot be dismantled neither sacrificed because we are the fabric that keeps our community stable.

Thank you for listening and for your leadership at this time. I trust that through creative and collective efforts, your team will be able to propose other options that are much more viable than cutting teacher pay.

In gratitude and aloha,
Rebecca Kapolei Kiili
Maui



Teacher salaries

Antonia Ramirez <antonia.ramirez.educator@gmail.com>

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 10:30
PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

My name is Antonia Ramirez. I teach fifth grade at Kaleiopuu Elementary School in Waipahu, HI. I am writing to you to express the disappointment I feel knowing that you are planning on cutting teacher's salaries and would like for you to consider other viable ways to get through this economic crisis without sacrificing one of your best employees; your teachers.

I came from the state of Texas back in August of 2019 as an experienced highly qualified teacher. I had always heard about the teacher shortage in the islands of Hawaii. I arrived here with the intention of impacting positively the lives of our keikis. I have taught elementary school for 17 years back in Texas. When I was hired, I only got credit for the maximum amount of years your Department of Education credits for an incoming teacher; which makes me receive a salary of about 8,000 less than back home. With the high cost of living here in the island, that is a huge adjustment I have had to make. Nonetheless I go to work everyday because I am an educator.

Throughout the year, working at Kaleiopuu Elementary School I have met amazing dedicated teachers. They have been waiting for a step increase that never happened and a pay increase that was promised to them and vanished. Teachers are losing faith in the system that doesn't show them the appreciation they deserve.

Day in and day out, these dedicated professionals give their 100% to keep delivering a quality education to the children they serve. We have adjusted in record time to a new way of educating through Distance Learning. We could have made up lots of excuses as to Distance Learning is complicated but instead every day, we continue to deliver quality lessons to the children. Why? Because we are dedicated to these children. We have chosen to do what ever it takes to ensure the continuity of learning because they deserve it.

I have many highly qualified teachers inquiring about coming to Hawaii to work, but I am apprehensive about recommending for them to come over because you guys do not compensate your teachers what they deserve.

This consideration of cutting our salary another 19-20% is another blow to your already underpaid teachers.

A salary cut that significant will hinder them from affording the basic necessities. That in turn will probably cause that more qualified teachers leave the island.

Ultimately it leaves the keiki unable to be educated by highly qualified teachers and increases the teacher shortage..

Isn't education a priority for you? Aren't you the ones that are supposed to advocate for the children of this state to receive the education they so rightfully deserve?

You know there are federal aides that you may qualify for and could prevent this atrocity.

On behalf of the thousands of amazing teachers your state has, desist of cutting the teacher's salary. I pray that you come together and create a plan that will not sacrifice our profession even more.

May God be with you,
Antonia Ramirez
Fifth grade teacher

940-765-3514



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

Teacher Salary

kristiauyong@yahoo.com <kristiauyong@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:35 PM

Dear Board of Education,

My name is Kristi and I teach high school art at Mckinley High School. I strongly oppose a salary reduction for teachers because it discourages individuals from pursuing the education field and contributes to a teacher shortage. In the long term, students lose interest in learning because they lose qualified teachers that have a rapport with them due to the low salary and high cost of living.

Even though it's my first year at Mckinley High School, I have freshman that are begging me to teach art classes for the next 4 years. With my upcoming mortgage next year and my below average salary, I'm barely able to sustain myself in the long run financially and I am often pondering if this field is truly meant for me.

I want to stay in the field because of the positive influence I have on my students. I watched students come from broken home transform under my guidance because I make learning fun and take the time to help them. I want to stay in the education field to continue to help those students but find it disheartening to wake daily worrying about not being able to pay my bills.

I kindly ask you to reconsider the decision to reduce the salary of teaches because they deserve better than this and there are many alternatives to balancing the budget. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Kristi

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2020
1:30 PM

BOARD OF EDUCATION CHAIRPERSON CATHERINE PAYNE and members of the BOARD:

My name is Kathleen Shiramizu. I am a Special Education LifeSkills Teacher at Farrington High School, grades 9 -12 and code 31-34(post graduates). I am submitting testimony to the BOE: Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage.

I am a Special Education LifeSkills Teacher, dedicated to those students with severe special needs. Special Education is a shortage area. Not all teachers in the position of Special Education are licensed and substitutes are not guaranteed when you request for them. The field is so specialized that the ends don't justify the means. You are still "short". Should you lose "one" Special Education Teacher to a reduction in salary, you may lose another to early retirement. That may be 2 different teachers or it may be the teacher in the shortage field of Special Education. Is that a positive outcome?

Retirement is a reward to those who aspire to earn the years of service. Reduction in teacher salaries at this time is a mistake, like a worm in a program. Damages will occur at the cost of wrong decisions and disrespect for all teachers. A teacher's choice to leave at a time of reduction in pay is a choice. Is that a positive outcome?

I suggest that you include a plan to find another way to get the funds that you need. Teachers, during this pandemic of COVID-19 have been extremely creative in collaborating, designing, and educating from afar. That didn't take funding, it took dedicated teachers with professional ethics and integrity to step forward and make it work. Every student had the opportunity to be a success. There are isolated stories of students who achieved more during Distance Learning than during the school year. Is that a positive outcome?

Lastly, Hawaii's high cost of living and Hawaii teacher's salary as being the lowest in the nation makes finding teachers to teach here a problem. This is definitely a negative outcome.

My message is short a clear. BOE: Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Besides being an educator, I am a mom, a daughter, a grandmother, and a sister; my family depends on my income to survive living in Hawaii. That is an unrelenting fact!

Thank you.



Michelle Hakes to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 12:00 AM
From: "Michelle Hakes" <michelle.hakes@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

If there is a 20% pay reduction I am going to have to move to a smaller place. I will not be able to afford my rent every month.

I am also going to have to go out and get a part-time job (if there are any left) which means less time focusing on the needs of my special education students. Most of them are high end with advocates. Less planning for their individual needs.

I worked through the last furlough Fridays and you taking 20% it's going to put my pay back to my pre 2005 paycheck. Even back when we had furloughs in 2009 to 2010 it only came out to about 10% it was not 20%. You cut my pay 20% that's approximately \$1000 every month. Then we're not eligible for unemployment because we still have a job.

You do another furlough Friday and then weeks where the kids have holidays on Mondays, they're only going to be in school three days a week .. should be furlough Mondays if you're going to do that. Do you realize how many advocates and lawyers are out there waiting just to sue the DOE and you're going to cut services to the kids...

How can people ever make a living if you continually go backwards in their pay, yet cost of living keeps going up?

--

Transition Coordinator
Hali'a Aloha Yearbook Adviser

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Testimony - Agenda Item V(5) re: Teacher Pay
5/7/20 General Business Meeting

Aloha Board of Education members,

My name is Julie Uyeno-Pidot and I'm a HIDOE graduate and the proud parent of two HIDOE students. During this general business meeting, I would like to submit testimony in opposition to any pay cuts proposed during agenda item V(A): potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education.

As all parents who have recently attempted to homeschool their keiki know, the work that teachers do requires highly specialized skills (including the ability to motivate unwilling learners and the mastery of multiple academic subjects) that the rest of us don't possess. They work extremely hard for very modest pay and have outrageously high insurance premiums, and they simply can't afford a 20% pay cut. The cost of living in Hawai'i is already high and I fear that a reduction in income would make it impossible for many teachers to remain HIDOE employees. Our state already has a shortage of qualified teachers, and losing the ones that we currently have would only exacerbate this problem.

While I understand that the state must make adjustments for the economic losses sustained due to COVID-19, I urge you (and our state lawmakers) to find any other way to save money than to dock the pay of the dedicated people who are responsible for educating the next generation.

Mahalo,
Julie Uyeno-Pidot



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

No Pay Cuts

Cindy Deuz <cngdeuz@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:51 AM

Good Afternoon,

I started teaching when the pay cuts were still in effect from Governor Linda Lingle's era. It was extremely hard to make ends meet and I seriously thought about quitting. But I persevered because I love my kids (each and every one of them every year, honest to God). Teachers are professionals and our students are like our own kids, we spend money out of our own pockets to buy supplies, treats, and teaching materials every year.

I worked hard to get my salary up by attending all the PD courses I could and to have that taken away feels like a slap in the face. Even at this pay, I am still struggling to make ends meet. A 20% pay cut would mean that I would need to look for a 2nd job or move to another state. I know teachers who are going to leave the profession to retire earlier than they would have done if pay cuts are implemented. Please help us keep the teachers we have and enable us to recruit new ones so our keikis can be taught by highly qualified teachers and not long term subs or emergency hires.

Thank you for your time,
Cindy Deuz
1st Grade General Education Teacher
Red Hill Elementary School



Say NO to Draft on COVID Re-Balancing Framework Proposal

B. Nakamoto <honukahu@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:19 AM

May 6, 2020

Catherine Payne
Hawai'i State Board of Education
P.O. Box 2360
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

Dear Honorable Board of Education Chairperson Catherine Payne,

Greetings with warm aloha. My name is Brian Nakamoto and I work as a high school math teacher, teaching all the math classes for high schoolers from 9th to 12th grade at Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind. I would like to provide my written testimony in regards of the draft on COVID Re-Balancing Framework, a presentation to be unveiled by Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) Superintendent Christina Kishimoto at the meeting to be taken in place on Thursday, May 7, 2020.

I strongly recommend to deny that draft of re-balancing framework. I have numerous reasons why I am against this. First of all, I work as a high school math teacher that is responsible to teach all the academic levels of mathematics, ranging from Pre-Algebra to Pre-Calculus, at Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind. Since the coronavirus pandemic hit here in our state of Hawai'i, I have been working overtime by several hours per day, everyday. The reason why I worked for so many hours is because I have to develop my instructional videos for each of the mathematics classes, as a lesson in Pre-Calculus cannot be distributed in another mathematics class such as Algebra I, for instance. And what is even more, I have to do these instructional videos in **American Sign Language**, then I have to upload these videos into Google Classroom, one of the apps under Google Suite provided by HIDOE. The average length of each instructional video is 10-20 minutes, depending on which class it will be used, then the process of uploading these videos directly from my home through my own Internet can last up to 2 hours per video. It is already tedious and I have to do my part as a high school math teacher at HSDB to provide the enrichment opportunities for all of my high school students.

Second of all, how can this proposal actually help the employees like us the teachers under HIDOE, especially us who are living on paycheck by paycheck? If this draft is being considered, then that will hurt our way of living by putting unnecessary burden on us to deal with high cost of living and the expectation of making payments for the rent and/or mortgage that are currently not being suspended. We already are struggling with our budget to accommodate the high cost of living in Hawai'i, especially when it comes to us who are locals. We are the teachers who are doing our investments in our own keiki in each and every city and town in this state of Hawai'i and we deserve better than this draft of our pay reduction.

Third of all, if this draft is being approved, you are sending more teachers away from this state as they will consider moving to other places for better cost of living. Do you really want to deal with increasing severity of teacher shortages in our state of Hawai'i? This has been problematic for Hawai'i over many years that I have lost the count. Also, you will send a pretty bold statement to the incoming teachers that they will struggle once they accept the offer of working as teachers in Hawai'i. Most certainly, they will reconsider about working here as teachers by looking elsewhere that will allow them to live comfortably without worrying about their budget being dependable on paycheck by paycheck. Either way, the teacher shortage in the State of Hawai'i will become worse and both HIDOE and the State of Hawai'i government will go backwards as well.

With these reasons mentioned, let me retract you to the idea of that draft on COVID re-balancing framework, this will not work for many of us. Remember, you have thousands and thousands of teachers working with their devotion to our keiki in the State of Hawai'i and I will not be surprised if they are already working over and beyond their time to ensure that the quality of education is still intact for all of our keiki, may they be Deaf, hard of hearing, hearing, Deaf-Blind, blind, with or without special needs, or mentally challenged, as their rights for the free appropriate public education.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to deny this draft of re-balancing framework that is being proposed by HIDOE Superintendent Christina Kishimoto and consider a different proposal that will not reduce any of the teachers' salaries. It is time for us the teachers to be appreciated and recognized for all of the hard work we have endured amid this coronavirus pandemic in our State of Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration, Chairperson Catherine Payne. May aloha be the force with you. Mālama Pono.

Aloha,
Brian Nakamoto
High School Math Teacher and High School Department Chair
Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind
honukahu@icloud.com



Testimony on proposed cuts to teachers salaries

Nathan Takahashi <n8takahashi96706@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:01 AM

To the members of the Board of Education,

It is very distressing to hear about the governor's plan to cut the salaries of government workers, including teachers by 20%. As the primary provider for my family you can probably understand the stress this is causing us as we struggle through these uncertain times. My colleagues and I have been striving to continue the education of our students regardless of the challenges that they and we are facing. Providing material both on-line and for physical pick-up, hosting video meetings to interact with students, and constantly reaching out to families to provide support are only some of the things that we are doing to continue our students' education. This has not been an easy transition for anyone and has required a huge change in the way we try to work and connect with our students. To now hear that this cut is on the horizon will cause many of our most effective, and seasoned teachers to consider retirement. I have heard that several teachers at my school will be retiring due in large part to these proposed pay cuts and I believe others will soon follow if this comes to pass. We are already dealing with a shortage of qualified teachers in our schools, and this will only serve to make this situation worse. As a parent of two children in the public-school system this makes me worried about the kind of education and future, we will be providing them. As many people may know teaching is not an 7:45am to 3:00pm kind of job. We spend countless hours during the night and on weekends working to plan and hone our craft. Creating engaging lessons, meeting with parents, planning with colleagues and furthering our own education are the things we do outside of our work hours. We spend a lot of our own time and money for our students' success because we understand that we can have such a big impact on their lives. And we do this willingly and without expectation of compensation, because we know how important our job is to the community we want to have in the future. How can teachers continue to do this with the worries of financial hardship looming over our heads? Having lived and worked through "Furlough Fridays" I can tell you that the impact is real and will be felt for years to come, both in the loss of quality teachers and the education our children will receive. I appreciate you taking the time to read my testimony.

Aloha,
Nathan Takahashi
Mauka Lani Elementary School
Academic Coach



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

Testimony 5/7/20: Oppose Budget cuts

Leona Watson <lpwright@hawaii.edu>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:01 AM

Aloha Kakou,

As a recent graduate who went back to school to change my career from a non-profit preschool teacher to Special education teacher to fill the need of our teacher shortage and to serve my community of Nanakuli I am writing to oppose this budget cut. In addition, both myself and my husband are teachers and we have three children, in which the budget cut will cause us to look towards other means to become sustainable. Therefore, I am asking that funding come from outside sources to help maintain funding for teachers. Please oppose the budget cuts.

In addition, we as teachers are working even harder with Covid-19 and thinking of new ways to continue learning. Managing time with homeschooling, parent communication, google meets, PLCs, various meetings, IEP writing, lesson plan development, study sessions, etc. We spend more then 40 hours a week just trying to make sure our students are malama.

I believe if we look into outside sources to fund education we will be able to avoid budget cuts across the board. Let's collaborate, reassess, and look into all means, before making a decision. Let's continue to be innovative and not make a mistake the will affect all stakeholders which includes our keiki, teachers, community, and 'ohana.

Malama pono a me Iesu Pu,
Leona Watson
Special Education 9-12
Nanakuli High and Intermediate School



Support for teachers

miyazono@hawaii.rr.com <miyazono@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:02 AM

To whom it may concern:

My name is Kristen Miyazono and I am a science teacher at Waiakea Intermediate School on the Big Island of Hawaii. I am writing to urge you to not cut the salaries of teachers. We work extremely difficult jobs, physically, mentally, emotionally, but we do it everyday for the keiki and the future of Hawaii. Yes, teachers do work 7 days a week, planning, preparing, prepping, to give our students the best instruction possible. If there is a 20% pay cut to state employees, both my husband and I would be impacted and therefore, it would amount to a 40% cut for my household. I have a mortgage, a child to raise, college to save for, and parents to care for that would be impacted greatly by this pay cut. On top of all the financial hardships, several of my colleagues have expressed to me that they will be opting for early retirement. We teachers will not be able to support each other and our students if the teacher shortage grows any bigger. Our classrooms are already overcrowded. This year, I have 152 students on my roster. Can you imagine reading and commenting on 152 papers on a daily basis so your students have effective and immediate feedback to guide their learning? Can you imagine the pressure of making sure you make connections and build relationships for each of those students on a daily basis to make sure they know that they are cared for and that school is a safe place for them? Can you imagine the amount of money being spent out of my own pocket to purchase consumable lab supplies for my science class so that all students are able to understand the science concepts in a way that they learn best, which is hands-on learning? Imagine that number being even higher due to a teacher shortage. My job is already 110% stressful and we are under a lot of pressure, and I'm afraid that this pay cut could also result in a career change for myself. I don't know how I would be able to do it with increased class sizes and lack of adequate resources for my students. My classroom is as packed as it can be. I do not have any extra desks or space to put these students. I'm not sure how I will be able to handle the added pressures and anxiety to an already highly stressful career. There are many, many reasons why teacher salaries should not be cut, but I will end my letter here. I urge you to please re-think the salary cuts and help to find other means to balance the budget. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Kristen Miyazono



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

please do not cut the pay of teachers

Kathy Ferguson <kferguso@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:10 AM

Dear Board of Education,

I am writing to oppose cutting teacher pay. I am not a K-12 teacher, and my children long ago graduated from high school, but I am very aware that the quality of teaching in Hawai'i affects me as a citizen and affects every person and every institution in our state.

Our teachers are already among the lowest paid in the nation and teaching positions are often hard to fill in our state. Forcing experienced teachers into retirement and discouraging young people from entering the profession are both counterproductive policies.

When I study countries that have fine education systems, like Finland, I see that they pay their teachers well and give them substantial autonomy in their classrooms. I would like our state to follow that lead.

Instead of taking away from those who already are struggling, I would like to see all educators unite behind the idea of taxing wealth more heavily in order to provide for public goods.

Thank you.
Kathy E. Ferguson
2154 Booth Road
Honolulu, HI. 96813



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

Spare teachers please

Sienna Makarewicz <ohanamaka@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:12 AM

Hello. My name is Sienna Makarewicz, I am a second grade teacher at Kapaa Elementary School. I ask that you please do not cut teacher's salaries yet again. Please! Many of us are just starting to recover from the Furlough Fridays and the DLWOP days. We were put in debt back then and were never compensated even when the state had a surplus. We have barely had cost of living raises and out Pau has been stagnant for years.

At our school we have had several teachers that have been recruited from out of state. They are already in shock with the high cost of living in Hawaii and if teachers are given a pay cut they will most definitely leave. We have many openings at our school that are and will be hard to fill. That leaves the children of Hawaii with unqualified teachers. This situation will effect the future of Hawaii. Our children will not be given the best opportunities to learn and grow as global citizens.

Please be very mindful of Your decisions. We are not just numbers and dollar signs on a piece of paper. We are the people that educate the children of Hawaii. We support our local communities. Please continue to support us.

Thank you,
Sienna Makarewicz
Sent from my iPhone



Cuts to Teacher Salaries

Meghan Flynn <meghan.flynn@campbell.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:57 AM

Aloha,

My name is Meghan Flynn and I'm an 11th and 12th grade Special Education teacher at Campbell High School in Ewa Beach. I am reaching out to urge you to reconsider the proposed cuts to teachers' salaries for the following reasons:

- 1) Teacher pay in Hawaii is already among the lowest in the nation, especially when considering the cost of living. If our salaries are cut, many of us may not be able to maintain living here and might have to leave our positions, causing even more teacher vacancy than already exists, and therefore hurting the potential of our students to feel connected to their community.
- 2) Teachers are among a small group of professions with consistent pay throughout this recession, and we are one of the only sources of money being injected back into the economy by providing patronage to small businesses. If our salaries are cut, you would be directly cutting off part of small business revenue streams.
- 3) Many teachers have become the sole providers for their families during a period of astronomical unemployment rates. If you cut teacher salaries, you would cause further damage to the financial stability of thousands of families across the islands, and potentially increase the risk to property owners that rely on our incomes to continue paying rent and managing the property.
- 4) Teachers already work countless more hours than we are paid for, and even sacrifice part of our income to pay for classroom supplies which are not provided to us by the state. By cutting our salaries and continuing to rely on us to purchase our own resources, you are forcing us to invest less in our students and spend more time outside of school hours working to make up our income in a 2nd or even 3rd job.

Overall, the existence of this proposal is devaluing everything we work to achieve for our children and our communities as a whole, and you are severely limiting our ability to provide a stable and positive learning environment to hundreds of thousands of kids throughout the islands. Please consider how history will look upon a government that chooses to financially handicap the foundational workers of its education system and public services before finding alternative ways to limit funds being spent by the state. Show that you care about children in Hawaii by making the right decisions about their education-- do not reduce the already incredibly low salaries of our state's teachers.

Regards,
Meghan Flynn

Ms. Meghan Flynn
James Campbell High School
English/ Social Studies Resource
meghan.flynn@campbell.k12.hi.us
(808)305-3833



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

Reject salary cuts

dpslatt@gmail.com <dpslatt@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:48 AM

To whom it may concern:

My name is Daniel Slattery and I currently work as a PreK special education teacher at Mountain View Elementary School in Hawaii. Current budget cuts for the 2020-21 school year are already adversely impacting supports for our students. Next year, we will have less funding for part time help, supplies, and for curriculum supports. A projected 20 % decrease in salary will force experienced teachers to make the difficult decision of either retiring early or looking for positions in other states. As a result, our keiki will not have the highly qualified teachers they deserve. The cost of living in Hawaii is high. A decrease in salary will cause additional stress and make living in Hawaii and teaching more challenging. Please reject the proposed budget cuts in order to support the appropriate education and development of our keiki here in Hawaii!

Thank you!
Daniel Slattery

Sent from my iPhone



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

Don't cut teacher Pay

Brittany Johnson <johnsonbe78@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:01 AM

To whom it may concern,

Please do not cut the teacher pay. If you decide to cut the teacher pay the problem would continue to exist. Don't punish the teacher that have transformed a face to face class to a virtual one over night. By cutting teacher pay we are doing a disservice to our future leaders. If we don't invest in our student now then our future will not be what we expected.

Personally, if you cut my pay you will make it ten times harder to stay in the profession and live here in Hawaii. What is going on in the world is affecting us all. Please don't let it affect the future more than it already has. Teachers are already expecting not to get purchase orders for the next year. With that being said they will be spending their own money to supply their classrooms. If you cut their pay it would just make sure that our students don't have the supplies they need to learn, work, and grow.

Your decisions affect more than just the teacher but the future leaders as well.

Sincerely,

Brittany Vimahi



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

A Pay Cut on Educators is a Cut on Education

Chris Pascual <chrispascual79@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:01 AM

Aloha, my name is Chris Pascual and I am a teacher at Konawaena High School.

A pay cut on educators is a cut on education. A cut on education is an attack on the right for our students to have access to education.

The Board of Education and Teachers are the major organizers that fight to ensure public education is constantly improving and we can not let this pay cut reverse and set back our school systems which will be negatively impacted by a massive exodus of vacating teachers.

It is time to act on new means to provide for additional revenue streams to fund public education in the form of a property tax surcharge that would start to address the social economic gap in Hawai'i. Only in Hawai'i do we see multi million dollar properties adjacent to extremely underfunded public schools.

My question to you is what does the pay cut achieve in advancing public education? We must push back and demand that any decision making moving forward needs to address the needs of the students and families of our schools and aim to explore opportunities of betterment in this time of crises.



State worker pay cuts

Linda Jones to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/06/2020 07:12 AM

From: "Linda Jones" <linda.jones@k12.hi.us>

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

Aloha,

If state workers have their pay cut then the economy will suffer even more than it is now!!! As is, I have shared my stimulus check with those in my community who have less than I. I have hardly cooked a meal at home since March because I grab and go to eat almost every meal to support the businesses in my community! I will not be able to do that if my and other state workers have their pay cut.

The economy will suffer so much if state workers have to tighten the belts... once again!! to help everyone in the state.

We can do better than this, can't we??!

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Testimony for Thursday, May 7th's meeting regarding 20% pay cut

Haley A. Ku'uipo Bufil Agbayani <hakbufil@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:14 AM

To the Hawai'i Board of Education:

My name is Haley Agbayani and I am a 7-year teacher with the Hawai'i State Department of Education. I am currently a third grade teacher, but have also taught in grades K, 2, and 4. My first three years of teaching were done at Mountain View Elementary. I now work at Pāhoa Elementary School (PES) and unless something comes up that forces me to transfer elsewhere, I am in it for the long haul at PES. I work amongst some of the most resilient students and colleagues in the Kea'au-Ka'ū-Pāhoa Complex Area, as we have endured and continue to persevere a multitude of life-changing and trauma-inducing events: Hurricane/Tropical Storm Iselle, lava flow 2014, Hurricane Lane, the Leilani lava flow of 2018, and now COVID-19. I am also a proud product of our public education system and graduate and alumni of Hilo High School, as well as a proud alumni of Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole Elementary and Intermediate School in Pāpa'ikou.

I am writing this testimony to ask you to continue your support of education and investment in society and the future by **avoiding** any proposed 20% pay cuts for my colleagues and I. Other alternatives should be considered before imposing any pay cuts to us that would further the impact of the Hawai'i's teacher shortage crisis: Rainy Day Fund, Emergency and Budget Reserve Fund, monies from the Federal Reserve, etc. There needs to be another way to address the money shortfall Hawai'i faces with this pandemic.

Pay cuts to education would only widen and deepen the negative implications of another mass exodus of educators and the anticipated negative affect on our keiki and future. We have already heard from many colleagues that were looking into make plans to move elsewhere with the April 2020 pay cut scare. Teachers close to retirement, the gems of our profession, would most likely consider early retirement. A 20% pay cut would decimate the livelihoods of many of us and many would have to leave Hawai'i in its entirety or find second or third jobs to survive here. These scenarios all lead to less experienced or even less qualified teachers, long-term/day-to-day substitute teachers, emergency hires, or vacancies. We need to consider the investment or disinvestment to society if a pay cut were to be incurred. According to HSTA, in the school year

2018-2019, “Hawai‘i had a total of 1,029 emergency hires and vacancies...” (“Our Plan to End Hawaii’s Teacher Shortage Crisis”, 2019); let’s not increase these already startling numbers.

Please consider other alternatives; don’t cut us or our keiki short, furthermore, don’t cut Hawai‘i short by taking pay from those that stimulate the economy in the first place. Please guarantee that your investment in Hawai‘i is unwavered and help to continue to support quality educators, fully supported keiki, and a hopeful future society by providing us with a decent living wage, untouched by a 20% pay cut.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Haley Agbayani, M. Ed.
Pāhoa Elementary School, Grade 3 Teacher
7-year Hawai‘i Public School Educator
Proud HSTA Member and School & Chapter Level Leader

--

Haley Ann Ku'uipo (Bupil) Agbayani, M.Ed.
808-315-0102, hakbupil@gmail.com, HC 1 Box 4069, Kea‘au, HI 96749

- 3rd Grade, P-18, Pāhoa Elementary School, Pāhoa, Hawai‘i
- SLL HSTA Grievance Representative, Pāhoa Elementary School, 2019-2021



Teacher pay cuts

Kay Naquin to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 07:19 AM

From: "Kay Naquin" <kay.naquin@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Board of Education,

My name is Kay Naquin. I am a teacher of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students at Pearl City High School. I have been teaching in the DOE for thirty years.

I understand that the COVID19 has greatly impacted our economy and you are considering reducing teacher salaries by as much as 20%. I urge you to look for other ways to meet the budget shortfall. Reducing teacher pay will jeopardize student progress and increase the teacher shortage.

The challenges to teaching while COVID is a threat are huge. Engaging students on-line and with social distancing really needs the creative thinking and expertise of experienced teachers. Do you want to create a situation that encourages teachers to leave?

I find the current situation unrewarding. I teach because I enjoy being with students. I have to revamp everything to fit into a virtual classroom environment. Frankly, it would be easier to retire. A pay cut would make the decision to retire an easy one. I am sure there are other experienced teachers having the same thoughts.

You may be thinking that it is a new age so it would be better, easier, and cheaper to have younger teachers in the COVID 19 Era. However, there is no teacher preparation for this situation. It is the experience and insights of experienced teachers that will help the schools adapt. It will be more work. But for less pay and less job satisfaction?

Please do your best to consider less drastic cuts. I think my experience is of value at this time. Surely we are saving money somewhere with the facilities closed and alternatives could be identified? This is a time when we need teacher experience and creativity.

Your decision will impact the schools for many years.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kay Naquin

--

Kay Naquin
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program
Pearl City High School
(808) 307-5643

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Teacher Salary

Wendy Shigeta <ws96825@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:32 AM

Dear Board of Education Members:

My name is Wendy Shigeta and I am currently the Student Services Coordinator at Hahaione Elementary School in the Honolulu District. I have been employed as a teacher/counselor for 31 years in the Hawaii DOE and have been the SSC at my current school for 15 years.

I understand the dire financial situation that the State and DOE is facing due to the COVID-19 crisis. However, I strongly feel that any thought of reducing teacher salary and/or benefits will not solve the State's financial crisis and, in fact, in the long run will only hurt our economy even more. If teacher pay/benefits are reduced, I believe that our State will see a large number of highly qualified teachers leaving the field, simply because they will not be able to financially sustain themselves and their families. If this happens, our students will have to return to the classrooms after this stress-filled period to different and, most likely, unqualified "teachers." These students already face a difficult path as they have had to endure an emotionally draining and difficult period of distance learning. Some may have been unable to access their education due to social, family, or financial restraints. These students will need highly qualified professional educators to help them to regain their sense of stability and confidence so that they can begin learning again. They will also need skilled teachers who can identify their unique individual educational needs and who can help develop a plan to address these needs. Without highly qualified teachers in the classrooms, our State may find a generation of students who do not have the educational and emotional skills needed to re-vitalize and sustain our State's economy in the future.

I can honestly say that in all of my 31 years with the DOE I have never worked harder, longer, and been under more stress than these past 7 weeks. I have had to learn new technology, revise and create new ways of doing things, and assist and support staff, students, and families almost non-stop. This, coupled with the anxiety of the unknown and fears for my own and my family's health has caused long days and many sleepless nights. When I see in the paper or hear on the news that the Governor and now the BOE is considering cutting the salary and furloughs for teachers, it hurts my heart because it underlies the lack of respect that our society has for one of it's most important members.

Public education, with it's ability to educate the general populace and instill in them positive values and attitudes, is at the core of our democracy and financial stability. Please do not let short term goals of balancing the budget impact our long term future.

Sincerely,
Wendy Shigeta
Student Services Coordinator
Hahaione Elementary School



BOE: Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Maryann A <aguimoto2011@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:43 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Maryann Aguinaldo and I teach at Iao Intermediate. I am a Special Education Co-teacher for 7th and 8th grade Social Studies.

On my team, Hikianalia, we are known as the inclusion team and 3 out of 6 classes are 7th graders and the other 3 are 8th graders. MAJORITY of the 7th and 8th grade students who are IDEA are in these classes with us. In each of these classes, 40-60% of the students are IDEA students who are in need of some kind of support academically, behaviorally or both. It is a weekly if not daily struggle to develop lessons that have rigor and meaning for these students while managing their behaviors.

Reducing our salaries will only enhance the struggles we face in school. I'm sure upon our return to school, teachers will be expected to get their students caught up with what was missed during the 4th quarter while plowing ahead with what is expected at the beginning of the new school year. It will be cramming 40+ days (miss) into the new school year with 40 less days to work with due to furlough through out the school year. With the limited amount of time we already have to collaborate, furloughs will only make it more challenging trying to get our students caught up and "make the grade" by the end of the 2020-2021 school year. Some see us as miracle workers, but that is something we are more than likely will not be able to do.

Personally, the pay cut will hurt my family tremendously. Being raised in Hawaii, I love the teachers I had growing up. When I was in the 3rd grade, I knew I wanted to be a teacher. I started in 1997 and this is my 22nd year of teaching. I have a Master in Education with an emphasis in Middle Level Education. I also have reached the end of the class status for teachers (Class 7). Pay increase for me can only happen through years of services. I've been through the 3 weeks teacher strike and the furlough when Lingle was Governor and I believed that teachers could prevail and I continued to teach. I was single then. Unfortunately, what I am receiving now with the SPED differential, my family is living paycheck to paycheck with a toddler in preschool and the other in daycare who will begin preschool this August. My family will be rob of time as a family and making memories if my husband needs to look for part-time work for us to make ends meet.

What the DOE is already expecting me to do for my students upon our return next school year and proposing to reduce my pay that will affect my family, especially my children is very disheartening. The thought of retirement in 8 years is becoming a reality with each year that passes. Unfortunately, being a teacher is no longer a profession that is respected or honored as it should be.

I hope and pray the idea of teachers having to take paycuts and being furlough will be considered as a bad idea...for our students, our teachers, our local families.

Sincerely,

Maryann Aguinaldo, M.Ed.

lao Intermediate

7th/8th grade Social Studies SPED Inclusion Teacher

Sent from my iPad



Teacher Salary Reduction

Delia Gallagher <delia.gallagher@campbell.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:44 AM

Dear Sirs,

I have been a teacher at James Campbell HS for 7 years, and I love my school and my job.

I have just recently reached a wage that allows me to actually have a savings account and not live paycheck to paycheck, **after 7 years!!**

I did not come into education expecting to become rich, I did so because I love history and sharing my love of it with young people. I believe that if we do not adequately understand the past, we cannot navigate a better future for all.

If you cut my salary, I do not think I will be able or willing to remain in Hawai'i with our exorbitant cost of living. I do not believe I am alone in this, especially new teachers who have to wait many years to reach a wage that will sustain a life here.

I suggest that you instead, find another way to balance the budget, Governor Ige was elected primarily because of teacher support, it would be a travesty if he does the same thing to us that former Governor Abercrombie did.

I ask that you protect us, rather than sacrifice us.

Respectfully,
Delia Anne Gallagher

--

Thank you for all you do!!

*Delia Anne Gallagher,
Social Studies Teacher
James Campbell High School*



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

salary cut

Angelina Cruz <aecruz2011@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:07 AM

My name is Angelina Cruz, a 6th grade Science teacher at Kalakaua Middle School. As a Science teacher in a public school, I have to be resourceful so that I could make my students engaged at all times. They love experiments and hands on activities! I don't mind buying the supplies for my 170+ students because the enjoyment, engagement and learning that I see everyday is priceless. However, with the salary cut, I don't think I would be able to supplement what they need in my classroom. Our family is growing and my two children would be needing more as they grow older. If I have a choice and the luxury to do so, I would want to invest on the education of all the children in public school being that my children go to public school as well. But what could teachers do? We receive one of the lowest salary in the nation, we have teachers shortage, the cost of living is high. How could we provide quality education to the children of Hawaii if we do not have enough to meet the needs of our own family? I hope that our governor considers all the possible options and NOT resort to salary cut of teachers. We, teachers are already struggling but we try to stay afloat. With the pay cut, these struggles could result to our own children suffering.

Thank you.

Angelina Cruz



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

Teacher Testimony

Jonathan Fong <ycjonny@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:10 AM

My name is Jonathan Fong, a 7-8th grade art teacher at Washington Middle School, teaching for almost 30 years. I am writing to express my deep disappointment and concern regarding the proposed cut in teacher's salary especially after the heartfelt testimonies already expressed last month. My wife and I are both teachers and my son is also currently enrolled at UH Manoa majoring in education. It's already a challenge making ends meet and paying the mortgage on the house we recently bought and it just makes it so much harder and concerning for us to think of how we have to make cuts in our daily living to support my family. It is frustrating and difficult in being encouraging to him and the future of education in Hawaii with the imposed salary cuts that will undoubtedly have a negative impact to the already alarming shortage of teacher recruitment and sustainment of attracting quality teachers and retaining them. I would like to stay positive and encouraged that more support can be given to our deserving teachers who have sacrificed and given so much of themselves especially in these difficult times.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Fong



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

Don't cut teacher salaries please

Jamie Coulter <jamiecoulter2000@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:21 AM

In Hawaii lots of people including myself regularly consider packing it in and heading back to what seems like a simpler life on the North American Continent. Although it's beautiful and lots of other good qualities, it takes a certain kind of fortitude to stick it out on the Big Island. I'd hate for the proposed 19% teacher salary cut to push me or anyone else in that direction. Also, if I have to tighten my belt, fight my ex about a 20% cut in alimony and child support, and generally tighten my belt, I'd likely not continue to spend my money at local business beyond the barest of necessities. I continue to teach online every day, navigate all the platforms, conference with parents and prepare my curriculum. Thank you for considering leaving my salary as is. Sincerely, James Coulter, class teacher at Kona Pacific PCS

Sent from my iPhone



Teacher Funding

kristy arakawa to: Testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/06/2020 08:23 AM

From: "kristy arakawa" <kilihune007@hotmail.com>

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

Aloha,

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I am pleading with you to not cut our budget or reduce teacher pay! I have been a DOE educator for over 14 years. I was born and raised in Hawaii and have no plans to leave, unless my salary is reduced. I have colleagues on the mainland who are beginning teachers (BT) who make more than I do. If our pay were to be reduced, veteran teachers will leave the profession at this most critical time of Hawaii teacher shortage. Currently, I am in charge of a 12 person department at my school and will start off the school year with projected three long term subs because the positions cannot be filled. Please do not do this to our keiki, our future! I know that everyone is financially suffering from this pandemic but it would be a wrong decision to cut teacher pay. We are almost front line workers with 13,000 strong who are needed everyday to empower and educate our youth!

Mahalo,

Kristy Arakawa
Ilima Intermediate School
8th Grade Science Teacher

91-960 Iwikuamoo Street #1003
Ewa Beach, HI 96706
(808) 779-5294



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

Teachers Deserve Better

Kate Wines <kathleen_wines@connectionspcs.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:25 AM

My name is Kathleen Wines. I am a 4th grade teacher at Connections Public Charter School. This is my 14th year teaching. I attended UH Hilo for my teaching certification, and went on to obtain a Master's degree in Education.

I am here to say that a possible cut of 19.62% in pay for teachers would be a horrific blow to me and my family. As it is, our pay is low. Cutting teacher pay would be a hardship that would not only be very difficult for my family, but have ripple effects across the economy.

Teachers deserve better. Teachers work hard, putting in many more hours than what we are paid for to support and ensure the success of our students. During this COVID-19 time, we have jumped in and actually worked harder to support our students through this unprecedented time. A cut in pay shows no regard for teachers and their well-being. To keep teachers in Hawai'i, there needs to be a liveable wage. Cutting pay by 19.62% is not a liveable wage. Teachers will leave the profession. What we need is the opposite. We need to encourage teachers to be the best they can be and stay in Hawai'i. One way to support teachers is to provide the wage that they deserve.

Do not cut teachers' pay. There are other ways to balance the budget, respect teachers, and support the keiki of Hawai'i. Let's make the future of those keiki bright by showing that teachers are important, and they deserve better. Cutting teachers' pay and balancing the budget on the backs of keiki is not the way to move forward.

Thank you,
Kathleen Wines



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Teacher testimonial for salary retention
Brett McCardle to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 08:26 AM
From: "Brett McCardle" <dayanmcclain@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hello,

My name is Brett McCardle. I am a special education teacher working at Kealakehe Elementary School on the Big Island. I've taught fifth grade for the past three years, and this year transitioned to kindergarten.

I am writing to make the Board of Education aware that a pay cut to my salary would be devastating. A pay cut that amounts to roughly one fifth of my salary will make it next to impossible to continue to work and live as a member of this community in the education field. I would need to seriously consider alternative options for employment.

I have lived here since 2016 and have worked in special education the entire time. The money that I have made from this job is not enough to live comfortably in the Kona area where I teach. To make ends meet, I have worked a second job in the tourism hospitality business the entire time I've lived here. I've followed an exhausting routine: I work during the school week helping students achieve their true potential and then spend weekends selling tourism trips to island visitors. Both of these jobs require me to be 100% present at all times to do them well. After all is said and done, I then use whatever time I have left on the weekend to plan and prepare for the upcoming week at school.

The teaching profession requires a lot of prep time and work that is already unpaid. Special education requires additional time spent with the creation of individual education plans and meetings that do not take place during regular school hours. It is very hard to do this while working multiple jobs just to scrape by. Moving to the island and establishing oneself in a new part of the globe is hard. It is always hard. For every teacher Hawaii imports, it is extra difficult.

If the Board of Education seeks concrete evidence showing just how hard it is to make ends meet for teachers in Hawaii, I encourage folks to take an afternoon and examine Craigslist for apartments for rent. Take a look at the choices that are available in your area and make a note of the average prices. Make sure to set the parameters to only choices under \$1300 because that is what my typical take home pay is every two weeks after taxes and insurance is taken out. After viewing these places, set the parameters to places that are \$1040 or less and see what comes up. This is what will be available to me if my pay is cut by 20%. Most of them will boast a "kitchenette", including a hot plate and a microwave but no stove or oven, and utilities will not be included. These are the options available to me if I want to spend roughly half of my monthly income on living here.

In January 2020, differentials were put in place that allowed me to finally feel I could be a teacher. After four years of praying for summer so I could have some weekdays off (maintaining my weekend job year round), I was finally looking forward to this coming summer. The differentials would allow me to quit my weekend job and focus on taking some classes and getting better at my one full time job. They are necessary, and they cannot be taken away.

The reality of the COVID-19 situation is not something anyone is taking lightly. This is a crisis. The teacher shortage was a crisis too, and it existed prior to anyone talking about forcing pay cuts. The students of this island already had difficulty being taught by professionals before this situation and right now, they are being taught throughout the pandemic by innovative and determined teachers. When the board discusses slashing parts of our salaries, I remind you that we are ***currently revolutionizing an entire educational model in real time*** while continuing to serve the children of our islands. We are doing two jobs for the price of one already - and we are doing it at 100%, because that's all we know how to do. Teaching is not a job that stops when the bell rings. Caring for the students doesn't stop at the end of our day. Trying to be the best we can possibly be for them is in the job description and in the people that choose this work.

I came into teaching to try to help make this world a better place. It has been the hardest thing that I have ever done by far, but I love it. I love it so much that I will work seven days a week to do it. That's the kind of job it is. It's a career that requires a passion and a fervor that is very time and effort consuming. It is also a career that draws in people that don't mind the extra work. It is a career full of people that will do anything in their power to help their students. This is a group of people that will work untold hours (most of them unpaid) trying everything they can to help children have moments where they suddenly "get it".

Remember that somewhere along the lines, you had a teacher that believed in you more than anyone else did. Somewhere there was an educator that held you up to get you to where you are right now. People rise or fall to the expectations of those that are their support system and to get where you are, you have had it better than some. Keep that educator in your mind while you deliberate over the budget. Those educators were there to support you because they were in a place that valued and treasured them enough to keep them working in this extremely demanding calling.

Please exhaust all other options before thinking that a pay cut at this time is something this workforce should have to weather. Would you do it to the teacher that helped you? And if you did, would you expect them to stay?

Thank you for your time.

Regards,

Brett McCardle

Special Education Teacher

Kealakehe Elementary

Big Island



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

NO pay cut for teachers

Hilary White <hillysplace@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:37 AM

My name is Hilary White. I am the Kindergarten Teacher at Kaaawa Elementary School. Just a couple of months ago there was talk of pay raises for educators, especially those who have been teaching for many years. Now you want to cut our pay almost 20%?! This is criminal.

Teachers do not make much money, especially when you factor in the high cost of living. Add to that, we are required to have advanced degrees, that also come at a high cost. We are professionals and should be treated and paid as such! But instead you want to add an increased burden of a STEEP pay cut?

Is our rent or mortgage payment going to be reduced? Are utility costs going to be reduced? My guess is NO!

How do you expect us to survive? Are we not important?

Through this pandemic we have worked hard, often with added expense, to continue to provide not only education, but compassion and familiarity to our students to help them get through this scary and trying time.

You will get what you pay for! When people feel valued, they do more. When they are treated as an inconvenience, or not important, it is very hard to keep the moral up. That translates to early retirement, moving to where I AM valued, and possibly having to sell family home.

Find a way to make cuts elsewhere! Shall we start from the TOP?

Teachers need a living wage. We are professionals with college degrees. Treat us as such!

Sincerely,

Hilary White
Kaaawa Elementary
387-6682



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

Reject Salary Cut Options

Madeline Kimmel <mkimm9@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:41 AM

Hello,

I am writing to encourage the BOE to reject salary cut options to teachers' salaries. Hawaii struggles each year due to a teaching shortage. The impacts resulting from cutting teachers' salaries would be devastating to campuses across the state. The most disheartening effect would be that on the keiki.

A cut in teacher salaries would drive senior teachers to retire early, and young licensed teachers to look for work elsewhere. Keiki would be left in the classroom with unlicensed teachers year after year, which will cause devastating results to their achievement and success.

I, as well as many young teachers, live paycheck to paycheck due to the high costs of living here in Hawaii and the current state of teachers' salaries. I know that the lifestyle I am currently living in is not sustainable and can only last for a brief period. If wages are cut in this next school year, I will try to make ends meet to finish out the school year for my students and school, but I know that it will mean my time here in the Aloha state has come to an end.

I urge you to consider the critical teacher shortage, the future of school and teacher leadership, and our growing keiki when considering how to allocate funds.

Thank you for your consideration,
Madeline Kimmel
7th-grade math/science teacher, Wheeler Middle School,



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

Salary Reduction

Joe Siofele <jsiofele@iaoschool.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:49 AM

Dear BOE,

Due to Covid-19, our state and especially our country has been dramatically impacted like never seen before. Our economy has taken a major blow with many who have lost their jobs. I urge and pray that you as board members reconsider the salary cut for us teachers. As all parents have found out during this time, a teacher's job is not easy and they really appreciate the job we do day in and day out with our keiki. Our salaries are already low as is and many of us have to work other jobs to support our families. With these proposed salary cuts, our state will lose many qualified, hardworking individuals and we can't afford that being our entire state is already in a shortage of teachers. I hope that you along with our other leaders find a way to keep our pay so that in the future our keiki have the Teachers they deserve!!!

Mahalo and God bless,

Joseph Siofele

BIC Teacher

Iao School

"Kulia i ka nu'u" Strive for the summit



Proposed Salary Cuts to State Employees

Stephanie Buelow <buelow@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:52 AM

Aloha,

My name is Stephane Buelow and I am an Associate Professor in the College of Education at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and a former elementary teacher in the HIDOE. My husband is a high school science teacher here in the state. I am writing to submit testimony to express my opposition for teacher salary cuts. I am writing for personal reasons as this would greatly impact my family, but I am also writing on behalf of teachers across the state.

Decreasing teacher salaries will exacerbate already challenging work conditions for Hawai'i's teachers. With cost of living adjustments, Hawai'i's teachers **already** rank as the lowest paid in the nation and the cost of living in HI make it almost impossible to live on a teacher salary. Many educators (my husband and I included) already work second jobs/take on extra work to subsidize current salaries. Pay cuts have the likely potential to financially devastate teachers for years to come.

Each year Hawai'i DOE already has approximately 1,000 vacancies and emergency hires to fill. Decreasing salaries will likely lead to more quality teachers retiring, making teacher vacancies even higher. Teacher turnover is expensive. It can cost up to \$20,000 to replace each teacher. I urge you to invest in our teachers by protecting them from pay cuts. Ultimately, investing in teachers is an investment in students.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Buelow, PhD
Associate Professor of Reading/Literacy
Institute for Teacher Education, Elementary Education Program
University of Hawaii at Manoa
buelow@hawaii.edu



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

Do not cut teacher's salary

Juday Leong <judayleong@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:57 AM

To Whom It May Concern

I am emailing in response to request **no cuts** to teacher's salaries. The teacher's salary is already so low based on the standard cost of living in Hawaii. A cut in paychecks will create additional hardship to the struggles already existing for teachers trying to make it financially.

Teachers have one of the most difficult jobs that I feel few of you could handle during normal times, let alone during a national crisis. In a very short time, teachers had to transform the way they teach during an extremely challenging time while juggling their own childcare, and being available for students and families. Teachers provide a sense of normalcy by giving routines and a chance for students to learn and socialize in virtual classrooms. Their position now, more than ever, have become very important. Teachers deserve to be supported, recognized, and valued. A cut in pay does not send that message. Please support teachers.

Sincerely,
Juday Leong
Kilauea School
School Counselor



Testimony

Sharnell Mora <sharnellm@hotmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:00 AM

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

Ms. Sharnell Mora

English Teacher

Pearl City High School

Re: Budget Cuts

The proposed budget cuts for state employees, including educators, will have devastating effects on families and the economy. I oppose the pay reduction and implore the state to seek alternative methods. I personally took a \$30,000 pay cut to move from out of state and teach in Hawaii 3 years ago. As an educator, I am passionate about my job and love helping young people to better themselves for the future, but I still require a living wage. The pay reduction will cause my family and other educators to seek employment elsewhere. This mass exodus is already happening, and we are losing skilled citizens to states offering competitive wages. Our graduates are moving off island, and families are being separated due to the outrageous cost of living in Hawaii. The budget cuts are an added blow to our community.

The state has not solved the current teacher shortage. Schools continue to be under funded, and students are the ones who struggle to stay on par with peers in other states. I ask the BOE to adopt the best practices of other states who have improved school funding by a variety of methods that did not include cutting employee pay. I understand these are difficult decisions and trust that the BOE will do what's right for our community.

With aloha,

Sharnell Mora



Proposed Salary Cuts

Jamie Hoopes <hoopesjamie@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:02 AM

Aloha,

I am writing on behalf of all educators in the State of Hawaii. I am asking that alternative options be put in place, rather than the proposed salary cuts. It's not a secret that Hawaii has been struggling with education issues for years. Cutting teacher pay would be like throwing gasoline on the fire. The high cost of living in Hawaii is very difficult for teachers. Many have other jobs just to make ends meet. The proposed cuts would make living and working as a teacher in this State almost impossible. It would drive experienced teachers to early retirement. New teachers would leave the profession or go to the mainland where the pay is better and the cost of living is less.

Schools in Hawaii are often forced to hire unqualified teachers at reduced pay because of the widely known teacher shortage and low budgets. These teachers are in programs while they teach and are working for reduced pay. How could they further handle the cost of living? They would most likely walk away.

The domino effect of these pay cuts will hurt the most innocent involved, the keiki, and that is unacceptable. When they return to school, they are going to need strong, supportive teachers to be there for them.

State employees are the engine that keep our communities thriving. They are the ones that stepped up, without hesitation, to care for the State. These people don't make \$100,000 a year. Cutting their pay is not only irresponsible, but disrespectful.

What will the response be when state employees respond to salary cuts by saying, "You're welcome, now do it yourself!"

Jamie Hoopes
Kindergarten Teacher
Connections PCS



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

Teacher salary cuts would be devastating

Donna-Lynne Hanlon <donnalynnehanlon@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:10 AM

My name is Donna-Lynne Hanlon and I am currently a probie 5/6 at Baldwin High School, It is my intention to teach until retirement and make Hawaii my home. However, reducing my salary may jeopardize that dream.

My rent is currently 60% of my take home salary. A 20% pay cut will make housing completely out of reach.

Currently the teacher shortage in Hawaii is already in crisis and this move would only worsen the situation. A pay decrease would only mean the following:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement; and
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

I urge you to consider the impact, not only on the teachers, but also on the keike.

Sincerely,
Donna-Lynne Hanlon



Covid-19 budget

C Jicha <cjicha@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:17 AM

Hi,

As an educator I am proud of my career choice. But, working for a state that constantly under appreciates educators makes me second guess why I choose this career path? Maybe my choice of career and attempting to help kids was actually the wrong choice.

I totally understand that with this Covid-19 pandemic and our number one source of revenue for the state, tourism being impacted that cuts to the state budget or the way we spend tax money may have to change.

But, as has been shared by the Governor and Superintendent that around 20% pay cut, furlough, leave with out pay - whatever you want to call it - can not and should not happen.

This will impact not only the number of students being educated by non highly qualified teacher, but this will impact my children as well.

20% pay reduction will decrease my pay by \$1,000 a month. I bring home about \$4,000 a month now. How do you think I can support my children - pay rent, put food on the table, etc.... with that much of a pay reduction. If will force me to move and after 19 years of service and a master degree I will make less than some of my friends on unemployment (when they can actually get on the state system).

Please rethink how your actions will impact not only the students, but the children of your educators.

I know we are all in this together, but 20% will hurt families. Maybe rethink and decrease the percent of reduction to something more like 5% across the board with no pay increase.

Rethink before people have to relocate

Chad Jicha

Sent from my iPhone



budget for education

Cynthia Reves to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 09:21 AM

From: "Cynthia Reves" <creves@mckinleyhs.k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Do not reduce teachers' salaries. Hawaii already has a critical teaching shortage. I teach at McKinley High School and cuts will hurt our faculty and our students.

Cindy Reves

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Testimony for BOE on clarity of budget and work issues

Angie Hashimoto <ahash94@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:42 AM

Aloha,

My name is Angie Hashimoto and I am an Educational Assistant III at King Intermediate School in Kaneohe. As this pandemic moves forth, it has changed our work environment and also our lives! I have heard from many in the community who share their experiences. Utmost is the fear of not keeping up or not being able to succeed with their child. So many parents are struggling themselves with pandemic issues that students and schoolwork is an issue that becomes overlooked. Especially since it is not being graded and does not count for our current fourth quarter. Parents that are interacting with their respective schools will help to keep their child on a schedule with needed consistency. This will help when returning back to school. There are so many questions moving forward and communication and action at this point is needed to address the changes the pandemic has caused with education. In addition to helping our students, we realize our job duties and see the many additional duties we are faced with. Please understand our issues and hold fast in supporting our pay and rethink wages cuts or furloughs. Our students need the consistency and safety of Hawaii's schools and staff. Please don't ask us to step forth to do more with less for our own families! We will do what we have to do to protect the knowledge and education of Hawaii's children, please do the same for the thousands of Educators who step forth for Hawaii's children in education today, tomorrow and everyday!

Educators took the challenge and created school whether it be online or paper packets. Schools also added people support to help with any trauma or tutoring for students. Now we need specifics, how staff helped, how many it helped and the continued support of the employer to keep these educators supporting their own families! We went to bat for education please don't overlook all that we do! It's not just teachers that make the school succeed, it's everyone from the office clerk to the cafeteria lunch worker to custodian to educational assistant to security that help our children wholeheartedly!

Mahalo, Angie Hashimoto

Email: ahash94@gmail.com



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

Please DO NOT reduce teachers' salaries!

Rene Stroud <renestroud@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:32 AM

Aloha,

First and foremost, a 20% or 34hrs. a month would be devastating to our whole education system in Hawaii. It would seriously impact families, students, and teachers! Many, many teachers could not live on that type of a pay cut and survive in Hawaii.

I have taught in Hawaii for 20 years and went through Furlough Fridays, so I know how a pay cut and loss of an instructional day can affect teachers and students.

In anticipation of a pay cut, my family has made a draft budget of a 5%, 10%, and 20% pay cut. My family could manage a 5% cut, however, any more than that and we would suffer serious financial consequences!

Other options have been presented, please don't use the very people and families who look out for our student's education and well being to balance the budget!

Mahalo for your consideration and support,
Rene` Stroud
Elementary teacher
Innovations PCS
Kailua-Kona



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

Pay Cut for teachers should be completely discarded

malia r <maliasphone@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:34 AM

Dear Board of Education Members,

Please do not allow a pay cut for our teachers. I'm a lucky teacher, to still have my full pay & be able to save. I don't take it for granted. During this pandemic, not only have me & my husband provided for his parents & my mother, with enough food & supplies, but we have also extended our income to help our friends & families in need. We gave \$150 to one niece, who is a young mother about to give birth to her 2nd child. We gave \$1000 to another niece in Washington state who was just laid off from her coffee shop job, to help w/ her rent. We gave \$1500 to my friend Grace, who just lost her husband in mid April, and has 4 children. Then we have been checking on Pou, a kupuna who has symptoms of dementia & lives in the Kamehameha IV housing alone. We bring her food & we are in constant contact w/ her neighbor, also a kupuna who lives alone, to see if there's anything else we can do for both of them. My husband & I don't do this, to look good, but because it's the right thing to do. With a 20% pay cut, that would definitely make workers spend less, which would not help the economy to get back to its feet sooner. This is a lesson learned from the Great Depression.

Please do not support cutting teachers' pay. I'm confident that we can find better alternatives.

With appreciation,
Maria Bernard-Reantaso
Moanalua High School Teacher



Testimony

Jenna Fettig <jennafettig@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:38 AM

Hello,

I am writing to encourage the BOE to reject salary cut options to teachers' salaries. Hawaii struggles each year due to a teaching shortage. The impacts resulting from cutting teachers' salaries would be devastating to campuses across the state. The most disheartening effect would be that on the keiki.

A cut in teacher salaries would drive senior teachers to retire early, and young licensed teachers to look for work elsewhere. Keiki would be left in the classroom with unlicensed teachers year after year, which will cause devastating results to their achievement and success.

I, as well as many other teachers, live paycheck to paycheck due to the high costs of living here in Hawaii and the current state of teachers' salaries. My husband was born and raised here, his family still lives here, and I hope to remain here to raise my family. With a pay cut I do not see how this will be possible. I love my job as a special education teacher, the pay differential has helped not only financially but compensates us, special education teachers, for all the time we spend writing individualized education plans, meetings for our students and families, and other special education-related duties not performed by general education teachers. By reducing our salary, this will only cause a bigger shortage of licensed special education teachers. Our special needs keiki will need us the most upon returning to school. I have no doubt our special education teachers will work tirelessly to fill in these education gaps and work to get our keiki back on track.

I urge you to consider the critical teacher shortage, the already existing shortage of licensed special education teachers, the future of school and teacher leadership, and our growing keiki when considering how to allocate funds.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jenna Bachmann
7th-grade special education math/science teacher, Wheeler Middle School,



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

Voicing My Opposition to Pay Cuts, Furloughs, etc. for Teachers

Andrew Jones <jonesbaron23@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:39 AM

Aloha, Board of Education members.

I am a Language Arts teacher at Radford High School and am writing this message to express my opposition to salary cuts or any decisions leading to reduced pay for teachers (furloughs, DLWOPs, etc.).

Many teachers are still recovering from the prolonged situation caused by the Great Recession a decade ago. We sacrificed much during that period, and many of us do not feel that we've completely recovered or have yet been fairly compensated. The furloughs/DLWOPs were a mistake that all educational "stakeholders" should have learned from - a mistake that deepened the teacher shortage and that, if repeated, would likely lead to an even worse predicament for public education in Hawaii. A 20% pay reduction would force many younger teachers out of the state or out of the profession, would cause many older teachers to retire early, and would encourage mid-career teachers such as myself to embrace other options such as employment at private schools or international schools abroad.

The fact that, after everything we endured a decade ago, pay cuts for teachers are even open to discussion is a matter of deep distress to many of us. We would be grateful to the Board if it would not only discourage any proposals that might lead to reduced pay but also send a message to the governor's office that the very motion towards such discussions will in itself be rejected.

Sincerely,
Andy Jones
National Board Certified Teacher
Language Arts Department Chair
HSTA Head Rep
Radford High School



NO Pay Cuts for Teachers

Amy Naehu to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 09:41 AM

From: "Amy Naehu" <amy.naehu@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

My name is Amy Naehu, and I am a SPED teacher for the resource and inclusion setting at Pearl City High School. I teach grades nine and ten, and I also provide service and care to students of all grade levels, under my caseload.

I implore the BOE to NOT approve and go through with pay cuts for teachers. Cutting teacher salary causes detrimental harm to teachers, students, communities, and our state.

Personally, a salary reduction will force me to look for another job and make it almost impossible to remain a public school teacher. I love my students and always give all my dedication, knowledge, and effort into their education. I purchase supplies with my own money as most of my students cannot afford items such as pencils, paper, display boards, etc. I dedicate my time after contracted hours to attend meetings, watch sporting events, and supervise extra-curricular activities.

It breaks my heart to imagine the day when I'll turn in my keys and say goodbye to the students that became my children; however, I cannot afford to remain a public school teacher if there are salary reductions.

Thank you for your time,
--Amy Naehu

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Salary Reduction

Chris Takenishi to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 09:42 AM

From: "Chris Takenishi" <chris.takenishi@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hi...my name is Chris Takenishi, I am a special education teacher at Pearl City High School. Although the schools were closed, I have worked very hard with the parents of my students and my students while fulfilling all the added or increased duties the State has mandated a special education teacher needs to do. We have held virtual IEP Meetings, and in order for that to happen, spend a couple of hours with the parent to educate them on how to access the google meet...virtual meetings. We have worked to provide enrichment activities and also placed more specialized activities on google classroom. Like all teachers, I have been working 14 hours a day, on weekends too to encourage my student's parents and support them as they deal with their child being home all day. We all learned a lot, we all strived hard to reach out to the students.... As a special education teacher, it made me feel good and appreciated when we were given that \$2,000 a month...it really helped ease my financial burdens. But now, we are coming to a point where all of you will decide on giving us a salary reduction. I'm wondering if all the effort I put in was worth it or not.... In the private sector I was always compensated for the quality of my work...here it does not seem to matter.... this makes me sad... A pay reduction will make things hard..but more it feels like a disrespect to all of my effort all these years.

I look at the nurses...the first responders... and all whom we call the heroes of this covid19 pandemic....and even for them.... we are looking at payroll reduction... Actions speak louder than words.... Call them heroes but actions of disrespect through pay cuts....Teachers...call them important and hard working..but give them a pay cut... Actions speak louder than words.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak...no matter what the outcome, I am one of those who will continue to work as hard as I do, with the same diligence and devotion to what I do... But your actions will show me what you the BOE think about me and the work I do.

God Bless all of you...Have a great day.

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

Cutting teachers' pay

Krista Delaney <kldelaney@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:45 AM

The idea that the state of Hawaii is considering reducing teachers' pay by almost 20% is criminal. Teachers in Hawaii are already treated extremely poorly by the state and don't make enough money to live a decent life as it is. I taught in Hawaii for 12 years, and I eventually ended up leaving Hawaii because as a teacher with a master's degree, I wasn't making enough money. I was getting deeper and deeper in debt, all while living in the cheapest apartment I could find. I had no hope of ever buying a house or even digging myself out from under my mounting debt. No teacher deserves to live like that. I moved to a state that actually cares about teachers, and 4 years later, I now own my own house and have paid off almost all the debt I accrued while living there.

Cutting teachers' pay at all is a horrible idea, but 20% is mind blowing! Hawaii knows that it has major education problems, including teacher shortages, and their idea is to take away 1/5 of their income? You are killing teachers' desire to stay in Hawaii, or even continue in the profession at all.

Shame on you Hawaii BOE.

Sincerely,
Krista Delaney

May 7, 2020

Ms. Catherine Payne, Chair, and Members of the Board
Hawai'i Board of Education
P.O Box 2360
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

RE: Written Testimony on Agenda Item V (Presentation on COVID-19 Budget Effects)

Aloha Chair Payne and Members of the Hawai'i Board of Education,

We are writing, on behalf of The Special Education Provider Alliance (SEPA) which represents the majority of the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) contracted services providers. We applaud Superintendent Kishimoto's efforts during this unprecedented time. Our schools are a fundamental nexus point in any discussions in returning to community normalcy. We support of the HIDOE's foresight in planning, and consideration of potential budget shortfalls. It will take a community to revive a community. HIDOE personnel and supports are not just line-item budget expenditures; they are the very fabric of our communities in the Aloha State.

We support the Department's efforts to provide safe summer learning opportunities to our keiki. During the last 7 weeks, many children experienced adverse effects as a result of school closures. Children requiring special education have been especially hard hit. Our schools can bridge the learning gap. In addition, by slowly providing access to school campuses, the HIDOE can provide families the respite needed to return to work, or work from home more productively. By systematically planning to safely reopen portions of our school campuses, the HIDOE can provide a bridge to supplemental education that will benefit educational outcomes. This is especially true for those students who are unable to fully benefit from online distance learning. Working families with children safely in school can help to begin mitigating some of the state budgetary challenges by helping to free the tax base and ultimately aid in addressing future HIDOE budget shortfalls.

We support the Department's efforts to enhance technological capabilities to deliver quality distance and online learning. The community needs to be prepared to truly educate our children in a manner consistent with 21st century technology. It will be important work. We should be moving toward an efficient transition to online synchronous and asynchronous learning as part of our extended educational future. Our systems will need to be pre-existing and more rapidly and comprehensively deployed.

Lastly, we support the Department's efforts to work with SEPA as indicated in our previous correspondence to Governor Ige, Superintendent Kishimoto, and Chair Payne. Specifically, we request consideration in regard to our communication on the "Educational Stabilization Fund authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act."

In the letter, dated April 22, 2020, SEPA requested:

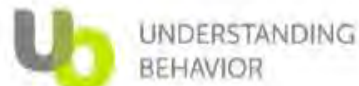
- **Workforce Funding:** From Section 18006, “Any local educational agency, State, institution of higher education, or other entity that receives funds under ‘Education Stabilization Fund’, shall to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to coronavirus.”
- **Emergency Special Education Services:** Utilize the fund, as indicated in Section 18002(c), to make grants available to assure emergency educational services can be provided to children including the possibility of securing summer workforce, increased access to extended school year service, and identifying locations to provide special education supports.

Our initial meetings and feedback from the HIDOE have been positive. We wish to continue partnering with the Department to ensure our staff can meet the ongoing special education needs of our keiki. Through continued collaboration and planning we can emerge with a more robust system of supports even in the midst of this continuing educational, economic, and public health crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration,



Jeffrey Krepps
Facilitator, Special Education Provider Alliance





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

Teacher Pay

Nicole Heinlein <nikkidanielle@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:51 AM

Aloha,

I am a teacher at Iao Intermediate School on Maui. I urge you to reconsider cutting teacher pay to balance the budget. Hawaii teachers are already the lowest paid when cost of living is factored in and we are facing a huge teacher shortage right now. Students will suffer if we continue to lose teachers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nicole Heinlein
808-866-4502

--

Nicole Heinlein



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

Against Pay Cuts

Malia Holmes <mholmes@haaspcs.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:51 AM

Aloha,

I am a teacher at Hawaii Academy of Arts and Science. I am concerned about possible pay cuts. I am completely against teacher pay cuts.

As stated by many:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.
- Teachers who currently teach our children compassionately and provide innovative learning, safety, care and support, social/emotional learning to the whole-child are already paid salaries that are tight to live on. The cuts may cause these irreplaceable teachers to find other jobs.
- Where is the appreciation for all that teachers do for our children? Pay cuts would devastate not only the hearts and minds of teachers but would be detrimental to their household budgets and the integrity of education.

Malia Holmes-Baker
Hawaii Academy of Art and Science PCS
PHH 3rd and 4th grade Teacher

Hawaii Board of Education:

My name is Aaron Kubo I am an eighth grade social studies teacher at Hilo Intermediate School in the Hilo-Waiakea Complex area on Hawai`i Island. I am submitting testimony imploring every single appointed BOE member to not reduce teachers' salaries!

Teachers are besieged everyday by many systems (e.g. burdensome evaluation system, mandated curriculum, SBA/WIDA/NWEA/NGSS-HSA, data collection/implementation, RTI, meetings and many other mandated things teachers are required to do on a daily basis that exist in the DOE/complex/school) and, in turn, receive the lowest pay in the nation adjusting for inflation and Hawaii's high cost of living. Cutting one-fifth, almost 20%, of teachers' salaries are going to devastate the already critical teaching shortage. If things do not change I, and others, may be forced to move to the continental United States where we can be adequately compensated for being a teacher. Many teachers pay for school supplies out of their own pockets. I have spent over \$1000 in this school year alone. My school is 70% free and reduced, in other words in a low socio economic area, where the students cannot always afford the basic supplies. Do we ask police officers to purchase their own guns and bullets? Ask firefighters to purchase their own axes? Does the paramedic ask the rider if they brought their own saline solution? And on top of that cut their pay and ask them to do the same amount of work? The answer is a resounding no, so why is it okay for teachers in Hawaii to buy their own supplies and work for one-fifth less pay for doing the same amount of work? For society to flourish the needs of the whole child must be addressed, teachers' and schools' need to be adequately funded and that is why cutting teachers' salaries are a catastrophic mistake.

Respectfully,

Aaron Kubo, Hilo-Waiakea Complex, Hawai`i Island



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

We need HIGHLY qualified and competent teachers!!

S. Y. Im <yonim@ymail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:56 AM

To whom it may concern:

Please understand the plight that educators face in Hawaii. I am currently a special educator in the DOE. We are already one of the lowest paid states here when it comes to educators. I am burned out and morals are low as it pertains to my colleagues. We are in consensus about missing our students and our classrooms. Our daily norms have been reduced to uncertainty about the future of teaching and having classrooms function in a safe and happy manner. Our students will suffer ultimately if we do not get back to the norms that were in place before the pandemic.

Cutting our pay is not the solution. If we want to retain and attract highly qualified and capable educators do not cut our pay. We do not need to be the scapegoat when it comes to saving money for our state.

Please consider and visit other avenues when it comes to saving and procuring money and funding for our Aloha state.

Samantha



Board Meeting Testimony

Antonia Ramirez <antonia.ramirez.educator@gmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:57 AM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

My name is Antonia Ramirez. I teach fifth grade at Kaleiopuu Elementary School in Waipahu, HI. I am writing to you to express the disappointment I feel knowing that you are planning on cutting teacher's salaries and would like for you to consider other viable ways to get through this economic crisis without sacrificing one of your best employees; your teachers. I oppose the cuts on teacher's salaries.

I came from the state of Texas back in August of 2019 as an experienced highly qualified teacher. I had always heard about the teacher shortage in the islands of Hawaii. I arrived here with the intention of impacting positively the lives of our keikis. I have taught elementary school for 17 years back in Texas. When I was hired, I only got credit for the maximum amount of years your Department of Education credits for an incoming teacher; which makes me receive a salary of about \$8,000 less than back home. With the high cost of living here in the island, that is a huge adjustment I have had to make. Nonetheless I go to work every day because I am an educator.

Throughout the year, working at Kaleiopuu Elementary School I have met amazing dedicated teachers. They have been waiting for a step increase that never happened and a pay increase that was promised to them and vanished. Teachers are losing faith in the system that doesn't show them the appreciation they deserve.

Day in and day out, these dedicated professionals give their 100% to keep delivering a quality education to the children they serve. We have adjusted in record time to a new way of educating through Distance Learning. We could have made up lots of excuses as to Distance Learning is complicated but instead every day, we continue to deliver quality lessons to the children. Why? Because we are dedicated to these children. We have chosen to do whatever it takes to ensure the continuity of learning because they deserve it.

I have many highly qualified teachers inquiring about coming to Hawaii to work, but I am apprehensive about recommending for them to come over because you guys do not compensate your teachers what they deserve.

This consideration of cutting our salary another 19-20% is another blow to your already underpaid teachers.

A salary cut that significant will hinder them from affording the basic necessities. That in turn will probably cause that more qualified teachers leave the island.

Ultimately it leaves the keiki unable to be educated by highly qualified teachers and increases the teacher shortage.

Isn't education a priority for you? Aren't you the ones that are supposed to advocate for the children of this state to receive the education they so rightfully deserve?

You know there are federal aides that you may qualify for and could prevent this atrocity.

On behalf of the thousands of amazing teachers your state has, desist of cutting the teacher's salary.

I pray that you come together and create a plan that will not sacrifice our profession even more.

May God be with you,
Antonia Ramirez
Fifth grade teacher

Aloha Chair Payne and members of the Hawaii Board of Education,

Thursday, May 7, 2020 1:30p.m.

Testimony on agenda item V.

A. Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act") K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process

I believe the Governor should not be negotiating in public! Ige's Chief of staff Linda Chu Takayama's idea of threatening a 20% pay cut to all state workers is a bully approach that hopes to make state workers feel content in accepting a smaller percentage, and it is unprofessional.

First, in any economy, demand creates more supply, and the demand comes from good wages. There has been a teacher shortage since 1911, according to documentation in the book Hawaii Pono . We are already leading the country with one of the lowest teacher salaries, when factored in the cost of living. Ige was the first Governor to propose gutting teacher salary in order to balance the budget in wake of the pandemic. He told teachers, when campaigning for reelection, that he would not cut their pay if the economy falters again. Cutting teaching positions, teacher pay, or benefits will only hurt our state economy as well as our public education system. I already have teachers asking me if they should retire now before the state balances the budget of their back, like so many times in the past. Abercrombie mandated a reduction in pay, Lingle gave us furlough Fridays, Cayetano gave us a two week temporary pay lag, that still exists today, along with a strike. Waheee gave us a billion dollar lawsuit in the Felix Decree. An educated citizenry has never been valued in Hawaii.

I became a Special Education teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary school in 2005. I was replacing a teacher who quit mid-year because she didn't feel supported. I don't recall a year where we didn't have a teacher quit or a position wasn't filled by an uncertified emergency hire. Even though I had a masters degree, I could not pay my bills at the time. Moving here to become a teacher forced me to go into credit card debt. In 2006 I was hired at Sansei in Kapalua Maui as a part-time server. Unfortunately, you don't have any rights in the private sector and when new management came in I was working upwards of six nights a week. I would have to leave school roughly around the same time the kids were let out in order to drive to and be ready for my second job. They had karaoke and a late night menu on Fridays so I ended up working 19 hour work days. I would work until roughly eleven at night, drive an hour home, get less than six hours of sleep and do it again the next day. I always found it ironic when I would talk to kids about the importance of getting eight hours of sleep so you can function properly at school the next day. I was also jealous of the teachers who were married or had significant others because they weren't dependent on another job to go paycheck to paycheck. They could spend more time at school to fulfill their job requirements. This filled me with massive resentment. Thus, it was no surprise that when I turned forty my body broke down. I suffered a slipped disc and was unable to work for a year and a half. Luckily, I wasn't single and was able to weather that storm. My wife has a PhD and teaches Advanced Placement Biology at Maui High School. Together we have a child that just turned one. Even with two advanced degrees, working in two hard to staff areas, we had to take a major loan out for daycare. Since our pay was so low we started to apply for job openings on the mainland. My 2019 tax return showed I made \$58,000 with a Masters Degree and 15 years of experience as a Special Education Teacher. A friend of mine in Washington told me I would be making \$105,000 if I was teaching in his district. My wife would make around \$85,000 instead of \$60,000 with her PHD. That is \$70,000 more in net income.

Honestly, when the Governor, Superintendent, Board of Education and the state Senate were all committed to funding differentials I thought hell froze over. With my Special Education and hard to staff differentials, we were now able to pay for daycare. If the Board goes along with gutting pay or benefits, then we will be forced to apply for jobs and move to a state that values their children.

Currently we are not sending our one year-old to daycare because we don't want to take a risk of the family getting COVID-19. Since my pay has not been cut yet I am still paying for daycare services. If I stopped paying we would possibly lose our daycare position and might not be able to find another one by the time school reopens. Daycare is really hard to find on Maui. If my pay is cut I will be forced to stop paying and will be in a stressful dilemma not knowing whether my child has a daycare to return to.

I hope that when you consider gutting teacher pay that it's not the teachers you are hurting, but our keiki. 60,000 of our students, who's parents pay taxes for adequate public education, go without a certified teacher annually. Those students move forward regardless. When I look at poor designs and solutions in my community I feel a lot of our leadership would have been better prepared to solve problems if they had certified teachers teaching them critical thinking skills. On Maui the person who came in second for mayor didn't even have a high school diploma. When I see; no side walks going into Wailuku, sidewalks that don't reach the end of the street, kids forced to walk a few blocks to and from school on the road, housing being developed with zero plans for a new school, or people living in their cars, I always think what if they had an adequate education by certified teachers? When we don't value education, we don't value our community.

Filling the teacher shortage and keeping salaries as well as benefits should be the top priority. In a crisis we should be looking at solutions. Now is the time to propose a dedicated funding source solely for education. Our keiki shouldn't be the first to suffer when tourists stop coming. Most states fund education from state and local taxes. Zero property taxes go toward public education. We need to be promoting revenue-generating policies rather than draconian measures.

The Department of Education can save thirty million dollars by designing the statewide assessments themselves. In a meeting I attended on the Committee on Weights, Principals from Elementary, Middle and High schools were in agreement that the current statewide assessments are insignificant and detrimental. It is ludicrous for a non-for-profit public school system to be paying top dollar for for-profit assessments. Sen Jim Jeffords produced the congressional research study in July 2009 that stated, "Estimated aggregated state level expenditures for assessment programs in FY 2001 are \$422.8 million." George W. Bush made a million dollar testing industry into a billion dollar one overnight. NCLB was never about accountability, it was about corporate profit, something our legislators have an inability to understand.

Again, it has been a struggle to accept a job as a Special Education teacher in Hawaii since this state has never valued public education. The insufficient pay has really made it challenging to properly fulfill the job requirements when I have had to depend on a second job to pay rent and groceries. I really appreciate the differentials that were recently instated. Please don't give into old school austerity policies that have hurt our keiki, economy and communities for decades.

Mahalo,

Justin Hughey

Special Education Teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary

37 Poniu Circle

Wailuku, HI 96793



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

Reduction of salary

Trisha Tang <trishtang@hotmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:08 AM

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

To whom it may concern,

I have been teaching for 13 years in the DOE. I hated teaching when I first started. I could not handle the ins and outs of teaching. It was more of the demands of admin, demands of parents, and other requirements that are needed of a teacher, not the teaching time with the students. I have learned over the years how to have effective strategies outside and inside the classroom to evolve into being the best teacher I can be. In 2017, I was named Outstanding Educator for Aiea High. My passion has always been about motivating my 250+ students a year, not just in Physical Education, but to be the best person they can be in their lives.

Having said all that, I am honestly thinking about changing careers. I have a second degree and have been offered another job. I was offered this same position 3 years ago but turned it down because I was making more with the DOE. With this paycut, I would be making a lot less than this current offer. I have already been working 2 jobs for 13 years. My husband also works for the state and has another job also. This paycut would be devastating to our family and would force us to leave the DOE for a better paying job with less demands. I love teaching and am passionate about giving these students the best opportunity to have an amazing future! I love my students and am missing them tremendously, but the state might force me to leave this profession and maybe even move to a place where teachers are actually valued. I really hope you reject this offer because I do not want to leave my students and the DOE.

Sincerely,

Trisha Carreira

Aiea High

Freshman Physical Education Teacher

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone



Testimony to the BOE

Kumi Alice iida to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 10:09 AM

From: "Kumi Alice iida" <kIida@haaspcs.net>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha:

I am a Middle School teacher at the Hawai'i Academy of Arts & Science in Puna, Hawai'i and am writing to submit testimony stating my position against pay cuts for teachers. Education is a priority for our community, and our state already struggles in keeping highly qualified teachers and filling positions. The cost of living is one of the highest in the nation, and the teacher pay is one of the lowest in the nation. We would just continue to lose our quality teachers who just cannot afford to live here, and decide they would prefer to teach in a place where the cost of living is lower and the salaries are higher. We need to invest in the keiki as they are our future and cutting teacher salaries is not the best way to do it. Although I understand the state has taken a hit with tourism, I believe there are better ways to reprioritize funds.

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Kumi Iida

HAAS Public Charter School

InDigital Program - Middle School

Teacher: ELA/Social Studies

School Direct Line: 808-965-3730 ext. 215

808-640-8370

kiida@haaspcs.net

'A 'ohe pau ka 'ike i ka hālau ho 'okāhi.

Not all knowledge is learned in the same school ~ Tutu Pukui



Cutting teachers pay is unacceptable

Virginie Solace-michaud to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 10:11 AM

From: "Virginie Solace-michaud" <virginie.solace-michaud@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

My name is Virginie Solace-Michaud. I've been a teacher at Radford High School for the past 4 years, I teach 4 levels of French 9th to 12th grade and a Health class as well. This Summer I will be teaching English 10th. I am also a single mom of 2 boys who works another job outside of her main teaching career to make ends meet... Every year, teachers fight to see their salary increase because it is just too hard to survive on a \$2800 paycheck every month. That's what I make even with a Masters's degree and 10 years of teaching experience (I taught in private schools as well, but the DOE does not take that into consideration) ... I live in a tiny 2 bedroom rental with 2 teenagers. I can't afford a 3 bedroom for my boys to have their own space... If my salary is cut even by just 10% it will greatly affect our life, I might have to work more hours at my second job, which will take away time from my children, affect my health and consequently affect my performance as a teacher.

We cannot allow any pay cut for teachers, Hawaii's education will immensely suffer and regress from that. I hope that this testimony and the testimonies of other colleagues will bring some sense to Gov. Ige. There are other places where the money is not an issue and that's where Ige needs to focus.

Thank you.

Virginie Solace-Michaud.

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Against Pay Cuts

Travis Armstrong to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 10:15 AM

From: "Travis Armstrong" <travis.armstrong@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

My name is Travis Armstrong and I'm AP US History teacher and varsity boys basketball coach at Radford High School. I'm very concerned about potential pay cuts. My coaching pay for next year has already been reduced by 50%. Although I do not coach for the money this is a huge blow to my family considering the time and effort I put into coaching. Right now my pay for the month barely covers my mortgage, health insurance, and car payment. 5 months ago I was blessed with my third child but this blessing has further added to my financial burden.

For the past 12 years I have had to supplement my income with 1 or 2 extra jobs. I'm currently working on another business because my teaching pay is not livable. Cutting our pay would be devastating to my teaching career. If there was a reduction in my pay coupled with my coaching pay being slashed I would have to seriously think about giving up my career in education.

This is a career that I love and enjoy. I have put countless unpaid hours into my career with no regrets. With that being said I refuse to burden my family with unwarranted pay cuts.

Mahalo

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HSESJ 
**Hawai'i Scholars for
Education and Social Justice**

May 6, 2020

Honorable Catherine Payne, Chairperson
Hawai'i Board of Education Members

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Dear Chair Payne and Board of Education Members,

We are six scholars from the University of Hawai'i. Four of us are affiliated with UH Mānoa while the other two work at Leeward and Windward Community Colleges. Together, we serve and facilitate Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice (HSESJ). HSESJ is a voluntary group of scholars from across the State that conducts, reviews, and disseminates research related to education and social justice in Hawai'i.

Together, we stand against Governor Ige's proposed reductions in compensation for State employees, especially teachers.

Earlier this year, we synthesized the results of 41 journal articles, three books, two dissertations, and 35 other reports on the effects of teacher compensation on students and teachers in a research brief entitled, "Increased Teacher Compensation Can Lead to Equitable Education in Hawai'i." The research brief presents evidence that **educators' salaries impact the recruitment and retention of public school teachers**, and that **teacher recruitment and retention ultimately affect student learning and other outcomes**. Our brief was **signed by over 120 scholars in Hawai'i**. Our shared testimony is based on this brief. (Attached is a short version of the research brief.)

Having a knowledgeable, well-prepared, and experienced teacher is the most significant school factor related to student achievement. In fact, quality teachers have 2-3 times more influence on students' math and reading test scores than other school factors, including facilities, services, and leadership.

As many of us are aware, when adjusted for the cost of living, **Hawaii's teachers rank as the lowest paid in the nation.** Moreover, Hawai'i is among the lowest in the nation for state and local expenditures on education.

These fundamental conditions impact our ability to recruit and retain the quality teachers that our State's children deserve. For many years now, Hawai'i public schools begin each school year with approximately 1,000 unfilled teaching positions. This is despite the DOE having recruited hundreds of new teachers, many of whom come from the continental United States. As a result, the State has already made exceptions in allowing for the hiring of emergency staff who lack appropriate teaching credentials.

If teacher salaries are cut, it is likely that Hawai'i will lose many qualified teachers, which will exacerbate the teacher shortage. Reducing livable wages through the pay reductions, furloughs, and suspending employment benefits will likely result in eligible teachers taking early retirement to maintain their "high three" years of salary. Moreover, research indicates that teacher turnover is costly. It can cost close to \$20,000 to replace each teacher who leaves. This means that it could potentially cost the State MORE to decrease teacher salaries than to keep compensation at their current levels. We cannot afford to lose more of our educator workforce, as efforts to build capacity have been taxing and costly.

We expect that a reduction in salary will impact student learning and achievement. Teacher salary has been shown to affect students' achievement scores, even after controlling for students' background characteristics, such as their families' income. Additionally, teacher salary is related to improvements in student achievement and success through its impact on student retention. Raising teacher salaries by 10% is related to a 3-4% decrease in high school dropout rates.

Every child deserves to have well-prepared teachers, who know their students and their subject areas. As you know, Native Hawaiians and Filipino Americans make up over 50% all public school students. **Research indicates that the schools with the highest shortage of teachers in Hawai'i are those that serve Native Hawaiian, Filipino American, and other Pacific Islanders.** These groups represent only 16% of the teaching force. Many of these families also face challenges commonly associated with low-income communities. Research shows that when teachers are the same race or ethnicity as their students, learners display higher academic outcomes, specifically in math and reading, when compared to students taught by teachers from a different racial or ethnic background. We know that **increased teacher compensation attracts more diverse teachers to the profession.** Reducing teacher salaries would make teaching even less attractive for these underrepresented groups.

Reducing teacher salaries will negatively impact the attractiveness and status of teaching as a profession in the State. Unlike many other states across the country, Hawai'i has a large pool of interested teacher candidates and high students who want to be teachers. Due to already low

teacher wages and high cost of living, many young people who initially pursue teacher education do not complete training or opt for a different profession altogether. Reductions in the already low compensation for teachers in Hawai'i public schools are likely to dissuade more people from our communities from becoming teachers. Lower salaries would also make it more difficult to recruit and retain teachers in hard-to-fill geographic areas and those with content expertise in hard-to-staff content areas, including special education and Hawaiian language immersion. In other words, reducing teacher salaries is likely to have the greatest and negative impact on students who are already the most vulnerable to falling behind because of the teacher shortage.

The uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic and talk of possible reductions in teacher compensation will likely dissuade many teachers from relocating to Hawai'i. We expect that the combination of these factors will lead to a decline in the recruitment of teachers from the continental United States as well.

Prior to taking a recess due to COVID-19, the State legislature was considering SB488, a bill that would offer funds for teacher shortage areas. We understand that due to the State's current economic challenges, additional funds for education might not be implemented. However, a decrease in salaries will exacerbate the shortage of teachers as well as educational disparities.

COVID-19 has made Hawaii's stratified communities and educational disparities glaringly stark. Educators have continued to teach throughout the pandemic, trying to meet the educational needs of their students, despite varying access to computers, internet connection, and even food.

In sum, the research is clear that teacher compensation influences teacher recruitment and retention, as well as student outcomes. We strongly disagree with proposed reductions in teacher compensation that are short-sighted and have long-term negative consequences. We urge the Board of Education to oppose any funding cuts to education. A substantial decrease in already low teacher salaries will only increase the chronic teacher shortage and educational disparities in our public schools.

Aloha,

Lois A. Yamauchi, PhD

Colleen Rost-Banik, PhD

Janet Kim, MEd

Jonathan Okamura, PhD

Klavdija Zorec, PhD

Michael Cawdery, PhD

Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice



Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice

Read complete text of HSESJ
Research Brief #2:
<http://hawaiischolars.wordpress.com>

Highlights of Research Brief #2

Increased Teacher Compensation Can Lead to More Equitable Education in Hawai'i

Hawai'i needs to recruit and retain more teachers to assure a quality education for all of our 180,000 public school students. The greatest shortages are among teachers of special education, science, mathematics, Hawaiian language immersion, and English-as-a-Second-Language. Communities that are home to higher percentages of Native Hawaiians, Filipino Americans, and other Pacific Islanders are disproportionately affected.

The reasons for the teacher shortage are numerous and complicated, including systematic discrimination against Hawaiian and other teachers of color. Long-term solutions require additional funding as the Hawai'i State Department of Education does not currently have the funds to raise teacher compensation in meaningful ways. This research brief draws on research in education and related fields to provide facts about the teacher shortage and to dispel misconceptions regarding the effects of increased teacher compensation and incentives for teacher education.

What we know about Hawaii's teacher shortage and compensation

- Each year, roughly 1,000 teachers leave their positions in Hawai'i public schools, and these numbers appear to be rising.
- When adjusted for the cost-of-living, Hawaii's teachers are the lowest paid in the nation, and Hawai'i is ranked as one of the worst states to be a teacher.

- The short-term solution to fill vacancies with non-licensed teachers, including those in "fast-track" teacher education programs, has not worked well.

Misconception #1: People in Hawai'i do not want to be teachers.

In Hawai'i, there is a large and growing pool of people who aspire to become teachers, especially among underrepresented groups.

- Hundreds of high school and community college students across the State enroll in teaching-focused pathways, and many are Hawaiian and Filipino American.
- Long-term substitute teachers, emergency hires, and others, who live in communities where teachers are needed, have responded to initiatives to become licensed teachers.
- Across the university-based rigorous teacher education programs in Hawai'i, approximately 1,200 people are working toward a teaching credential.

Misconception #2: Increasing teacher compensation will not affect teacher recruitment and retention.

- Higher teacher compensation attracts more qualified applicants, influences teachers' career aspirations, enhances teachers' commitment to

their jobs, and improves the status of teaching as a profession.

- A 25-40% increase in teacher compensation can improve recruitment and retention of well-prepared and motivated teachers.
- Teachers in high demand fields, such as mathematics, and science, are especially vulnerable to salary differences that affect their retention.

Misconception #3: Increasing teacher compensation will not affect student outcomes.

-
- Teachers have 2-3 times more influence on students' math and reading test scores than other school factors, including facilities, services, and leadership.
 - When teachers are the same race or ethnicity as their students, learners display higher academic outcomes, specifically in math and reading, when compared to students taught by teachers from a different racial or ethnic background.
 - Students of color often do not choose teacher education because of financial reasons.

Misconception #4: Supporting students to complete rigorous teacher education will not improve the teacher shortage.

-
- Rigorous, university-based preparation of teachers enhances teachers' self-efficacy and performance, thereby improving student outcomes.
 - Teacher candidates from fast-track programs display lower levels of instructional knowledge, are less confident in their teaching abilities and skills, and are 2-3 times more likely to leave their schools than those who received rigorous preparation.

Misconception #5: Once people become teachers, they no longer need support to stay in their positions.

-
- Research indicates that providing high-quality induction and mentoring is one of the most

effective ways to advance teacher retention, satisfaction, and performance.

Conclusion

The quality of public education and Hawaii's future are dependent upon how well the State supports public education. The status quo results in academic and economic disparities, with the greatest impacts on Native Hawaiian, Filipino American, and other Pacific Islander families living in rural and low-income areas. The data presented in this research brief make a strong case for increasing teachers' compensation, recruiting and supporting more local teacher candidates, and retaining public school teachers, thereby, improving learning for all of Hawaii's students.

HSESJ recommends the following public policies:

1. Increase all teacher salaries in accordance with Hawaii's cost of living.
2. Offer affordable housing for teachers.
3. Provide greater financial support to low income and underrepresented students aspiring to become teachers by offering tuition assistance and living stipends.
4. Strengthen and develop more partnerships among high schools, community colleges, universities, and the communities in which teachers are needed.
5. Support and reward induction and mentoring of all new teachers.
6. Provide more funding for these initiatives.

Over 120 scholars in Hawai'i have endorsed this statement. View the complete text of HSESJ Research Brief #2 and see the full list of signatories online: <http://hawaiischolars.wordpress.com>



TESTIMONY

Malamalama Ada <malamajohnson@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:18 AM

Aloha,

My name is Malama Ada and I am a School Counselor at Pearl City High School. I write this testimony as a means to implore the BOE to NOT go through with the proposed pay cuts.

Personally, these pay cuts will greatly impact my family. My husband and I are both educators in the DOE. We have two young children and our family of four cannot handle 40% (39.24% to be exact) of our income taken away from us. We are strong believers in living within our means and budgeting, but even so, losing 40% of our income would be devastating. We hoped to put our youngest child into preschool this coming year, but with the uncertainty of what our income could be, we are strongly considering holding off. It breaks my heart to even consider doing this because we value education and want the very best for our children; these pay cuts would prevent us from offering that to them. Furthermore we have already made plans to move in with my parents later this summer as a way to cut costs. It is not ideal, but we are trying our best to be proactive for whatever might happen.

Professionally I believe these pay cuts would do harm to our students. Hawaii already has difficulty filling its teaching positions with qualified teachers. This is my 5th year in the DOE and at Pearl City High School, we've had an increase in teacher turn over already, I can only imagine what the pay cuts would do. As a School Counselor, I've had to listen to both students and parents complain about vacancies, substitute teachers, long term subs, etc. It's clear that students want to learn and are completely aware of when they aren't. While I don't believe this to be a reflection of our school itself, it does tell me that we aren't able to provide our students with the best learning opportunities at this time; this is in part due to low wages. Again, if these pay cuts are approved, I can only imagine things getting worse.

I understand that something has to be done to balance out the budget shortfall, but cutting our salaries is not the best solution. Over the last 8 weeks I believe everyone with children at home have gained a new respect and appreciation for teachers, counselors, administrators and support staff. It is now clearer than ever that being an educator is not an easy job. Please do not make it even harder than it needs to be.

Mahalo,
Malama Ada
School Counselor



Salary Cut

Rexann Shanahan to: testimony.boe, dubielfdesign@hotmail.com, edshanahan24

05/06/2020 10:21 AM

From: "Rexann Shanahan" <rexann.shanahan@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov, "dubielfdesign@hotmail.com" <dubielfdesign@hotmail.com>, edshanahan24@gmail.com

Dear Board of Education Members,

Please do not even consider cutting teachers salaries as a way to remedy the economic impact of the corona virus.

We are grossly underpaid already, struggling to keep our heads above water. I am still recovering from the furlough during the Great Recession.

It is not reasonable for teachers and other state workers to shoulder the burden of the virus. Institute an "environmental tax/fee" on the 10,000,000 visitors who arrive in our islands every year. Let them pay their share for our state services and infrastructure. Or, what about raising the excise tax? It would be more fair. Those with more money would pay more taxes. They could afford it.

I sincerely hope you will not even think about cutting my salary. Our raises are miniscule to begin with and it's taken me years and years to be at my current salary.

Aloha,

Rexann Dubiel Shanahan

31 year veteran 3rd grade teacher

Sunset Beach Elementary

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

teacher salaries

Mary Silva <maryhavana51@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:23 AM

TEACHERS ARE THE PILLARS OF SOCIETY. WE ARE ESSENTIAL !!!!
DON'T CUT MY PAY !



NO SALARY CUTS!!!

Kevin Miura to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 10:25 AM

From: "Kevin Miura" <kevin.miura@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Kevin Miura
Aiea High
9-12, EL Lang Arts

Living paycheck to paycheck, cost of living in Hawaii is very high, why would you want to cut our pay???

There are better options. Make everyone pay a higher premium for certain resources and then you will see everyone learn to manage their money better and not spend so wastefully.

Governor Ige, please think about the children in Hawaii.

--

Kevin Miura
ELA Dept Head/ EL Coordinator
Room B7
Aiea High School
98-1276 Ulune St.
Aiea, HI 96701
(808) 305-6465

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

Pay the Teachers

Cynthia Van-Kleef <cvan-kleef@iaoschool.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:25 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm a teacher on Maui at Iao Intermediate School.

I strongly oppose any pay cuts to teachers' base pay salaries.
I would accept furlough days, but not a pay cut to my base pay.

The DOE is saving 100's of thousands of dollars on electricity and water since schools are not in session. They can take that money and "re-balance" some of the budget using the utilities monies they are saving.

In addition, Kishimoto said in an email that DOE will be reducing their real estate footprint by having non-instructional employees continue working from home, this will save money in rents.

I am at Class 6, Step 10 in the salary schedule. I cannot even afford to live on my own in a decent neighborhood, in a livable, safe environment or buy a house or save money. This is ridiculous because teaching is a professional career, yet, I cannot get ahead to save, buy a house, go on vacation, etc.

Kindly,
Cynthia Van Kleef
SEL and Peer Mediation Coordinator



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

Testimony

Amanda Hicks <amanda_hicks@baldwin.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:26 AM

Do not reduce our salaries! My plan was to work 25 years, but if my salary is cut, I will retire sooner, and my goal of reaching Step 14 will not be in my future. Students will have to be “taught” by long-term subs and unqualified teachers! My name is Amanda Hicks, I am a special education teacher in English and Social Studies at H.P. Baldwin High School.



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

Teachers

Todd Gettleman <tgettleman@mac.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:27 AM

BOE,

As a public school teacher on the Big Island I know how hard it is to afford to support a family on a teachers salary. As a school board member I also know that budgetary decisions can be very challenging. I hope you will do all you can to not reduce teacher salaries in the wake and of pending cuts to school budgets.

Sincerely,

Todd Gettleman
530-867-2475
tgettleman@mac.com
PO Box 2239
Kealahou, HI 96750

Testimony Support regarding School Psychology Credentialing

Board of Education Meeting

Thursday, May 7, 2020 at 1:30PM

Aloha Board Members,

I am a School Psychologist from the island of Maui and am writing to inquire about the status of establishing credentialing requirements for School Psychologists in the state of Hawai'i.

I have previously worked in states requiring licensing for School Psychologists (currently all states have this requirement with the exception of Hawai'i) and recognize the importance of hiring credentialed School Psychologists to ensure they can meet the critical demands of this position. Having credentialed School Psychologists is not only a protection that ensures our keiki receive services from practitioners who have completed extensive training in the roles and duties that the title represents, but at this time would also enable school psychologists to participate in tele-health services, as proposed by the Hawai'i Department of Education, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Does the Board of Education support the argument that School Psychologists in the state of Hawai'i should be credentialed?

- If not, why?
- If yes, how can we move forward to expedite the credentialing process during this pandemic?

Mahalo for your time and consideration,



Holly Hoke, Ed.S.

Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP)

Past-President of the Hawaii Association of School Psychologists



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

Pending decision

Joseph Adorno <joeadorno@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:36 AM

I am a certified classroom teacher with a total of 50 years experience. I am 72 years old! I teach because I love it and I can't afford to pay my mortgage and to live in Hawai'i without working at what I love! I love my kids and my school!

I urge you to break the cycle of balancing the state's budget on the backs of those in education! If you think our children deserve the best education possible, then treat the people in the classroom and school with respect !

Yes, these are unusual times but it is not the time for turning your backs on our keiki, teachers and school staff! Stand up to the legislature and tell them to look elsewhere, maybe closer to their pockets!

Sincerely,
Joe Adorno

Sent from my iPhone



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

COVID Re-Balancing Framework

Lydia Haff <lydia.haff@outlook.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:37 AM

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

Dear members of the BOE,

I am a ninth-grade English teacher at Wai'anae High School. Please reconsider the cuts to teacher salaries. At Wai'anae High School, we are already short on licensed, qualified teachers. Additional pay cuts to benefits and pay would drive qualified teachers away when they are already struggling to make ends meet.

Pay cuts would directly affect the quality of education that students at Wai'anae High School receive because it affects everyone who supports them. We would need to rely even more heavily than we already are on emergency hire and long-term subs. Prospective teachers would be discouraged from entering this field because of the loss in leave and incentives for teaching in our state. With a large portion of our current teachers working as emergency hires, they were counting on the negotiated pay raises so they may continue to teach in the coming years, but they are afraid that these pay cuts will force them into other professions before they are able to complete their licensing processes. Teachers who are close to retirement were planning on waiting until later, but even the threat of additional pay cuts have forced several teachers in our district into retirement.

With the threat of pay cuts, many teachers have already been considering moving away to other states or even other countries. If these cuts to benefits and negotiated pay take place, we will not be able to recruit new teachers to our school because the teaching environment will be made worse as a result of these cuts.

While we understand that we are in an economic crisis currently, the budget should not be balanced on the backs of our students and teachers. Please reconsider this decision because it would cause lasting damage to the quality of education in Hawai'i, especially out on the Leeward coast.

Mahalo,
Lydia Haff



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

Testimony against paycuts

Jacquie Ramirez <jramirez@haaspcs.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:38 AM

Aloha,

I have been a secondary English teacher at the Hawaii Academy of Arts & Science for the past five years. I love my job, my students, and Hawaii. But making ends meet has always been a struggle. Often, my family and I discuss leaving Hawaii to seek out a life we can financially maintain. Last year, I had my first child, and every month is a budget balancing act, even though I frequently work overtime to support my students and my community.

Unfortunately, too many teachers are in this same position. An [article](#) published by the NEA states that Hawaii has the highest teacher turnover rate in the nation, the lowest teacher pay when adjusted for cost of living, and a teacher shortage which translates to nearly 60,000 students being taught by underqualified teachers each year. Hawaii's students - and Hawaii's future - deserve better. A pay cut for teachers as a result of coronavirus will make this bad situation worse. More students will go without licensed teachers. More HQ Teachers will leave the state.

Cutting teacher pay to ensure a more secure future for Hawaii is a contradictory line of thinking - the only way we can ensure Hawaii's future is by securing the education of its youth, today. Do not cut teacher pay.

--

Ms. Jacquie Ramirez
(808) 640-8077



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

Teacher Pay Cut

Jacquelin Sabin <jacquelinsabin@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:39 AM

Aloha,

In this time of uncertainty, cutting teachers' salaries would only exacerbate Hawaii's problems. Many teachers are already living paycheck to paycheck and with a 19% cut, many will be forced to leave the profession, increasing our already incredible teacher shortage. Hawaii has the highest income to living costs discrepancy in the nation. As a single mom, I personally would have to make serious compromises in my already modest life with a 19% pay cut. I would hate to stop teaching, but considering my masters degree earning potential, I would be hard pressed to justify working at that pay.

Mahalo for your considerations,

Jackie Sabin

7th Grade Teacher



education budget/teacher salary

Carina Morgan to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 10:41 AM

From: "Carina Morgan" <carina.morgan@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To Whom it May Concern,

As a veteran teacher with 15 years experience, I have appreciated past negotiations that have been focused on the retention of teachers and additional support structures for our beginning teachers to help keep them in our profession.

I understand that we are in a financially challenging time and I am not expecting salary increase to be a part of negotiations moving forward. However, I do have to express the necessity to maintain teacher salaries where they are currently at....no pay cuts. Many teachers currently work additional jobs to live successfully in Hawaii and a 20% pay reduction would be devastating. In addition, many teachers also have spouses that are teachers as well; therefore, those families (mine included) would incur a 40% family income reduction. Honestly, we and families like mine in this situation would be forced to move away to a more affordable state and financial support for teachers OR we would be forced to look into other professions.

Furthermore, reducing our school calendar/instructional day is not a fair nor equitable solution to our keiki. Our current virtual learning environment is going to have a detrimental effect on our students' learning as only 10-20% of the students are completing the enrichment activities (this is data collected from my school). If instructional days are taken away our students will experience a colossal academic gap, especially considering that we are just beginning to regain academic strength after our previous experience with "furlough days" in 2009-2010.

I urge you to please consider other alternatives. Our keiki are our future!

Carina Morgan
Mililani High School
National Board Certified
PE/Health Department
AP Capstone Teacher
Instructional Leadership Team
Professional Community Leader

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

Future of Hawai'i's schools

Jo Ann Kimura <joannkimura@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:43 AM

Hi,

I am a teacher with 30 years of service, asking for no teacher pay cuts. A pay cut will mean that many of us (veteran, mid-career and new) will be forced to leave the profession. Not for any other reason, but because we will not be able to make ends meet. There are teachers out there who are already working 2 jobs to be able to afford living expenses here in Hawaii.

We already have a teacher shortage, due to lack of pay. What will happen to our university students choosing careers and wanting to keep/make Hawai'i their home? How will our state be able to recruit and keep qualified teachers? Will it be acceptable to have non-qualified teachers in our classrooms? How will this impact the future of our state?

Please reconsider the proposed teacher pay cuts. The consequences will be multiple, with long lasting effects to our state.

Mahalo,
JoAnn Kimura
Honowai Elementary School
Gr. 2 teacher



Please support our teachers!

aurene padilla <aurenecp@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: aurenecp@gmail.com

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:46 AM

Aloha Board of Education Members,

I am a second generation educator who has committed 24 years to public education. I currently serve as the Program Coordinator for Induction and Mentoring in the Central District. My program serves 20 schools, 50 veteran teachers who serve as mentors, and approximately 300 beginning teachers in their first and second year of teaching. We have the second highest number of beginning teachers in the state of Hawaii. As you well know, teacher retention has been a growing problem for years. We have many classrooms being taught by substitute teachers, unlicensed teachers, and teachers in their first five years of teaching. Studies have shown that experience matters when it comes to education. Hawaii's keiki are at a disadvantage because we do not have qualified teachers in every classroom. When cost of living is factored in, our Hawaii teachers rank the lowest in salary in the nation. Teachers struggle to make ends meet as it is. They sacrifice their families by spending long hours (unpaid) after school and on weekends to do their work, and spend their own salaries for supplies for their classrooms and students. For years, teachers have made sacrifices for the good of Hawaii. I myself went on strike for 21 days in 2001, took Furlough Fridays in 2009, and now I am faced with the possibility of a 20% reduction in pay due to budget shortfalls in the wake of Covid 19.

Over the course of the last 5 weeks of school closure, I have worked tirelessly at home. I no longer have a set work day, and I am writing and answering emails, conducting conference calls, providing online professional development opportunities to beginning teachers and mentors at all hours of the day. I have observed teachers who haven't even taught a year engage their students on Webex Video Calls, and have watched entire school systems bring learning to their students' homes and communities. A search of #LMWHope on Instagram will give you a snapshot of the commitment that the educators in my complex area have to their communities. Time and time again, public school educators have shown that they will overcome any obstacle and make the most out of dire situations. Rather than continue to cut their salaries, they should be revered, celebrated, and compensated for rising above every challenge and giving their students their all!

I am a single mother of 2 children and I already work a part time job to pay our bills. My car is old, we live with my parents, we don't go on fancy trips, and we live pay check to pay check. My children often ask me why I became a teacher if I am so poor. So many parents sway their children from becoming an educators because it is impossible to make a living on a teacher's salary in Hawaii. I am tired of living pay check to pay check, working a second job, and stressing over money. Although I love teaching, I need to start putting my family and myself first.

Should teachers be asked to give up their pay to balance the budget AGAIN, I will be leaving this profession, and I know many of my colleagues will follow suit. A mass exodus of experienced teachers will destroy public education. We already are unable to fill positions with qualified teachers. Another example of how Hawaii does not value public education will be the final nail on the coffin. I implore you to protect our keiki, protect public schools, protect the future of Hawaii.

Mahalo for your time,
Aurene Padilla
Leliehua Mililani Waialua Complex Area Induction and Mentoring Program Coordinator
Proud Public School Teacher
Proud Public School Parent



COVID Rebalancing Framework

Mrs. Bri Ganigan <b.ganigan@seariders.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:46 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a ninth-grade English teacher at Wai'anae High School. I beg you to please reconsider the cuts to teacher salaries. At Wai'anae High School, we are already short on licensed, qualified teachers. Additional pay cuts to benefits and pay would drive qualified teachers away when they are already struggling to make ends meet.

As a former student of Wai'anae High School myself, I have already seen my alma mater struggle to hire licensed, qualified teachers. Many of the teachers who were amazing often left within a year or two to teach elsewhere due to the low pay being unsustainable in an environment where the cost of living is so high.

As such, pay cuts would directly affect the quality of education that students at Wai'anae High School receive because it affects everyone who supports them. We would need to rely even more heavily than we already do on emergency hires and long-term subs. This year alone, we went through countless emergency hires and long-term subs because our qualified teachers had to leave for better paying jobs just to make ends meet.

Prospective teachers would be discouraged from entering this field because of the loss in leave and incentives for teaching in our state. With a large portion of our current teachers working as emergency hires, they were counting on the negotiated pay raises so they may continue to teach in the coming years, but they are afraid that these pay cuts will force them into other professions before they are able to complete their licensing processes. Teachers who are close to retirement were planning on waiting until later, but even the threat of additional pay cuts have forced several teachers in our district into retirement.

With the threat of pay cuts, many teachers have already been considering moving away to other states or even other countries. If these cuts to benefits and negotiated pay take place, we will not be able to recruit new teachers to our school because the teaching environment will be made worse as a result of these cuts.

Although the financial stability of our state is important to its future, education is just as important. Our children and the education we provide to them should remain a top priority because without giving them a quality education, we are only preparing our future leaders for failure. Thus, emphasizing the importance of the teachers and staff that support them, providing them with the skills necessary to make positive changes for our state in the future.

While we understand that we are in an economic crisis currently, the budget should not be balanced on the backs of our students and teachers. Please reconsider this decision because it would cause lasting damage to the quality of education in Hawai'i, especially out on the Leeward coast.

Mahalo,
Brina E. D. Ganigan



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

Pay Cuts

charvis bush <keawe29@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:47 AM

Dear BOE Members,

I am writing to you today, because our future leaders are at stake. Even more so because of this pandemic, to be frank, these cut backs to education will only farther the gap between our students locally to their counterparts in the mainland. In the mainland you would send your kid to a private school for remedial help or to get more one on one help, but here if you want your child to get ahead or be equal the learning of mainland schools you send them to private school. How many of you on the board have a kid in private school or went to one? I don't disagree with you for doing so and why, because if I had the means my kids would of gone there. Our schools are under funded and are in a crisis with teacher shortage. Now we are thinking about more cut backs in education, this shows what we feel about our public education system in the State of Hawaii. We need to stop the mediocracy and start funding public education properly. Thank you for your time and we are in this together for our keikis.

Thank You,
Charvis Bush
Moanalua High School Teacher

Keri Anacker

School Psychologist

SBBH

5/56/20

Hello, it is my understanding that Hawaii is the only state in the nation that does not require school psychologists to obtain state licensure. However, it seems as though the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) is already advocating for an even *higher* standard. NASP encourages school psychologists to not only obtain state licensure, but also attain the Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential. The NCSP is a professional credential acknowledging school psychologists who meet nationally recognized standards. School psychologists who hold the NCSP demonstrate their commitment to the highest levels of professionalism, ethical practice, and continuing professional development.

If NASP is supporting school psychologists across the nation in the endeavor to become *nationally* certified, it feels as though Hawaii is already a step behind without even having a state licensure requirement. How can we, as school psychologists, provide adequate, consistent, and meaningful service to our keiki, teachers, and families if we don't even have what some might say is the bare minimum requirements? Without a state licensure, it allows for "unqualified" people to hold the position which lowers the quality of service provided. Thank you for your time.

Emily Neubauer
School Psychologist
SBBH, Central District
May 6, 2020

Aloha,

I am writing this letter to reiterate that establishing credentialing requirements for school psychologists in the State of Hawai'i is essential. As a School Psychologist who works in the Central District on Oahu I believe it is important to have licensed and credentialed School Psychologists. Many other school personnel within the State of Hawaii Department of Education including Teachers, Speech and Language Specialists, Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists hold state licensures. School Psychologists should have the same requirements and hold state licensures as well. With professionals that hold state licenses, the Hawaii Department of Education will have state standards for these professionals that will impact children and their families. As School Psychologists, we want to ensure the best education for all of our students and our licensure will support that.

As the Student and Early Career Co-Chair on the Hawaii Association of School Psychologist's board, it is my prerogative to ensure we are educating the soon-to-be school psychologist's, specifically in Hawaii, how important it is to obtain licensure and a National School Psychologist certification (NCSP) credential. The licensure and NCSP credential recognizes school psychologists who meet national standards for graduate preparation. This ensures quality standards across the nation in areas including but not limited to: ethical practices and standards, competence and responsibility, and honesty and integrity in professional relationships. The state of Hawaii is currently the only state in the United States that does not have any formal credentialing process at the state level which hinders the profession within the state of Hawaii to grow and support their professionals and soon-to-be school psychologists.

As a professional that currently possesses a National School Psychologist certification (NCSP) credential, I support in passing this bill to establish a school psychologist credentialing system in order to provide the Hawaii Department of Education with School Psychologists that are qualified to provide services in the schools for the best interest of the students.

Sincerely,
Emily Neubauer, MA, NCSP
School Psychologist
Hawaii Association of School Psychologist's Student and Early Career Co-Chair



david.miyashiro@hawaiikidscan.org
hawaiikidscan.org

David Miyashiro
Executive Director

May 7, 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 potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act") K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process.

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 (HIDOE) 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) HIDOE should leverage federal stimulus funds to invest in digital infrastructure, provide subsidies for low-income families to receive internet connectivity, and develop hybrid approaches using mobile internet hotspots and buses to increase connectivity. Invest in one-to-one device strategies that would at minimum allow HIDOE to loan hardware through the summer to their neediest students who do not have devices or connectivity in the home.

2) HIDOE should provide clear and transparent data showing how many students have partaken in academic and comprehensive services and offerings since the initial closure of school facilities. This accounting should continue into the summer and fall through transparent reporting and accessible community surveys.

3) HIDOE should provide clear benchmarks on the readiness of all students to begin their next grade with the start of 2020-2021 school year. HIDOE may repurpose the current Smarter Balanced Assessment test contract to offer an interim assessment for all students in late May to see which ones are on grade level. Schools should be encouraged to install competency-based approaches to assessment and course placement with the start of the school year.

4) HIDOE should use federal stimulus funds to ensure students can catch up by using summer school to target credit recovery and learning for those students most behind. Additional resources and prioritization should be provided on academic gateways like English and math, with free tutoring and additional support time made available. HIDOE should accelerate the existing \$50M 5 year federal literacy grant for grades K-2 to shore up reading loss. Enable students to enroll in and receive credit from existing local virtual options through institutions such as Hawaii Technology Academy, Myron B. Thompson Academy, HIDOE E-School, and independent schools. Allocate stimulus funds to empower organizations such as Hawaii State Teacher Fellows to address gaps in summer learning opportunities.

5) Additional state, federal, and private funding should go to schools with career and technical education or career academy programs in areas of high need based on current state economic employment and wage data, with special attention to computer science and other fields that can utilize remote work.

6) Given the stress of our current health crisis, incentivize schools to adopt a trauma-informed approach to student learning and support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

David Miyashiro, HawaiiKidsCAN



Please Don't Cut Teacher Pay

Olivia-ann Thomas to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/06/2020 11:00 AM

From: "Olivia-ann Thomas" <olivia-ann.thomas@k12.hi.us>

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

Aloha Board of Education Members,

In considering all options for balancing budgets during this pandemic, please do not cut teacher pay. Our keiki deserve a quality education and pay cuts of any kind will be extremely detrimental to ensuring educational equity in Hawai'i. We are already facing a drastic teacher shortage, and cutting teacher pay will exacerbate this problem further. Also, our local economy will suffer more as growing families face hunger and houselessness in light of pay reductions and job loss. Many local families depend on a teacher or state worker's income, and a 20% reduction will be extremely difficult to recover from. Please do not balance the budget on the backs of Hawai'i's public school teachers and children.

Me ke Aloha,
Maluhia Zamudio
6th Grade Teacher
Nā'ālehu Elementary

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

No Pay Cuts for Teachers!

Criss Poteat <cpoteat@haaspcs.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:01 AM

Aloha,

I'm Criss, a 1st grade teacher at Hawaii Academy of Arts and Science in Pahoa.

This is my 5th year in the classroom, and I am honored to serve my community. However, I am barely able to support my family on my current salary, and would not be able to handle a paycut.

If teacher salaries are cut:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. Please consider all other options before cutting pay for teachers. PLEASE CONSIDER ALL OTHER OPTIONS!



Pay Cut

Kristie Hotema to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 11:12 AM

From: "Kristie Hotema" <kristie.hotema@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern,

I've been a teacher for over 20 years. I have enjoyed teaching and still do. However, it's been harder to enjoy it with all the demands that I have on my plate. Although it's not said aloud, there are many expectations that are placed on teachers that are not compensated. Due to all the demands, I need to stay late, take work home, tutor students in the afternoon in order to meet up to the expectations that are set. I've done it for many years because I've enjoyed it. However, we are all suffering. We as teachers are made to feel bad if we don't do the "extra", uncompensated work because you are doing it "for the kids". I agree that many times we volunteer our time because we want to do it for our students, our kids. However, when it becomes an expectation without compensation then I feel it's unfair. I believe we are willing to do our part, which teachers have done countless times in the past. However, when you have other bargaining units only getting a 10% pay cut, how then can you say it's fair for teachers to have a 19% pay cut? As teachers we already know that next year will be a challenge due to the unfortunate closure of school. We know that we will have to work even harder than before, but to do that knowing that our pay is being cut almost double of others, that's hard to swallow. In the end, the students, our kids, will suffer. Can't you find a way to "do it for the kids"?

Sincerely,
Kristie Hotema

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

I cannot afford 20% pay cut

alice carpenter <lucy5071queen@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:14 AM

I work as a teacher here because I love teaching and I love Hawaii.

However, I can leave more cheaply on the mainland; I can get paid a living wage teaching on the mainland.

I can give up teaching and use my law degree to make a living wage in Hawaii, or on the mainland. I can teach for a private company and make a living wage here.

I would rather teach. I love my students. The state of Hawaii has been very good to me, and I have been very patient understanding that being a teacher here means living paycheck to paycheck and enjoying the wonderful schools and the wonderful students.

But I cannot live on a 20% pay cut to my current salary. I cannot pay rent, and I certainly cannot pay for things to keep this economy going in the right direction, like food and entertainment. I can barely afford living as it is.

Governor Ige and the State of Hawaii, please treat us teachers and our students with respect. Please understand we cannot do our jobs (or even stay in this profession, at least not in Hawaii) with a cut to our pay which is already very low considering the cost of living in this beautiful state of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Alice Carpenter
Teacher, SPED
Moanalua High School



20% Pay Cuts, REALLY!?

Skylar Decker <packman96793@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:14 AM

Aloha,

My name is Skylar Decker and I am a 3rd grade teacher that works at Kahului School on the island of Maui. I have worked as an elementary school teacher with the Hawaii DOE for over 18 years. The proposed pay cuts by Gov. Ige are simply unacceptable. For starters, I see first hand the shortage of qualified teachers at my school, not to mention across the state. Every year at my school, we seem to have a handful of classes taught by long term substitutes due to teacher shortages. These classrooms do not have certified teachers teaching students. I have also seen on the news how Hawaii has a major teacher shortage. Pay cuts will only compound this situation and make it far worse. I for see pay cuts forcing a lot of mainland teachers to move back to the mainland. Many of the new hires at my school are in fact teachers from the mainland. Teachers who are of retirement age might also call it quits. In addition, Hawaii's teachers are one of the lowest paid teachers in the nation when you factor in cost of living. Many teachers that I know of including myself work second jobs simply to make ends meet. Just like many of my coworkers, our second job is gone because of the pandemic. Due to this, many teachers are relying on their teaching salary to survive. We all know teachers sacrifice and give so much to their students and community. Yet, time and time again we are the ones asked to make the sacrifice and bare the load because of the ill preparations of government. Governor Ige's pay cuts will not only have long lasting effects on Hawaii's economy, it will weaken an already hard to fill position. Who in their right mind would want to work for a state that treats its teachers like that. Good luck attracting and hiring teachers to work in Hawaii public schools. Not only will teachers of Hawaii be negatively impacted by these pay cuts, but also the children they care for. Ultimately you are gambling with the future of Hawaii's keiki. Think about it! Thank you for your time. Please make the right decision.

Skylar Decker
Kahului School
Grade 3 Teacher

5/5/2020

Dani Schroeder, Ed.S., NCSP

danipsyc@gmail.com

I am writing this letter to reiterate that establishing credentialing requirements for school psychologists in the State of Hawai'i is essential. As of today, Hawai'i remains the only state in the nation without a credentialing or licensure requirement for school psychologists. School psychologists are exempt from licensure requirements when practicing in an educational setting in Hawai'i. Because of this, school psychologists are the only mental health providers in the state without certification or licensure requirements despite existing law that requires anyone practicing psychology must meet specific education and training requirements and be licensed. Therefore, those who are not specifically trained in the area of school psychology or fully qualified to practice in an educational setting may, in fact, meet the minimum qualifications established by the DOE to become a school psychologist. Without an appropriate credentialing system, the State is not able to make certain that those hired as school psychologists are properly qualified to deliver appropriate services.

A credentialing process is an essential component to ensure that specifically trained and highly qualified professionals are available to serve our youth, and doing so seems to align itself with federal requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act which requires all teachers of core academic subjects be highly qualified. Further, credentialing standards are necessary not only to use the title of school psychologist in one's work setting, but also to the practice of school psychology (NASP, 2010). To assist with financial burdens, school psychologists who are credentialed or licensed are considered qualified health professionals and mental health professionals under the Affordable Care Act which would then allow the DOE to bill Medicaid for their services (NASP, 2015).

School psychologists are uniquely trained in both psychology and education in order to "promote educationally and psychologically healthy environments for all children and students" (NASP, 2010a). Those that are trained specifically in the area of school psychology receive a specialized advanced graduate coursework and practical experiences relevant to both psychology and education. The graduate programs consisting of at least 90 graduate semester hours, 1200-hour internship, and lasts a minimum of three years of full-time graduate study qualifies at a specialist level. School psychologists receive training, at minimum, in human learning and child development; assessment; counseling; crisis prevention and response; academic, learning, behavioral, and mental health interventions; behavioral analysis; program evaluation; and how to make data driven decisions. They are able to provide school-based mental health services; provide consultation, assessment, and intervention along a multi-tiered continuum including preventative measures as well as intensive supports; and, assist in school improvement acts such as school climate and school safety; etc. Our extensive training in assessment ensures that students appropriate assessment tools are selected and results are interpreted accurately so that factors related to eligibility and placement and be validly determined.

Finally, by establishing a credentialing/licensing system, school psychologists would then meet the criteria for allowing the state to bill Medicaid for service reimbursement for activities such as assessments, counseling, etc. This should help the state to be able to generate additional income for implementing best educational practice.

As a professional currently possessing a National School Psychology certification (NCSP) credential, I humbly request your support to establish a school psychologist credentialing system in order to ensure those that practice school psychology are qualified to provide services in the schools so that the best interests of our youth can be met. Our code of ethics requires that we are forthright about our qualifications and competencies, and establishing a credentialing/licensure system helps to ensure that only those licensed in psychology can practice psychology.

References:

National Association of School Psychologists (2015). *School psychologists: Qualified health professionals providing child and adolescent mental and behavioral health services* [White paper]. Bethesda, MD: Author.

National Association of School Psychologists (2010). *Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists*. Bethesda, MD: Author

Sincerely,
Dani Schroeder, Ed.S., NCSP
School Psychologist – Big Island of Hawai'i
Hawaii Association of School Psychologist's Secretary



Payout Testimony

Mahina Komeiji to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 11:30 AM

From: "Mahina Komeiji" <mahina.komeiji@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hello,

I'm Mahina Komeiji, a teacher at Radford High School. I am not okay with a payout. I currently live at a family owned apartment (pay rent there) and pay other miscellaneous expenses and I still barely break even. I'd like to have a savings. I've been working really hard to move up in the payscale. I can't believe there is no other place to find that money other than your teachers' pay. There is a very slim possibility that I can stay in the teaching profession if this pay cut goes through. I can't imagine it's easier for someone that doesn't have family here.

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

Testimony to BOE to reject salary cut options for teachers

collparl2000@yahoo.com <collparl2000@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:30 AM

To Whom it May Concern,

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries! Salary cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Many of my colleagues and I are already struggling to live on a teachers' salary. I am presently the main wage earner in my family, reducing teacher pay will not only place a burden on mine and many teachers' families, but the students we serve as well. More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would impact senior teachers to consider retiring earlier. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession. As we know Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary would not attract new teachers. We teachers have dedicated years of service and want to continue to educate our keiki. Please support us as we do our job!

Thank you for your consideration in this concerning matter.

Colleen Parlee,

Wheeler Elementary School, Kindergarten



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

Budget Cuts

Alysia Flowers <alysiaflowers89@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:30 AM

Dear BOE,

My name is Alysia Flowers and I teach 3rd grade at Kahului Elementary.

Making budget cuts to education is the wrong way to solve the states budget issues. We need to support teachers and our keiki during this time and in the future. If the state cuts teacher salaries many educators will leave the profession. We live in a state that already has a hard time filling positions and keeping teachers due to our already low income and the high cost of living in Hawai'i. At Kahului Ele. we already have multiple positions filled by long term subs and have high class sizes. With these proposed budget cuts more students will be taught by unqualified teachers, which is a disservice to our keiki. Educators are teaching our world of tomorrow and if we are providing them with unqualified teachers, how ready for the future are they going to be? We need to be providing our keiki with licensed teachers and provide those licensed teachers with a salary that is livable. I already work three jobs to support myself. Outside of teaching, I tutor my school's EL students every morning before school and I am the Kahului Ele. ASLP Girl Scout Troop Advisor. With working three jobs, I am still living paycheck to paycheck. Not only would I be in financial hurt with this proposed budget cut, but it would devastate our already critical teaching shortage here in Hawai'i.



Testimony: Teacher Pay Reduction Concerns

Inga Park <ingapark@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:32 AM

Aloha Chairperson Catherine Payne and Members of the Board of Education,

I want to start off by thanking you for serving the children of Hawaii and acknowledge that it isn't easy to have to make so many important decisions. I am writing today to express my concern about the possible reduction in teachers' salaries. Lest I sound purely self-serving, let me say that I am fortunate I am married to someone who isn't a teacher and can provide for our basic needs. Even though we have educational loan and credit card debt, we will survive no matter what happens. I am writing on behalf of our students and my fellow educators who could be severely impacted by pay cuts. I know of one teacher who told me if we have a pay cut, she will become homeless.

You are acutely aware of the teacher shortage crisis and the research on why it exists and what needs to be done. A pay cut will exacerbate this problem when teachers leave the profession (I already know of at least one person who said they will likely retire and get another job if pay cuts occur) or refuse to accept teaching positions. You've heard the impact this has on our schools and especially on our keiki. We don't actually have enough qualified long-term subs so we have had to juggle short-term subs (and sometime administrators and other teachers have jumped in to cover classes). We already have an incredible shortage of special education teachers, the differential was supposed to help with that.

Losing our 4th quarter of in-school instruction can be mitigated when we return to school, if we can get qualified teachers in the classroom. Our teachers are working harder than ever. Personally, I feel like I live at work and am creating videos at all hours of the night(when it's quiet) and on weekends. I've never spent so much time at my computer. One of the teachers at my school was recently in tears when she was talking about staying up to 2:30 a.m. every night just to get everything done because she is having 1:1 meetings with students all day to provide IEP services and each child had different requirements.

Please protect our students and our teachers!

Mahalo,
Inga Park Okuna
Kalihi Uka School Counselor
Mother of a Roosevelt HS student



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

Teacher Salary That Means Value

Michal O Neal <moneal@aieahs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:33 AM

Dear Governor,

Over the 16 years that I have been teaching here I have had to file bankruptcy to continue to work as a teacher for the DOE. I have sacrificed the life of an unborn child due to working three jobs to maintain a decent income, as well as, the life of my older son. He is still alive but has PTSD from trauma incurred on the island of Oahu while I was teaching. And I am trying to do my best every day with 146 students total on all my rosters in a classroom that routinely gets up to 90 degrees Fahrenheit July through November and then again later in the year. I also spend my income to help supplement various labs and activities.

I live in the community that I work, but I can not afford to purchase a home. I am far away from my family and especially my 93 year old grandma. I save up all year to visit them for a couple of weeks a year. I'm not sure if any of this is important to you, but it is to me and my youngest son. My son's father had a stroke also, partly due to working long grueling hours to make a living. Now he lives with his daughter.

Do we, the teachers, have to do this on our own for the children. Our children, the children of Hawaii, children of the states, and the children of the world? Why, because We ARE Educators, Leaders, and We inspire the youth. We keep the youth alive and motivated. How much is this to be valued?

Thank you for your consideration,
M. O'Neal, Aiea High School, Sophomore Chemistry Instructor



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

CTE Nanakuli

Richard Harragan <richard.harragan@hawks.k12.hi.us>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:33 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern ,

I am responding to the current call to cut teachers pay . I have been teaching for 10 years , 8 of them here in Hawaii . I enjoy working here and have had offers to teach back in NY but I choose to stay here and help our students. My students have been a joy to educate and watch them succeed. I am a certified Social studies teacher but I teach Building and construction because of my 25 years experience in the trades I teach 7-12 grade students on the leeward coast and I am SLL and APC member at my school at Nanakuli int & High school. Cutting my pay would not be in the best interest to our community in nanakuli or here in Hawaii. I have made sacrifices to be here and stay here and a cut would be very demoralizing.

Rich Harragan



No Mas

Joan Lewis <joankamilalewis@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:33 AM

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Hawaii Board of Education;

My name is Joan Lewis. I am a 31 year teaching veteran serving as an Instructional Coach at Kapolei High School. Please do not entertain the 19+% pay cut that is being considered as a method for addressing the state's potential revenue issues.

I do not make this request lightly, nor am I unaware of the financial realities our state, and this department, face. I say this as humbly and yet as earnestly as possible...no mas.

In the late 80s the state removed the annual step movements that allowed teachers to have a financial framework that tracked with their experience. Since that time, it has become a herculean feat for veterans to reach the top of the salary schedule.

In 2001, I willingly gave up three weeks of pay and one month of service credit fighting for the future of my profession in this state. I know this was my choice, but our settlement was meant to be beneficial for our students, our schools, and for the growth of the teaching profession. It cost us greatly, but I thought it was worth it. This was especially true given that we had language that would allow for us to rebuild a step schedule that would help our teachers move financially as they gained more experience. Fast forward less than a year, and so much of what we agreed to with the state was wiped out because of the financial fall out for 9-11.

Seven years later, after years of "doing more with less" and having my profession vilified under the guise of No Child Left Behind, I was once again put in a position to lose pay...this time 5% because, as Governor Lingle put it, "...we were all in this canoe together." As it turned out, while teachers worked to paddle that canoe, it turned out that others were able to get life rafts out or never got in. Teachers dealt with the fallout of Furlough Fridays even as they struggled to deal with loss of pay.

As the vernacular goes...it's me, I'm teachers. This is what my career has been marked with. I have done everything I can to maximize my compensation within the framework of our salary schedule, I have picked up every extra teaching position possible (Twilight, Summer School), I have held other jobs while in this one. And for every day of this 31 year career, I have accepted that this is what I signed on for because I love being a public school teacher here in Hawaii.

It pains me to have to write about my personal financial stake in this, and when I speak to groups about compensation for the profession, I have always focused on what it will take to recruit teachers and what is at stake if we can't retain them. I never thought about what financial impact all of this history had on me, even as I was borrowing against my own retirement to make ends meet or constantly trying to borrow from Peter to pay Paul. In the end, I always thought that if I could just help people understand the importance of the profession, the professionalism of the profession, and the importance of investing in the profession, it would all work out.

But honestly, no mas.

I will have the age to retire in August. I have more than enough service time. For the first time, ever, I am wondering if it is time to cut my losses. I have long been a cheerleader for our State School System. I have defended the equity it promotes, and I have always held out hope that words of support for the profession would one day be backed by actions. It seems, however, for as long as it takes to coalesce

support for real, sustainable financial change, whenever there is any kind of financial set back, there is no hesitation in pulling out the financial rug from this profession.

I know this is no small financial situation, and that our budget is primarily people based. But this is a people business that we are in, and the people in it are struggling in ways they would never want anyone to know. They are also the people that support so many components of the very economy we want to get restarted.

Unlike every other financial set back my family faced in the past, this time around both my husband and I will be in the cross hairs as we are both teachers at Kapolei H.S. I am not even sure where to begin trying to figure out how we will make ends meet. As a veteran teacher with years of experience, no student loan debt to repay, and at my maximum earning capacity worrying about this, I cannot even fathom what my younger, less experienced colleagues must be experiencing. We all know the horrible facts related to recruitment and retention of the teaching profession. This shelter in place experience is likely to drive off droves of mainland rooted teachers who will likely never want to be that far away from their families ever again. There will be enough that makes the future of teaching in Hawaii's Public Schools a huge challenge. Please do not let this add to that loss.

I don't want to leave this profession, and while it is not likely that I will ever reach the top of the salary schedule, I would like to know that my faith in our system and in you, the decision makers who I trust to do what is right, will not be in vain.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Joan Kamila Lewis
Kapolei High School



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

Do Not Reduce Teacher's Salaries

Allie Ka'aloa <allie.ka'aloa@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:34 AM

Aloha,

I am an English Teacher at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School on Oahu. I am writing in response to Agenda item 2. Proposal to cut teacher (and other state workers) salaries by 19.62%. I have been a teacher for five years in a school that is already deemed "hard to staff." A deduction in teacher salary would make it even harder to find qualified teachers for our students here on the westside. These students deserve a quality education from trained professionals. These cuts would hurt our efforts to recruit and keep qualified teachers.

I urge the state to do an audit of all departments and find positions that can be cut or reassigned. Without teachers, there are no schools. And as a teacher, we service 200,000 people a day, across the state. We are the front lines in the education system and we don't deserve to lose 19.62% of our salaries. I understand the state is at a loss of funds due to the COVID 19 epidemic, and I am willing to give up some of our salary to help keep the state afloat, but 19.62% is ridiculous to ask. There must be other options the state can explore before they cripple our teachers and rob our children of a good education.

Thank you for your time.

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

RE: TEACHER PAY CUTS OF 20%

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2020
1:30 P.M.

Chairperson Catherine Payne, Vice-Chairperson Brian De Lima, and board members

Aloha,

My name is Karen Veriato. I am a 3rd grade teacher at Na'alehu Elementary School in Hawaii District (Ka'u, Kea'au, Pahoia Complex) on Hawaii Island.

I am submitting testimony to oppose a drastic 20% pay cut for teachers.

I work at a hard-to-staff rural school with a high ELL population and widespread poverty. It is difficult to keep teachers here because of the location. Many dedicated teachers commute about 70 to 120 miles round trip to work. Currently, we do receive a differential, but the gas and wear and tear on the vehicles for a long daily commute costs more than the extra pay. By reducing pay by 20%, plus possibly losing the differentials, the cost to some teachers is actually greater than 20%. The pay reduction probably takes us back to about six years ago and we may never recover from such a drastic pay cut placed on our backs and the backs of other public service employees.

The high turnover of teachers impacts the students. Every few years we need to recruit a new group of teachers. The teachers get their training here then transfer to a school closer to their home. A drastic 20% pay cut will mean that we may, in the future, need to staff classes with substitute teachers. Students deserve a consistent quality education with a certified teacher.

Teacher pay is prorated throughout the year. We already earned the pay for June and July. It is egregious to cut our summer pay as of June 1.

Teachers are working under unprecedented conditions. We created student packets and some teachers are using Google Classroom for lessons. We are working even harder now. To be faced with the prospect of drastic pay cuts is demoralizing and may lead teachers to leave the profession sooner, including early retirement.

Pay reduction for teachers and other public service employees is detrimental to the Hawai'i economy. Please reconsider and look at other ways to balance the budget.

Mahalo,
Karen Veriato
Ka'u District
Island of Hawaii



Against 20% teacher paycut!

RusSkillz . <russell.ibera@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:38 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Mr. Russell Ibera

I am a 2nd grade teacher at Kapolei Elementary School finishing up my 17th year of teaching. When I step back to think about how long I have been a teacher, I can't believe it myself! The things teachers go through every year, it feels like I have been teaching more than 17 years. Sometimes I wonder what keeps me coming back even though each passing school year just gets more difficult. Obviously, it's not the money. I always tell the non-teachers I come across, "To be a teacher, one needs to be a special type of crazy. But most importantly, that person needs to love interacting with kids." Ever since after high school, my goal was always to become a teacher. I never once strayed from this goal. When that day finally arrived being offered my first teaching job, it was one of the best feelings in the world! Of course my first few years were a bit rough. But soon after, I began to find my groove. That's when I knew I found my calling in life. Sometimes I like to say, "I didn't choose teaching. Teaching chose me." Over the years I honed my craft being more of an effective teacher. Developing ways I can connect with my students so learning could take place. And to be honest, I got good! Seriously, teaching is my passion! Because of my passion and dedication, I became very good at my career. To hear teachers may get a 20% salary cut felt like a slap on my face. The announcement left me stressed, frustrated, and worried. Is this the thanks us teachers like me will receive for dedicating my adult life teaching our students to be better academically and how to navigate through a confusing world? I am just baffled why our teachers always getting the short end when the words "budget cuts need to be made." It is like teachers are immediately thought of first! It is so frustrating that our leaders do not value the teaching profession compared to other countries. It is us teachers that help create doctors, lawyers, chefs, business men/women, etc....None of these careers are possible without teachers! Of course I always hear, "Yeah, but you already knew becoming a teacher won't make you rich." or "Go teach in another state/country that pays teachers more then." Both statements are true. However, it was never about money. It was always about the kids. As for teaching somewhere else other than Hawaii...nope. Hawaii is home for me. I was raised in this state since I was a 1 year old. I want to give back to the place that helped made me who I am today. This state needs homegrown teachers more than ever. I have been willing to stay home to continue teaching the students at Kapolei Elementary School as long as I can. But damn...hearing that 20% salary cut punched me in the stomach hard. I am already working at a second job just to stay above water because we all know being a teacher in Hawaii most likely means needing a second job. So far I have been okay financially. But if this 20% salary cut goes through, life will get financially difficult for me. Where is the respect and recognition for us Hawaii teachers? Please find other ways to balance the budget without having to cut an already low teacher's salary.

Sincerely,
Russell Ibera



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MĀNOA

My name is Lisa Jensen, I'm a freelance trainer, with a background in youth risk behavior prevention. I am an independent contractor working for various projects in the Kalihi area where I live. I also serve on the board of Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice.

My interest in FSM youth (children whose families are originally from the Federated States of Micronesia) stems from a conversation I had in the summer of 2009. I was working on a project for the FETCH program at UH, based at the Boys and Girls Club Spalding, when I encountered a gaggle of young men. They were not Hawaiian, not Samoan, I was curious where they were from. I asked where they were from, Chuuk was their answer. I had never heard of Chuuk. I asked how they enjoyed school here in Honolulu.

One of the Chuuk boys said: *"Oh miss, when we go to school, they tell us to go to the back of the room."*

As the child of a naturalized citizen, that boy's answer ignited something in me. I have not been able to turn a blind eye to the brutal, rampant, institutionalized racism and discrimination that these children deal with on a daily basis. Since that day, I've been working primarily on projects to edify FSM youth.

I wish to preface my remarks by stressing that I am not interested in politics, nor placing blame, pointing fingers, or vilifying anyone. My only interest in writing this testimony is in finding solutions and educating these children.

My primary focus is the students who reside at Kalihi Valley Homes (commonly and heretofore referred to as "Kam 4 housing" because of its location right off of Kamehameha IV Road) given that ZERO space for community meetings exists.

Kuhio Park Terrace, another federally subsidized housing project at the other of Kamehameha IV Road has an entire building with open meeting rooms, a Teen Center, and an indoor gym with other rooms available for meetings and classes in other buildings on site. Meanwhile at Kam 4, many organizations must provide services outdoors under tents, and in parking lots. I consider the lack of adequate meeting space disgraceful and unacceptable. It would not have been good enough for my child, nor, I'm guessing for yours.

The elephant in the room is that an unacceptable number of FSM kids are not getting educated.

While the DOE does a fine job of teaching those children who will come to school on time, sit down at their desk and respect the teacher, children not abiding by these norms will struggle and cause difficulty for everyone in the system. Certainly, the DOE is not accountable for the social and emotional readiness of a child to obtain an education, nor is it accountable for the

outrageous, dangerous, harmful student behavior that is seen on some campuses. It is a very complex problem and involves every player in the game.

On a voluntary basis, in 2016, I began a project called Kalihi Kids, an independent activity linking community volunteers (Navy corpsmen, Rotary Clubs, churches, and others), with children specifically from Kam 4. We provide informal mentoring and fun days of recreation with some academics. I put up some pictures of our activities at Kalihi Kids on Facebook.

Last spring, Dole Middle School's principal was kind enough to allow us space for monthly Saturday Kalihi Kids activities. Lani Rodriguez, Dole's Community Liaison is our primary contact. She has bent over backwards to accommodate activities, and has made herself available up to two Saturdays per month. She has been instrumental in making Kalihi Kids work, and genuinely cares for the kids. Further, we've been allowed to meet twice a week after school at Dole to prepare for Saturday activities.

There are many moving parts required to run Kalihi Kids, and while we're very grateful to have space at Dole, the primary reason for Kalihi Kids is to edify children living at Kam 4.

We want to provide screened, vetted, quality, caring adults in near proximity to the youth, to help them navigate their world, and help with enrichment and academics. Several local NGOs will also appreciate having space there. Were we to have space at Kam 4, we could provide literacy for parents so they could read to their children before pre-school.

Many children are not allowed out of their homes after school and on weekends at Kam 4. So, ideally, we would like to provide academic activities ON SITE at Kam 4. While not the direct kuleana of the DOE, any assistance that could be offered in obtaining space there will be appreciated.

Pre-pandemic, there were almost *80 children* at Dole failing grade level! I had been working with Chuukese leaders, volunteers, community members, existing programs in the neighborhood, anyone who would listen, to figure out how to get the kids to sit in a classroom and learn. Failing traditional education approaches, we were attempting to engage the most disaffected with the Kalihi Kids activities with some success. Now, mid-pandemic, anecdotal estimates suggest that 160 youth, many from Kam 4, are NOT availing themselves of the myriad educational services being provided by Dole.

In many cases, the DOE is going above and beyond to provide educational services to students. The resources are there, and most likely, it works very well for children from families that:

- 1) place a high value on traditional brick and mortar based education,

- 2) have access to the internet, electricity and private quiet space to work without interruption,
- 3) reasonable English language skills, and
- 4) adequate supervision and patience to help kids navigate the new digital ways of learning.

It's very difficult to know exactly how many children at Kam 4 can click any of those boxes. We do know however, that in too many cases students are SO disaffected, so disconnected to school, they have zero interest in engaging.

After reading the article in the Civil Beat last week, I read with interest the superintendent's responses to the many questions posed by legislators and HE'E Coalition. While her responses may fit the majority of Hawai'i schools, some Kalihi children, notably certain FSM students, face very specific barriers to education that require a level of response that I have not yet been able to find in the DOE response to the pandemic. I am very aware that it is not possible for the DOE to single out a particular race of problematic children, but this population needs to be addressed.

Possible solutions:

Choose Love

Many Kalihi elementary age children have had training in the **open source** SEL "Choose Love" curriculum. Many 5th graders from Kalihi area schools, having been exposed to Choose Love in elementary, go to middle school yearning for more Choose Love. Training and technical assistance is available to any middle school requesting the curriculum. Choose Love has made great improvements to school climate, including reduced discipline referrals, where it has been implemented. Many trainers are waiting for the call to implement it wherever it is requested.

Charter School

Paul Hadik, (PREL) Innocenta Sound Kikku, (Pacific Voices), myself, and many others wish that these children were in a school environment that could maximize their myriad strengths. We know that, and the children sense that a few faculty and staff in the DOE are frustrated and have developed bad attitudes toward the FSM children. A vicious cycle ensues, to the benefit of NO ONE. But there are many of us who know the FSM children to be clever, resourceful, delightful, funny, friendly, curious, beautiful children. In a nurturing, culturally appropriate environment, with high standards, we and others could teach them, and they would thrive.

Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School has canoe sailing as it's curricular centerpiece-ironic that FSM kids don't have at least that much, given that Papa Mau Piailug, after imparting his non-instrument wayfinding wisdom to the Hawaiian sailing community in the 1970s, requested that Micronesian kids get taught that rich tradition. Many children from Kam 4 cannot even swim

in the ocean, never mind navigate in a canoe. A very small, Kalihi based charter school could be piloted with the correct support and leadership, and produce literate, productive members of society.

Restorative Justice

A restorative approach to discipline and SEL is easily accessible by contacting Lorenn Walker at hawaiifriends.org.

KA'I

Iolani School sponsors a project focused on Palolo Valley Housing. This project could be replicated at Kam 4, with a cooperating, well endowed private school. I have met with the director of KA'I, who has offered technical assistance should we find a way to do something resembling KA'I for Kam 4 kids <https://www.iolani.org/about/kai-programs>

Small, project based learning activities

Many of these solutions are behemoths. I also suggest small, project based learning activities. Rather than sticking troubled FSM students not thriving at Kalihi schools into "alternative schools," "RTI-B," suspension, SPED or other less than fruitful settings, a hui of us could put together ocean-based, farm-based, and other challenging activities. These students need to build things, plant things, get in the ocean, learn their cultural traditions of caring for each other, and at the same time have the opportunity to learn the academic skills they need to survive in the 21st century. Their participation in our community as equal players will only make Hawai'i a stronger community.

Like literally everything else in the world at this writing, the future of the COFA is unclear. What is clear, however, is that currently thousands of FSM youth born here, could become thriving, contributing, hard working members of this society *if we seize this opportunity for a culturally competent education approach.*

The literature bulges with detailed accounts of the dangers to society of disaffected, angry, clever, illiterate youth. I request that a portion of the federal CARES money go to small, project based learning activities for FSM youth, or to one of the other suggestions listed above. Budgets and project outlines can be provided at your request.

A new approach to teaching these children is desperately needed immediately. I very much look forward to your thoughts on any of these solutions.

Respectfully,
Lisa C. Jensen, MEd.



Pay Cut?

Mark Kanetsuna to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 11:45 AM

From: "Mark Kanetsuna" <mark.kanetsuna@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Board Members,

I feel that we the teachers of the Department of Education of the State of Hawaii always get the short end of the deal when it comes to pay and money to support our teaching efforts.

I am in my thirty-fourth year of teaching and feel insulted by the fact that you of all people who should be supporting our efforts in educating our youth today in this world of ever changing politics.

In my years of teaching, I have been through two strikes and furloughs of various forms. I feel we may have had a few raises over these 34 years that I have been teaching. However, more has been taken away from us as much more has been demanded from us. Granted times have changed, but we need to be given credit for what good we have done for the youth of Hawaii. We have not been given state of the art technology, training, budget for supplies, books, etc. and of course adequate pay to keep up with the cost of living.

The hotel workers say that one job SHOULD BE ENOUGH. I agree but why do many teachers have to take on second jobs and scrounge for bargains just to make ends meet. I have seen too many teachers come from the mainland to teach and leave due to the lack of pay and administrative support. This brings up many other points. I just want to emphasize the point that we should be supportive of all educators and not seek to cut the pay.

I have had to work harder since the schools have been closed doing distance learning/teaching with very challenging equipment and training. Communication between the different levels of DOE bureaucracy has been challenging to figure out what is going on. The news media say one thing, HSTA says another, administrators are waiting for word and how it applies to the schools. Why? This is why we the teachers can't and don't get heard. Communication breakdown and time limitations all make it frustrating for all educators.

Please **DO NOT CUT THE TEACHERS' PAY**. There are other areas in State government that could cut wasteful spending from and not from the low paid teachers.

Sincerely,.

Mark Kanetsuna

Japanese language and Business Education teacher

Radford High School, Central District.

mkanetsuna@yahoo.com

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Please

Mike D'Amico to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 11:52 AM

From: "Mike D'Amico" <damico@whea.net>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

I am writing to request that the BOE votes to leave our teacher salaries as is. Personally, I'm fine w/out a raise, as my family and I feel I am finally making an amount reasonable for me to stay in the teaching profession (this is my 11th year teaching).

I have wrestled with quitting for quite some time, but it's my students who keep me in this profession. I love helping them, and although it's been amazing, it's been hard to give up teaching because of my students, and the relationships and trust we've built over the years.

If our salaries are cut, I would not be able to afford teaching, and would have to sacrifice helping the students to support my family. I, as well as several other teachers would have to find a new profession if our teacher salaries were cut. This would have a devastating impact on our students, and they would lose those years of trust and relationships built with the teachers who would now have to leave. Please support our keiki by helping us stay, so we can continue give them the trust and support they need!

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration reading mine, as well as all of the other emails,
Mike D'Amico

--

Mike D'Amico

West Hawaii Explorations Academy Educator

(808) 327-4751

"The teacher who attempts to teach without inspiring hammers on cold iron."



Proposed COVID - 19 Re-Balancing Framework

Joanne Kimura to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 11:56 AM

From: "Joanne Kimura" <joanne.kimura@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To: Board of Education, General Business Meeting COVID - 19 Re-Balancing

From: Joanne Kimura, Special Education Teacher, Pearl City High School

Subject: Written Testimony - Opposition to proposed directed leave without pay

Date: 5/6/2020

Board of Education Members,

I am humbly submitting this testimony to you concerning the plan to implement directed leave without pay as a possible part of DOE budget cuts. I am currently a Special Education teacher with 39 years in the DOE. I have always wanted to be a Special Education teacher, have always been a Special Education teacher, and all my higher educational training has been to be a Special Education teacher. I can honestly say teaching Special Education has been my passion since graduating from high school.

I continue to teach Special Education at my high school alma mater even if I have been eligible for retirement for almost a decade because I still wake up every day happy to go to work and eager to see my students. But unfortunately, if I have to work with a significant cut in pay, I need to step away from the job I still love. I am lucky to have 89 year old parents who are still healthy and are able to live independently. But in the near future I will need to retire to take care of them. But taking a cut in pay will affect me in my retirement years and affect my ability to comfortably take care of myself and my parents. So I am saying simply if I need to take an almost 20% cut in pay I will have to reluctantly file my papers for retirement that I have had on file for almost 10 years.

I will feel bad for my students because I have seen the effects on students both Special Education and General Education being taught by substitutes that have no teacher training often with no qualification in the subject area. Making matters worse the substitutes come and go. We had a General Education 10th grade English class that had 3 substitutes in a semester until finally the Principal disbanded the class and disbursed the students to other existing classes. He was unable to hire a permanent teacher for the position. Special Education is a high need area and finding a qualified Special Education teacher will be an even bigger challenge, plus one HQ in Science.

So I implore you for the sake of all the students in the State of Hawaii not to go ahead with the plan to implement directed leave without pay. I will be OK with or without teaching but I worry about the welfare of the students in the State of Hawaii and I feel any decision should be based solely with their educational welfare in mind.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Joanne Kimura

Special Education Resource Teacher - Integrated Science

Pearl City High School

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Testimony

Traci-ann Kobayashi to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 12:07 AM

From: "Traci-ann Kobayashi" <traci-ann.kobayashi@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Traci Kobayashi math and engineering teacher at Pearl City High School

I would oppose this 19.26% pay cut. This would be a very hard ask for teachers when our workload only keeps increasing. With this online learning (which is not mandatory for students to complete), I've spent more than my 7:30am-3pm work day implementing lessons, planning meetings, and meeting with students, leaving me to actually plan my lessons after the work day. This is almost a 20% pay cut which is 10 times more than our last pay cut, which we just recently received back. After teaching for around 15 years, this would be the first time I would actually consider looking at another career. I would even look into getting another job to help pay for my bills which would leave less time to plan. This pay cut would be pushing teachers back to their starting salaries (salaries they had maybe 10 years ago). For a beginning teacher, that would mean their salaries get cut to \$30,000. How do you expect someone with a degree to be able to make a living in Hawaii? Almost half of their salary would be just for rent, then they would still need to pay for utilities, car, car insurance, gas, and food. Maybe asking yourself if you would be able to survive with \$30,000 and let's not forget to take off your state and federal taxes too? This is just disappointing to hear, when you see so many people cheating the welfare system and nothing is being done about that.

--

Traci Kobayashi

Math & Engineering Teacher

Academy of Technology & Design Teacher Lead

Pearl City High School

2100 Hookiekie Street

(808) 307-5598

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

Testimony

Cheryl Goo <cgoo@kanoelanies.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:59 AM

Hi, My name is Cheryl Goo. I am an Inclusion Resource Special Education Teacher at Kanoelani Elementary School. I love working as a teacher, particularly differentiating instruction for our students that need it most. The possibility of a reduction in salary at this time is incredibly challenging to consider. I am a married mother of three children. My spouse is a small business owner who has shut down during the COVID 19 crisis. We are still paying commercial and housing rent at this time. My husband has filed for unemployment and for special loans, but nothing as of yet has come of it. We also have three children, one of which we are supporting while she attends college in the mainland. She will be in her fourth year as an Elementary School major. Even before COVID 19, she struggled with the idea of returning to Hawaii to work. She knows how hard I work, and that my salary would not sustain a single person on there own. I ask you at this time, while so many of us are continuing to struggle to reconsider cutting teachers' pay as it is scarcely enough to support us even before COVID 19. Many of us have family members impacted by this shutdown and are having to support our families at this time financially as the primary source of income. I believe I am just one local family struggling with so many others with similar experiences. Thank you for taking the time to listen to my request.

Sincerely, Cheryl Goo

95-576 Naholoholo Street
Mililani, Hi 96789
(808)551-2940
cgoo@kanoelanies.k12.hi.us

Credentialing Support
May 6, 2020

Hello,

I am writing this letter in support of, and to reiterate the need for, established credentialing requirements for school psychologists in the state of Hawaii.

As a School Psychologist working on Oahu and serving as Treasurer for the Hawaii Association of School Psychologists (HASP), I strongly believe all professionals responsible for the mental health and well-being of children should undergo a credentialing process. Having a set of standards in place for licensure is the expectation for educators, including our teachers, Speech and Language Pathologists, Occupational and Physical Therapists, and so on, working for the State of Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE). It should not be any different for School Psychologists. With credentialing for School Psychologists, we can ensure the wide capacity of our training is applied to the role of HIDOE School Psychologist. Graduate programs in School Psychology include rigorous training in areas such as psychological assessment, mental health counseling, and academic interventions. Above all, we are advocates for students to ensure education meets their individual needs. Our training is greatly minimized within our roles in the State of Hawaii. I attribute to this to both a lack of understanding of our training, in addition to the absence of a credentialing system. To date, Hawaii remains to be the only state without School Psychologist credentialing.

I request your support in establishing a credentialing system in place for School Psychologists to ensure any individual hired with the HIDOE is qualified to provide such a unique, and crucial, set of services to Hawaii's keiki.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Geoghegan, MS
School Psychologist – Central District, Oahu
Hawaii Association of School Psychologist's Treasurer



Hawai'i Board of Education - school year 2020-2021
Jeffrey Nishihara to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 12:01 PM
From: "Jeffrey Nishihara" <jeffrey.nishihara@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Hawaii Board of Education,

We live in trying times, and in these times we must take action to ensure the state's ability to function with less resources. And, I understand there is discussion about the possibility of a 19.62% pay for the educators for the school year, 20-21.

I do not support the idea of a pay cut for educators, in addition to the impacts it will have on me and my family's income, and ability to pay bills and our mortgage. It will have a negative impact on the overall GDP of our state. As people will have less money to spend, which limits the revenue of other businesses within our state.

According to the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization (UHERO) the best option for the state, is to borrow money from the federal government's Federal Reserve Municipal Lending Facility. While the BoE does not make decisions like that for the state, I urge you to inform the governor to consider the option, instead of cutting pay to state workers.

Mahalo for your time,
Jeff Nishihara
Washington Middle School
Social Studies
Grade 6

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COVID Re-Balancing Framework

Kapu Humel <s.humel@seariders.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:04 PM

Dear members of the BOE,

I am a ninth-grade English teacher at Wai'anae High School. Please reconsider the cuts to teacher salaries. At Wai'anae High School, we are already short on licensed, qualified teachers. Additional pay cuts to benefits and pay would drive qualified teachers away when they are already struggling to make ends meet.

Pay cuts would directly affect the quality of education that students at Wai'anae High School receive because it affects everyone who supports them. We would need to rely even more heavily than we already are on emergency hire and long-term subs. Prospective teachers would be discouraged from entering this field because of the loss in leave and incentives for teaching in our state. With a large portion of our current teachers working as emergency hires, they were counting on the negotiated pay raises so they may continue to teach in the coming years, but they are afraid that these pay cuts will force them into other professions before they are able to complete their licensing processes. Teachers who are close to retirement were planning on waiting until later, but even the threat of additional pay cuts have forced several teachers in our district into retirement.

With the threat of pay cuts, many teachers have already been considering moving away to other states or even other countries. If these cuts to benefits and negotiated pay take place, we will not be able to recruit new teachers to our school because the teaching environment will be made worse as a result of these cuts.

While we understand that we are in an economic crisis currently, the budget should not be balanced on the backs of our students and teachers. Please reconsider this decision because it would cause lasting damage to the quality of education in Hawai'i, especially out on the Leeward coast.

Mahalo,
Kapumealani Oje-Humel



Testimony

Arianna Sundstrom to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 12:04 PM
From: "Arianna Sundstrom" <arianna.sundstrom@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hello,

My name is Arianna Sundstrom and it is my second year at Makaha Elementary school in Waianae, Oahu. It is my second year both living and teaching in Hawaii. When I graduated college, I was so excited of the opportunity to teach in another culture. The longer I have been here, the stronger the relationships are that I have developed with my students, the other faculty, and the local community. I love the students I serve and I want to continue to work at my school and in this state. But if the pay cuts go through, I will no longer be able to avoid my rent. Although living in Hawaii is a wonderful experience, I barely make enough money to afford rent, student loan and car payments, bills, and food as it is. If these cuts go through, I will no longer be able to live in this great state 5,000 miles away from my family.

There is already a teacher shortage as it is. Please consider how these cuts will further deplete our number of teachers as teachers are forced to move away or retire early. Then, what will the class sizes and working conditions look like for the teachers who do stay?

Please, please support our teachers as we have supported our students and our communities. We are essential.

Arianna Sundstrom

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Testimony - May 7th

Cecilia Chung <ceciliaucc@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:06 PM

My name is Cecilia Chung and I am an educator at Ka'imiloa Elementary School and was named this year's Hawaii State Teacher of the Year.

I am submitting testimony against pay cuts for teachers that may be considered at your May 7th meeting.

In an already challenging situation, our students need teachers more than ever. We need each other more than ever. Teachers continue to work hard, despite their own challenges at home (including taking care of their own children and elderly family members). Please consider the importance of connection and learning, especially during these times - please remember your past teachers who may have impacted you.

I have had meetings with my students through video conferencing, communicated with them and their families over phone, and online platforms - I am working my hardest to keep the human connection that makes a classroom of kids a true community of people. In order to continue the learning, we have spent much valued time to be creative with lessons, thoughtful of our students' situations, and resilient when it comes to continuing the learning. I am one teacher out of the thousands and thousands in Hawai'i who continue to work hard to make this happen.

Teaching and learning is essential and that is a constant. We know the importance of our work and wish that more would understand this too.

Please do not cut pay for teachers. It will impact the future of education - it will impact teacher recruitment, retention, and ultimately, the impact on students. In order for our community to grow together, we must support each other; pay cuts will do much damage to those working to keep our students learning and also socially and emotionally healthy during this stressful situation.

Thank you for your consideration,
Cecilia Chung



Regarding Teacher Pay

Zoe Bliss <zoe.m.bliss@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:10 PM

Below is the testimony I have also sent to Sen. Baker and Rep. McKelvey.

"My name is Zoe Bliss. I am in my sixth year of teaching at Lahainaluna High School. As a teacher, we were notified Tuesday evening, 4/14, prior to the news announcement that Gov. Ige is planning on cutting state employee wages 20% as early as May 1st.

This is an atrocity. On behalf of the teaching community, we are already one of the lowest-paid teaching communities in the U.S. when factoring in the cost of living. To supplement this issue and continue to live in the State of Hawaii, many of us have second jobs. I am one of those people. Day in and day out, prior to COVID-19, I worked two full-time jobs, one as a full-time math teacher, and another as a full-time server at a local restaurant. Even with these two jobs, I have barely made enough to pay bills and pay student loans back (over \$800/month) and save toward a more permanent housing situation.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, I was aware that I would most likely be losing my income from the restaurant, which accounts for more than half of my monthly pay. I also am unable to file for even partial unemployment due to having a full-time job. So I have worked from home, setting up digital methods for keeping in touch with my students, continuing to teach them, and working toward next year. With the stay-at-home order, I usually end up putting in well over my required 8 am-2 pm hours Monday-Fridays, working at night and on the weekends. I want to be there for my students. I care, we are an ohana.

Now I find out that my pay might be cut to balance the budget?!? I'm an essential employee worker, putting in my time, and trying to be there for my students. And the contract that the State of Hawaii signed with our union, which guarantees my salary, is being ignored and my income is being cut even more. This is horrible. Many of us were already struggling. Many of the state workers are the only person in households across this state receiving pay, and now the state is telling us we don't deserve it. I am sure there are other ways to balance the budget. Not by once again cutting the pay of the teachers. Or by cutting the pay of first responders. I personally find this announcement appalling. This is a hard time for all of us. Please back us and support state employees."

I will be honest, with a pay cut I might have to leave the state due to the low wages and high cost of living. The State of Hawaii has reciprocity with 45 other US states. Some of these states have equal or higher pay than Hawaii, yet all of them have a lower cost of living. I don't want to leave, but I also don't want to wonder how I'm going to have enough money to eat.

--

Zoe Bliss
Cell: 808-269-6490



Teacher Pay Cuts

Peter Celebre to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 12:11 PM

From: "Peter Celebre" <peter.celebre@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern

My name is Pete Celebre and I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate School in Ewa Beach. I as well as my wife have been teaching in the DOE for 15 years. I am writing because I am extremely concerned with the talk of cutting teacher pay. Since the COVID 19 shut down I along with my colleagues have been working countless hours creating online activities and meeting with our students virtually to assist them with their learning. We have stepped up to the unprecedented challenge to support our students academically as well as emotionally.

If you cut teachers' pay you are not only hurting our keiki, but you will also force many teachers across the state to find new jobs. Both my wife and I have been working two jobs to support our family. If our pay is cut by the proposed 20% that would be 40% of our income gone. This would result in my wife and I not being able to pay our mortgage and significantly impact our ability to care for our two sons.

Cutting teachers pay is not the answer! There is so much money spent each year on programs and initiatives that should be cut before you even consider touching the teachers pay. It is hard enough to survive off of our normal teacher pay as is.

I understand this is a crisis situation but I fear if you cut teachers pay you are going to see a mass exit of teachers in Hawaii, which is going to have a significant impact on our children that will last a lifetime. We are already at a shortage of teachers in Hawaii and the teachers that have been faithful are barely hanging on as is. Please look at the other options and money that is out there. There are other alternatives. Cut the funds for testing, and big business programs that have infiltrated our public schools, but don't cut the lifeline of the people who are taking care of our kids.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Pete Celebre

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Grant Takiguchi to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 12:16 PM
From: "Grant Takiguchi" <grant.takiguchi@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha, Board of Education members.

I am a Math teacher at Radford High School and am writing this message to express my opposition to salary cuts or any decisions leading to reduced pay for teachers (furloughs, DLWOPs, etc.).

Many teachers are still recovering from the prolonged situation caused by the Great Recession a decade ago. We sacrificed much during that period, and many of us do not feel that we've completely recovered or have yet been fairly compensated. The furloughs/DLWOPs were a mistake that all educational "stakeholders" should have learned from - a mistake that deepened the teacher shortage and that, if repeated, would surely lead to an even worse predicament for public education in Hawaii. A 20% pay reduction would force many younger teachers out of the state or out of the profession, would cause many older teachers to retire early, and would encourage mid-career teachers such as myself to embrace other options such as employment at private schools or international schools abroad.

The fact that, after everything we endured a decade ago, pay cuts for teachers are even open to discussion is a matter of deep distress to many of us. We would be grateful to the Board if it would not only discourage any proposals that might lead to reduced pay but also send a strong message to the governor's office that the very motion towards such discussions will in itself be rejected.

Sincerely,
Grant Takiguchi
Radford High School

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BOE: Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Dawnne Laufou to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 12:16 PM

From: "Dawnne Laufou" <dawnne.laufou@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Board of Education Personnel,

My name is Dawnne Laufou. I am a counselor at Keone'ula Elementary. I am very concerned about teacher pay cuts. Please consider other options.

Teachers already do not get paid enough. Pay cuts will harm teachers. Prior to this epidemic, an Oahu family of four bringing in \$93,300 or less was considered low income [according to the U.S. Housing and Urban Development](#) guidelines. While the federal government is infusing money into the system on a national level, our state government is considering cutting some of the lowest paid professionals' salaries. Fully certified teachers in Hawaii start at 63% of HUD's low income qualification and a 20-year teacher with the equivalent of a doctoral degree is still low income according to HUD guidelines. While many teachers have relied on second jobs to supplement their salaries, many have lost those jobs and rely solely on teaching to get by. The problem is many of them can't get by and are leaving Hawaii, resulting in the current teacher shortage crisis.

Pay cuts will harm the students. Already, many are not being taught by qualified teachers. What will happen when teachers leave because they simply can't afford to stay here—or retire, because this makes more sense financially than continuing to teach?

Pay cuts will also be harmful for the long-term future of Hawaii. Already, teacher pay was cut during the 2008 recession—and has never recovered. If pay is cut again, it sends the message that Hawaii does not value its education. Locals won't consider teaching, not enough pay for the amount of work they would need to put in. If non-locals decide to come for the chance of living in Hawaii, they will soon leave because they can't afford to live in what should be paradise. This will harm our students because they need consistency, and qualified teachers. This is my 4th year in the DOE and although I love what I do, I might have to start to consider other career options if the pay gets cut. I would like to be able to encourage students to become educators without them having to worry about how to support themselves and their future. What message are we giving to our children about respect for their own education, and for spending money on four years of college to become future teachers? Education is the foundation of society, and all of Hawaii will benefit from a well-educated community.

Please consider other ways to save money:

1. The DOE can consider programs and assessments that it has purchased. We are a large group with negotiating power. Can we limit programs and assessments to those that have been most effective and negotiate lower costs?
2. The DOE uses a tremendous amount of copy paper, construction paper, and other classroom materials. They are often purchased by teachers on an individual basis or by

schools on a school-by-school basis. If it was purchased in bulk, vendors would have to compete for our business, which could save money.

Thank you for your time. I hope that you will consider the effects of this decision along with the many ways we can avoid cutting teachers' pay.

Sincerely,
Dawnne Laufou

--

Dawnne Laufou
School Counselor
Keone'ula Elementary School
91-970 Kaileolea Dr.
Ewa Beach, HI 96706
Phone: 808-307-2100
Fax: 808-689-1395

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

I object to benefit cuts for teachers

Scott Lane <slane@haaspcs.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:23 PM

Aloha,

My name is Scott Lane, I am a teacher of High School Physical Science, Chemistry and Engineering at the Hawaii Academy of Arts and Science on the Big Island in the Puna district.

I have been working in education for 30 years and hold an advanced license to teach grades 7-12 Mathematics and Science.

Although I have certainly witnessed the many ebbs and flows in education, and I possess a knowledge of budget priorities and inner workings, I must state my dissatisfaction with any decision to cut teacher benefits to compensate for budget losses due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

I believe this decision would bring many negative effects to education in Hawaii, not least of all a decline in the number of qualified teachers in hard to staff areas such as Puna, and the resulting loss in the quality of education for our youth.

With empathy to those who must make these decisions, it is unreasonable to place the welfare of our young people in jeopardy to create a quick fix to problems beyond their control.

I don't see why it is necessary to expect me to pay \$15,000 annually in order to prevent the taxpayers from paying a much smaller increase in their support of state benefits.

It is foolish to ask us to carry the burden that by all rights should be carried by all citizens of the State of Hawaii.

PLEASE REJECT THE PLAN TO CUT TEACHER COMPENSATION.

Consider the unfair burden you will place on the dedicated and necessary members of the community simply because we are a line item on your budget sheet.

Trust that you will hear much more of this as you move forward in this process of recovery.

Yours,
S. Lane



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

Testimony

Ricky <Rikson@aol.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:24 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern,

My name is Ricky Matsumoto, I work at Wheeler Elementary as a special education teacher, I am going on my tenth year, I just wanted to say please don't cut our salaries, we barely make enough to survive in Hawaii's economy, the work as a special educator is grueling at times, and if a pay cut happens, I will seriously question myself on why or if I should continue work in this field.

So please do not cut our pay!

Thank you!

Ricky

Sent from my iPhone



Proposed 34-hour DLWOP/STOWOP

Joyce Brubaker to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 12:25 PM

From: "Joyce Brubaker" <joyce.brubaker@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern,

My name is Joyce Brubaker. I am an 8th grade math teacher at Washington Middle School and I love my job.

I did not come to this job in the traditional sense the way most teachers do--as a young adult. I am a 52 year-old probie teacher, with three children (22, 16 year-old twins). I completed a SATEP to become a certified teacher online. Working full-time, I studied early in the morning before my family woke up, late at night, after homework help, chores and dinner making and on weekends, around soccer and volleyball games, spelling bees, play dates, dentist appointments and well, life.

Three years after deciding to become a certified teacher, it is one of the best decisions I ever made. I love connecting with a student, earning their trust and respect, learning about them. I love building relationships with my students, watching their "light bulb" go on when they "get" a concept, seeing their hearts open up to new ideas, witnessing their confidence grow with each class, and am blessed to be able to see the seedling of their life's passion planted and nourished. I laugh every day that I am with my students and I learn so much from them. My students open my world in more ways than I imagined possible. I have a wonderful team of teachers who have become more than colleagues, but friends who encourage and show me how to be a better educator, parent, person. A couple of months ago, my son asked me, "If you won the lottery, would you still go to work every day?". The question took me by surprise, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized that yes (!!), I would go to work every day, even if I won a lottery. Because I really love my job.

But, the idea of winning a lottery has its appeal-- my weekly take-home pay is less than what I was making before becoming a certified teacher. To make up for the difference and to keep up with the rising cost of living and raising three kids in Hawaii, I work summer school every year, after school as an Uplink teacher and have even taken up tutoring on weekends with a private firm. In a year, my husband and I will be paying for two college tuitions. A 34-hour DLWOP/STOWOP, what is essentially a nearly 20% pay cut, will force me to look for a position in another field altogether to be able to support my family--there are no more ways for me to "make up the difference". And that will be a pity. Not just for me, but for my students, who deserve a teacher who loves her job, who keeps learning to be better at her job today than she was yesterday, who knows that nurturing their minds and souls and meeting their needs to become better citizens of the world is her number one priority. And it is a downright shame that the very adults who should be prioritizing their needs as well are seriously considering options that will directly and, undoubtedly, negatively impact their education. Yes, we are living in unprecedented times, and the COVID-19 pandemic will have devastating repercussions on the state's revenue stream. We are all fully aware of that ugly fact. But a DLWOP/STOWOP will compound the pandemic's effects on the backs of, literally, the children of Hawaii. Well-experienced teachers will retire, young adults full of promise to become great teachers will seek careers better capable of sustaining the cost of living in Hawaii, and teachers like me, who love the job and aspire to be a great teacher but can no longer afford to, will be forced to leave teaching to find better paying jobs.

I humbly ask that you not support the DWLOP/STOWOP or any other teacher pay cut. I strongly urge you to seek an alternative revenue stream to mitigate the pandemic's economic impact on the DOE. I desperately hope that you will not make a decision that will result in taking great teachers out of the classroom, steering great teachers to-be away from the classroom, exponentially compounding the current teacher shortage, which will leave a great deal of our children of Hawaii in overcrowded classrooms with unqualified substitutes. Great teachers share a common goal-- ALWAYS do what's best for the child. It seems to me that the BOE and the State of Hawaii should have the same goal. Any decision that will take good teachers out of the classroom is not putting the child first.

Thank you for your time and allowing me to share my thoughts.

Best,
Joyce Brubaker

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(‘CARES Act’) K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process.”

PAM YUEN <yuen.pam@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:25 PM

Dear BOE Chairperson,

In light, of the current and ongoing COVID19 pandemic; please realize that educating our students, has and always will be a primary concern for all educators. Despite, the stay-at-home requirement, all educators have been working tirelessly, creating online classroom assignments, educational packets, enrichment activities, providing online libraries, research materials and educational games; as well as, processing and deploying computers to students. Teachers are always thinking about ways to provide information and support for students.

I'm employed at one of the "hardest to fill" schools in the state of Hawaii. Our students are already challenged with unqualified substitutes; making the learning process for students, frustrating and discouraging. We cannot allow students to fall farther behind. These students are our future leaders. Would any of you, put your life in the hands of individuals; deprived of proper education? If the answer is "no," then how can anyone suggest that our students be left in the hands of unqualified substitutes.

Please allow teachers, to do what they are professionally trained to do, TEACH. We are very capable and properly educated to know what is best for students. Please do NOT decrease our pay by approximately 20%; for the following reasons: 1) Our summer pay, are monies that teachers have already earned, that has been set aside to tie over during the summer months; 2) Teachers are already considered low-income professionals; trying to survive in a high economy state; 3) There aren't enough qualified substitutes throughout the state to properly educate our students; and 4) After dipping into personal savings accounts; borrowing from 2nd mortgages or other institutions, will place an even greater financial burden on us. Educators will never be able to financially recover. From repayment of student loans, to utility bill payment, mortgages and other survival necessities. This is a heartfelt plea, to please reconsider, do NOT cut Teacher Pay. Educator provide the education for our future leaders. Let's continue to work together and find other ways of finding monies during this devastating time. Please do NOT take it away from our students. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Pam Yuen

Librarian

Nanakuli High and Intermediate School

Grades: 7-12



Please no pay cuts

Susana Higa to: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov 05/06/2020 12:27 PM

From: "Susana Higa" <susana808@hotmail.com>

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

Aloha,

I kindly implore you to please fund alternative ways to adjust to the state's economy. As a registrar at Aiea High School, I am finding that I am working harder and longer hours. I have seen yearly for the last few years, our staff not having qualified and certified teachers for all subject areas. These students lose out with having substitute teachers. If there are pay cuts, many would leave our profession and I can anticipate more vacancies at Aiea. We owe it to our students to have qualified teachers so that they can receive the education they deserve and it needs to be equitable which we know it already isn't with the hardest filled areas.

On a personal level, this pay cut would be detrimental to my family as my husband is also a state worker. With double pay cuts, we are concerned we will not be able to make our monthly mortgage payments as well as all the other debts we have incurred. We also have tuition for college to pay for.

We already know teachers are underpaid for what we are expected to accomplish and only in the last few years have we begun to see some hope but all the progress will be for not if we do have a pay cut. Please help us to keep our profession competitive and respected.

Thank you and blessings to you,

Susana Higa

Aiea High School Registrar

Sent from my iPhone



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

Please Reject Salary Cut Options

Berta Akiu <bertaakiu@yahoo.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:31 PM

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

Dear Hawaii Board of Education,

I wish you all a good day. I am Roberta Akiu. I am a Special Education teacher at Mokulele Elementary School and I am in my 20th year of teaching for Hawaii's Department of Education as a Special Education teacher.

Please reject the salary cut being proposed. Prior to COVID-19, the Board of Education and the Department of Education were finding ways to increase teacher salaries to address the critical shortage of licensed teachers here in Hawaii. Additionally, the governor has stated he is seeking ways to prevent a salary cut of State employees.

A salary cut would increase our shortage of licensed teachers and increase the number of students here in Hawaii being taught by an individual who is unlicensed to teach. Teachers will begin to reflect on remaining in the teaching profession as well as whether they should remain in Hawaii to teach. Veteran teachers who have the years of service will reflect on retiring rather than face another salary cut. In my 20 years of teaching, I have experienced the previous two salary cuts. I don't believe the veteran teachers with years of service will want to endure another salary cut.

There are teachers and their families shouldering additional financial costs brought upon them by working remotely at home. I being one. I needed to update my internet service plan which will increase my monthly cost for the service, and I needed to replace my internet router. Prior to these changes, I was kicked out of WebEx meetings, seen but not heard, heard but not seen, not seen and not heard, and frequently saw the message of low broadband width. Since the changes, I no longer have experienced these things. I also have needed to order blue light shield glasses and blue light computer screen blockers for my devices as I've begun to experience eye pain and headaches with the long length of time I'm now spending on devices.

Teachers and their families are also shouldering the additional financial cost of electricity. Computers, laptops, cell phones, tablets are in continuous use and with some needing to be frequently charged. Then there's lighting of the area where the work is done. Unfortunately, not everyone has an area in their dwelling to able to do their work without the need for adequate lighting. There are times I need to continue my work in the early morning before sunrise or in the night to complete tasks related to Special Education as the days are filled with WebEx meetings, virtual online classes to understand how various programs work, seeking resources for students, Special Education meetings, communication with parents, and communication with colleagues.

For these reasons, I urge the Board of Education to reject the projected salary cut.

I thank you for your time.
May we all be safe and well.

Sincerely,
Roberta Akiu

5/6/2020

Jenna Maiorano, M.A., NCSP

Jmaiorano808@gmail.com

Aloha Board Members,

Hello, my name is Jenna Maiorano and I am current a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) in the state of Hawaii. I am writing this letter to support establishing credentialing requirements for school psychologists in the State of Hawai'i. As of today, Hawai'i remains the only state in the nation without a credentialing or licensure requirement for school psychologists. School psychologists are exempt from licensure requirements when practicing in an educational setting in Hawai'i. Because of this, school psychologists are the only mental health providers in the state without certification or licensure requirements despite existing law that requires anyone practicing psychology must meet specific education and training requirements and be licensed.

School psychologists are able to provide school-based mental health services; provide consultation, assessment, and intervention along a multi-tiered continuum including preventative measures as well as intensive supports; and, assist in school improvement acts such as school climate and school safety; etc. Our extensive training in assessment ensures that students appropriate assessment tools are selected and results are interpreted accurately so that factors related to eligibility and placement and be validly determined.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Jenna Maiorano, M.A., NCSP

Treasurer-Elect, Hawaii Association of School Psychology



Reducing teacher pay could decimate Hawaii Public Education for years to come

Ashley Olson <ms.a.olson@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:45 PM

Aloha honorable members of the Hawaii State Board of Education-

My name is Ashley Olson. I am a veteran teacher and I have spent virtually my entire career at Lahainaluna High School on Maui.

I want to first thank you all for your recent unanimous support of the hard to staff differentials. It meant a lot to so many teachers that you validated what we have been saying for so many years. That the next phase-addressing the inequity of pay steps for veteran teachers- seemed within reach caused MANY teachers at retirement age to reconsider leaving the DOE. I myself figured that I would stay long enough to at least achieve my "high three" at step 14B, rather than leaving the minute I was eligible.

We understand that it is no longer likely that those pay disparities will be addressed in the near future. And those of us who had expressed the thought that we could stay at least a few more years past retirement are once again ready to leave for retirement benefits and second career that will not leave us exhausted and broken at the end of the day. Conservatively, you are looking at 2,000 + teachers who will retire over the next three or four years.

Now, it seems that pay CUTS are on the table. Again.

If teacher pay is cut, we stand to lose thousands of teachers.

We know that we are already going to lose those who are at or near retirement if there is not a significant financial inducement to stay.

So many of our teachers come to us with student debt, facing an extreme cost of living and we reward them in Hawaii with a salary that forces them to work a second or even a third job for the 'privilege' of working in Hawaii Public Schools. Those second and third jobs are gone. That income is gone- but someone with a 'full time job' is not eligible for unemployment. Those teachers are barely hanging on as it is. If you allow teacher pay to be further reduced, we are going to lose thousands more teachers. Just the threat of a reduction in pay already has teachers packing up to leave Hawaii. They will be able to find a job that will allow them stronger earning potential anywhere in the country.

In a worst case scenario? A reduction in pay- cuts, furloughs, DLWPs, whatever form it would take- will decimate the teaching force in Hawaii for years to come. We WILL lose thousands of teachers AND THERE IS NO ONE TO TAKE THEIR PLACE. If there were, early retirement incentives might be part of this discussion.

The state cannot continue to balance the books on teachers' backs and still hope to have a viable public education system. Hawaii already has thousands of classes without a qualified teacher. Please do not allow this problem to become exponentially worse, for years to come.

Thank you-

Ashley Olson
Lahaina, Maui



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

Testimony: Teacher Salaries

Amelia Keefe <ameliak@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:45 PM

Hello,

My name is Amelia Keefe, I teach 7th&8th grade ELA at Ilima Intermediate in Ewa Beach. In this trying time many things are changing. One thing that needs to stay the same is providing quality education for our keiki. As a teacher I know that with the current pay many teachers struggle financially and many work multiple jobs to survive. We teach because we love our students but a pay cut could make it so teachers can no longer survive! Many teachers, myself included, have used our own money for classroom supplies to ensure students get quality instruction. A pay cut could mean that more students are taught by subs as qualified teachers may need to search for other employment. Again, please do not cut teachers pay! Thank you for your time,

Amelia Keefe

Sent from my iPhone

5/7/2020

Amanda Garrett, PsyD., NCSP
dramandagarrett@gmail.com

Aloha,

The Hawaii Association of School Psychologists (HASP) recognizes the difficulty and strain that the COVID-19 global pandemic has caused for our keiki and their families in Hawaii. This is an incredibly difficult and uncertain time for all, and as school psychologists, it is imperative to us that we be able to support our keiki. However, concerns have risen regarding our lack of credentialing in the state of Hawaii, as this could cause an obstacle in our ability to provide these services in a legal and ethical manner. Although HASP has been asking for this since 2011, the urgency to establish credentialing is ever-more present during this global pandemic, as it would allow measures for School Psychologists to support their schools with the protection, for both the school and the individual, that credentialing provides. HASP believes this concern could be fixed in a timely manner, as members of our executive board are willing to voluntarily devote our time completing all work that needs to be done to implement a credentialing process in Hawaii as quickly as possible during this crisis so that we can be available to offer our services to help our keiki in need if we could be provided the opportunity to do so. Therefore, as a practicing School Psychologist and an executive board member (President Elect) of the Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists (HASP), I am writing in support of credentialing of School Psychologists in Hawai'i.

School psychologists work to provide effective services to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally by providing direct educational and mental health services for children and youth. Additionally, we work with parents, educators, and other professionals to create supportive learning and social environments for all children. The Practice Model set forth by the National Association of School Psychologists delineates the standards, expertise, and training required to maintain professional competence, integrity, and trust. Currently, School Psychologists are 'exempt' from having to have licensure to practice in the educational setting (HRS465) and have had no credentialing in the state of Hawai'i. Hawai'i is the only state in the country that does not have a credentialing process in place for School Psychologists. There are a couple reasons this is extremely problematic. First and foremost, having no credentialing requirements may potentially result in unqualified individuals working in School Psychologist positions, which could possibly cause harm to our keiki. Because the state of Hawaii currently does not offer a single School Psychology graduate program, at this time all School Psychologists are either being recruited from the mainland, coming in with varying qualifications, or individuals within the state of Hawaii who have earned a degree in a similar field, such as counseling, are sometimes hired into School Psychologist positions, even though they have not received appropriate training to be working in these positions. It is clear that the state of Hawaii has a severe shortage of School Psychologists, and because of this, it's not surprising that unqualified individuals may be fulfilling School Psychologist roles; however, it is imperative to understand that this causes more harm than benefit to our keiki.

Secondly, the state's failure to require licensure of its School Psychologists means that, by law, the state is unable to seek warranted reimbursements from the federal Medicaid program for the services provided by School Psychologists in an educational setting. If we had a licensing process in place, we would be able to bill for our services, and this money would be used to help Hawaii's keiki.

In summary, credentialing is important for all professionals, but it is critical for professionals who work with keiki with special needs. Our keiki need to be protected through implementation of a credentialing process that would keep Mahalo for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Garrett, Psy.D.
Nationally Certified School Psychologist
President Elect of the Hawaii Association of School Psychologists (HASP)



Re: Testimony to Board of Education Opposing Pay Cuts

Anna Mendoza <annamend@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: infohsesj@gmail.com

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:53 PM

Re: Testimony to Board of Education Opposing Pay Cuts

Dear Hawai'i Board of Education,

My name is Anna Mendoza and I have just received my PhD in Second Language Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. In February 2020, I joined the Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice by signing a petition for increased teacher compensation to lead to more equitable education in Hawai'i. It is therefore disconcerting that Gov. Ige has instead proposed *cutting* salaries of state employees, which include teachers, by as much as 20%. I am sure there is no need to reiterate what has already been said:

- * With cost of living adjustments Hawai'i teachers **already** rank as the lowest paid in the nation.
- * Hawai'i state and local expenditures on education **already** rank among the lowest in the US.

In this document, I provide personal testimony to the BOE opposing these pay cuts by sharing with you what I found during my dissertation research, as I did a one-year ethnography at a Honolulu high school in a neighborhood with a predominantly Filipino and Micronesian population. It is not easy to teach at this school. Many students live in multi-family homes as a result of poverty, putting them at increased risk of COVID-19 and other social stressors. It is hard to focus on your studies due to familial obligations, including part-time jobs and care for younger siblings and cousins. Nevertheless, **the two teachers whose classes I had the privilege to observe were outstanding educators who made things work despite the most challenging of circumstances.** It would be an insult to undercompensate them:

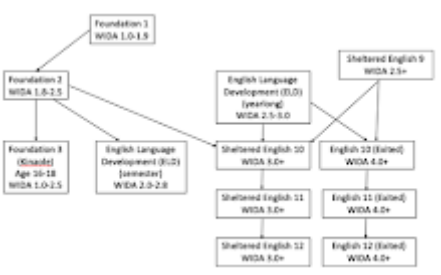
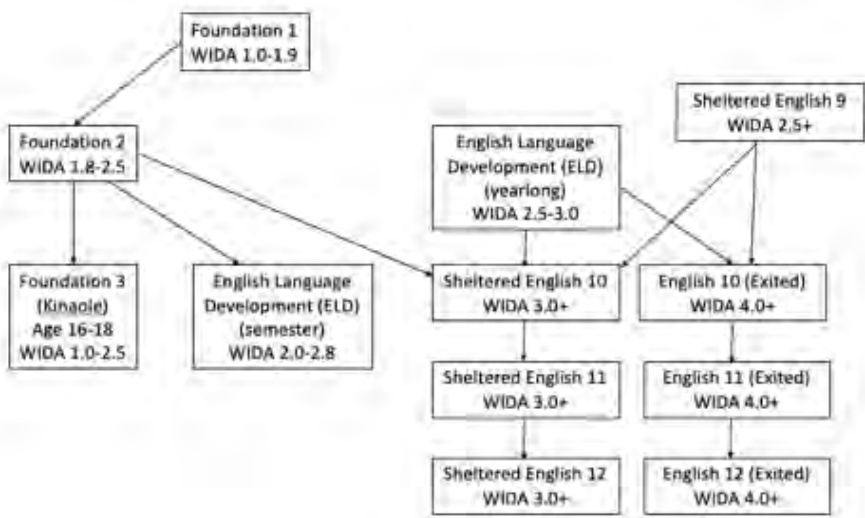
- "Kaori," the ESL department head, managed the placement of 443 students in a network of courses that would ensure each student received the appropriate levels of English support they needed at the right times as they completed their journey through high school (see diagram below). For example, some students are in sheltered English 9/10/11/12, which offers the grade-level curriculum but enrolls only ELLs, so they can get credit for English at their grade but still receive ELL-adapted instruction. Students whose English is at a lower level can test into a year-long general English Language Development (ELD) course, later entering their grade-level sheltered English course. Arrivals with even lower levels of English proficiency may start with Foundation 1 or Foundation 2, take a semester-long ELD course, and move into their grade-appropriate sheltered English class eventually. Failing this, they are placed in a special track called Kinaole that still lets them leave high school on time; later on, they can take adult education classes or the GED exam if they want to pursue postsecondary education. *As each level is carefully matched to national ESL exit benchmarks established by the WIDA Consortium*, Kaori has ensured that (1) standardized tests do not hold students back from a timely graduation, (2) every student has an avenue to get their high school diploma should they wish to pursue postsecondary education, based on their needs and current English proficiency, and (3) students have opportunities to change their track based on regular assessment.

- "Juan," the English department head, gave his sheltered English 9 students a richer literary experience than most "regular" English 9 teachers. A visiting educational consultant who has coached teachers *in all but one U.S. state* told me that Juan was a special teacher. Juan held his English 9 students to high standards, enriching the "coming-of-age" curriculum in the English 9 textbook with Sherman Alexie's YA novel *Flight* and Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*, making these culturally and geographically unfamiliar works engaging to students. One especially bold thing he did was design a unit on "Adverse Childhood Experiences," involving selected fiction and nonfiction readings, tying this unit into the analysis of *Flight* and inviting students to make connections to their own lives through poetry and creative writing to the

extent that they were comfortable. He launched a [multi-class poetry anthology](#) (authored with Kaori's and other classes) featuring some of these works at the Honolulu Public Library, a self-published book that has sold 650+ copies nationwide by the time it was presented at the National Council of Teachers of English Conference in Baltimore in Nov. 2019 (and I am sure it has continued to sell copies since). Other literacy and community projects presented at the NCTE 2019 conference by English teachers at Juan's and Kaori's school, which is one of the four most linguistically diverse schools in the state, also struck me as going "above and beyond" the call of duty.

If you do not make it worthwhile to be a teacher, you will not make it worthwhile for people to stay long in the profession to succeed the current practitioners and deliver the same quality of service. I hope that these portraits of individuals will make you seriously consider what you are doing to the profession of teaching in the state--and many other *ordinary* public service workers who are going *above and beyond the call of duty in increasingly challenging circumstances*--if you curb their salaries. Can higher-level administrators be the ones who take a pay cut to weather the storm?

Respectfully,
Dr. Anna Mendoza



ELL path to graduation.png
45K



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

Teacher Testimony

Landon <cuda316@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 12:56 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Landon from Ilima Intermediate and I teach 7th and 8th grade Math. This email is in regard to the state proposed teacher pay cuts.

The pay cut would drastically affect me and my family. I am the main source of income for us and my wife was recently furloughed due to COVID19. While it has been challenging financially, we've luckily managed so far. However any more decline in income would put us at hardship.

I am approaching my 10th year of teaching and I love it, I love Hawaii, and it has been one of the most fulfilling things to me. But unfortunately, if the situation arises I may be forced to find another career that can sustain my family especially in Hawaii's high cost of living. I take pride in being a teacher and I enjoy it when former students return for help on their high school math!

I know many former colleagues who find other jobs, not because they do not like teaching, but because it doesn't make sense. They leave because a teacher salary cannot sustain their family leisurely or they leave Hawaii altogether to teach in another state because of Hawaii's high cost of living. I DO NOT want to become another one of those teachers.

Please reconsider the pay cut as this decision will affect teachers, but ultimately students as they will lose great leaders for them.

Sincerely,
Landon



May 7, 2020

RE: Agenda Item V. Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Acts ("CARES Act") K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board,

On April 27, 2020 HE`E Coalition wrote a letter to the Superintendent entitled Six Questions, Six Specific Proposed Actions, after weeks of meeting with DOE staff and getting little clarity on the true situation of what was going on in our schools. The Superintendent responded to our letter on April 29, 2020.¹

These are unprecedented times and the Superintendent eloquently wrote about the efforts that schools have made to deal with COVID-19 and subsequent school closures, and we greatly appreciate these efforts. However, we still do not have the clarity and transparency regarding the condition of our students statewide, and what plans are being made to prepare for the reopening of schools. According to the Superintendent's response to our Congressional Delegation, "HIDOE does not have a centralized database where educators are logging in their interactions with students; however, individual schools maintain this information on each student." If DOE leadership is not taking a system-wide view, how then can a systemwide budget be created? How will DOE as a system know where to allocate funds to where the greatest needs are?

In the same way our leaders have used data and facts to develop and execute an effective response to COVID-19, we ask the BOE to urge the DOE to use data and facts to develop and execute a plan that will effectively educate our students in these difficult times.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE`E Coalition Director

¹ Attached are April 27, 2020 HE`E Letter to the Superintendent, Six Questions, Six Specific Proposed Suggestions, and the April 29, 2020 Superintendent Response to the HE`E Letter. Included in the HE`E Letter is the April 18, 2020 Congressional Delegation Letter to the Superintendent. Attached as reference is the April 27, 2020 Response from the Superintendent to the Congressional Delegation Letter.

HE'E Coalition Members and Participants

Academy 21

After-School All-Stars Hawai'i

Alliance for Place Based Learning

American Civil Liberties Union

BAYADA

*Castle Complex Community Council

*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS

*Education Institute of Hawai'i

*Faith Action for Community Equity

Fresh Leadership LLC

Girl Scouts Hawai'i

Harold K.L. Castle Foundation

*HawaiiKidsCAN

*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance

*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists

Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars

*Hawai'i Children's Action Network

Hawai'i Education Association

Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition

* Hawai'i State PTSA

Hawai'i State Student Council

Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Hawai'i P-20

Hawai'i 3Rs

Head Start Collaboration Office

It's All About Kids

*INPEACE

Joint Venture Education Forum

Junior Achievement of Hawaii

Kamehameha Schools

Kanu Hawai'i

*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council

Keiki to Career Kaua'i

Kupu A'e

*Leaders for the Next Generation

Learning First

McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds

Native Hawaiian Education Council

Our Public School

*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

*Parents and Children Together

*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i

Punahou School PUEO Program

*Teach for America

The Learning Coalition

US PACOM

University of Hawai'i College of Education

YMCA of Honolulu

Voting Members () Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*

Individual Support

William "Pila" Wilson



April 27, 2020

Via Email and USPS

Dr. Christina Kishimoto
Superintendent
P.O. Box 2360
Honolulu, HI 96804

RE: Six Questions, Six Specific Proposed Actions

Dear Dr. Kishimoto,

For the last several weeks HE'E Coalition and educational equity community advocates have dialogued with Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) staff to gain clarity on education issues related to the COVID-19 crisis. We have repeatedly posed reasonable, logical questions that focus on documenting what is happening in all our public schools, communications with students and families, and holding our system accountable. This is basic information that the HIDOE should have to address the current situation and plans for the next school sessions.

1. When will the HIDOE collect and share data on whether or not students are emotionally and physically safe, have access to devices and the internet, and are educationally engaged?
2. When will the HIDOE collect and share data examining what students are accessing the Meal-to-Go program and going forward, a plan to distribute food at all schools?
3. There is widespread misunderstanding and concern among parents and community members about what is happening in the HIDOE. Can you provide us with a written approved mechanism for interactive communication so that community members can be heard and get answers to their questions?
4. How will HIDOE determine which students are meeting academic standards without the Smarter Balanced and KAEO assessments and class grades? What is the plan for those students (including special education students) that are behind grade level?
5. Why isn't there an expectation or written policy that schools check in with all students (using mail, phones, computers, etc.) and set a daily schedule for subjects and assignments?
6. What is the plan for utilizing the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (\$43.4mm) and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund? (\$9.7mm)?

The answers we have received from HIDOE staff are not coming with any clarity or detail. We are left with the strong impression that the HIDOE and Hawai'i Board of Education (BOE) do not have in place a clear policy approach to the spring semester. There are no systemwide expectations for what schools or teachers are supposed to be doing during this period of on-line learning and engagement. There are vague terms such as "enrichment." There have been open declarations that HIDOE is not going to be specific in requirements or even guidelines for every school or teacher or student.

As for the fall semester, you have stated publicly that the HIDOE is only focusing on summer school, and that detailed contingency policies and plans for the fall are not a high priority. We have seen no proposed budget or plans for bulk purchases of computers or tablets to connect students to their learning centers. We have seen no detailed scheduling of professional development for on-line or other distance learning instruction, especially social emotional learning (SEL) instruction for students who are in traumatic environments. We have seen no attempt to convert safer spaces for student to gather in, such as the convention center, where the environment can be more strictly controlled, with larger spaces between students and teachers. We have seen no attempts to convert buses or vans into travelling "hot spots" for students to download assignments, or even park nearby and do their work online.

The perception of lack of clarity and specific planning appears to be shared by our Congressional Delegation.

We offer a list of suggested actions that could assist in getting clarity of the current situation and written transparent plans for the summer school and the fall semester.

1. With nearly half of all HIDOE employees working outside of the classroom, create and post a written plan to repurpose these staff for ongoing communication, technology and health assessments of public-school students.
2. Survey each school to understand what each school and each teacher within each school has done during this semester to communicate daily with each student. This will tell us if there are gaps, especially in terms of regions or communities.
3. Determine, in time for legislative action, which students do not have internet connectivity and devices to learn online, and the budget that will be needed to accomplish this. If there are methods of delivering education other than internet connectivity and devices, clearly explain why and the budget needed to accomplish this.
4. Open libraries with internet access (using safe spacing) and convert buses and other vehicles into mobile "hot spots" to facilitate access for students whose homes do not have adequate connectivity.
5. Survey and collect data *this month* to document how each complex, school and student is operating with the maximum quality learning experiences for all

students. Create separate elementary, middle and high school charts and graphs to illustrate the patterns of academic strategies.

6. Incorporate best practices from other public and private education systems, determine the need for elementary, middle and high school professional development in a transition to hybrid or online learning to address academic and social emotional learning needs and plan the budget that will be requested for this.

As an education community, we are asking these questions and giving these suggestions out of a collective concern for our education system now and as we recover from this crisis. We look forward to receiving answers to our questions.

Sincerely,



Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

Encl: Letter from Congressional Delegation dated April, 18, 2020

cc: Via Email and USPS
Hawai'i Board of Education
Brian Schatz, United States Senator
Mazie K. Hirono, United States Senator
Tulsi Gabbard, Member of Congress
Ed Case, Member of Congress

HE'E Coalition Members and Participants

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After-School All-Stars Hawai'i

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University of Hawai'i College of Education

YMCA of Honolulu

Voting Members () Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*

Individual Support

William "Pila" Wilson

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

April 18, 2020

Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto
Superintendent
Hawaii Department of Education
P.O. Box 2360
Honolulu, HI 96804

Dear Dr. Kishimoto,

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has upended the school year for thousands of students across the state. However, even as we take the necessary steps to mitigate the spread of the virus, educating Hawaii's children remains a top priority during this public health crisis. We are committed to supporting Hawaii's children and the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) during this pandemic, and to working closely with HIDOE to make sure federal assistance supports the needs of those who have been affected. As Congress works on new legislation, we request your assistance by providing us with information about the HIDOE's ability to continue providing education to our students and recommendations for how we can support the Department's continued efforts to provide communities with educational and related services.

As part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the Congress appropriated over \$30 billion for the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF), with over \$13 billion specifically for elementary and secondary schools. The HIDOE is expected to receive over \$43 million from the ESF. These funds are available to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing each school with the necessary resources to implement effective distance learning, including through the purchase of education technology and training teachers to adapt to nontraditional classrooms.

As the Congress works on the next bill to assist elementary and secondary schools in responding to this public health crisis, additional data from HIDOE would help to direct resources or ensure flexibilities in federal law. For that purpose, please provide answers to the following questions:

- 1) Across the state, how many public elementary and secondary students are receiving some kind of consistent education every day? How many students are not receiving this level of education?
- 2) How are public schools collecting information about the needs of students and their families and the ability to engage in distance learning? How many students (and their families) lack consistent internet access? How are schools providing educational material to those students (including laptop computers, instructional packets, and other materials), and what federal resources and flexibilities do you think would be helpful to improve the distance learning experience for students?

- 3) How many public schools are providing some kind of education? For schools that may not be able to provide distance learning, if any, how is HIDOE directing resources and guidance to those schools?
- 4) What is your expectation for how often a student connects with an educator? Are there data systems where you are logging these interactions, and, if not, then what federal resources would be helpful to make sure students are connecting with educators? How are non-classroom teachers being used to promote learning?
- 5) How many public schools are going beyond enrichment to provide some kind of education? For schools that may not be able to provide distance learning, if any, how is HIDOE directing resources and guidance to those schools?
- 6) Are there any other school districts across the country that offer effective models and best practices?
- 7) What offices within HIDOE are developing and implementing COVID-19 related guidance? What can we do to support HIDOE and these offices moving forward?

On April 17, 2020, HIDOE announced that it will maintain continuity of learning—providing distance learning and educational packets for public and charter school students—through May 28, 2020, which is the end of the 2019-2020 academic year. Planning for summer learning programs and the 2020-2021 academic year is of paramount importance for families across the state. However, the COVID-19 pandemic does not have a clear endpoint and cases could reemerge even with preventative measures. For that reason, HIDOE should be prepared for a disrupted 2020-2021 academic year.

It is imperative that we serve the students of Hawaii well by continuing to provide the best education possible while we mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Please provide regular updates on HIDOE's efforts to develop and execute plans for educating students through the summer and 2020-2021 academic year if the pandemic continues or resurges and specifically how you are using the additional flexibilities in U.S. Department of Education federal title funds to support students farthest from opportunity. We are committed to working with you to ensure that this pandemic does not result in lower educational outcomes for Hawaii's youth.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



BRIAN SCHATZ
United States Senator



MAZIE K. HIRONO
United States Senator



TULSI GABBARD
Member of Congress



ED CASE
Member of Congress



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

April 27, 2020

The Honorable Senator Brian Schatz
United States Senate
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mazie Hirono
United States Senate
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ed Case
United States House of Representatives
2433 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tulsi Gabbard
United States House of Representatives
1433 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Aloha Members of Hawaii's Congressional Delegation,

Thank you for your letter dated April 18, 2020 regarding the Hawaii State Department of Education's (HIDOE) response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please find our responses to each question below. I appreciate the phone calls that I have been able to have with each of you concerning our education transition priorities, funding needs and planning processes focused on protecting and advancing a quality instructional design for our haumana during this pandemic period and beyond. Thank you for your continued support of Hawaii's public education system.

- 1. Across the state, how many public elementary and secondary students are receiving some kind of consistent education every day? How many students are not receiving this level of education?**

HIDOE services approximately 180,000 students in 256 public schools and 37 public charter schools. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the HIDOE's intent has always been to provide all students with regular access to educational material for the remainder of the school year to the extent possible. The HIDOE continues to strive to provide equal access for all of its students, but acknowledges certain limitations beyond our control that disproportionately affect our most vulnerable populations.

We are currently working to ascertain the exact number of students that are not receiving educational services, but can report that approximately 80%-95% of our student population are receiving consistent access to educational material depending on the school.

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While we are still determining the number of students by gathering data by Complex Area and school, we do know that many of these students are amongst our most vulnerable populations and we need to continue to diversify our approach to reach them. Currently, the HIDOE has Homeless Liaisons, English Learner teachers, and Special Education providers reaching out to students. School counselors also connected with students during this unprecedented time. The addition of an HIDOE telehealth hotline that will be in place later this week, will organize our Hawaii Keiki Nurses, a partnership with UH's School of Nursing, and our DOE school counselors, psychologists, and social workers in a triage approach that we hope will engage and capture more students from families who are overwhelmed with medical, psychological and social network needs, and thus may not be engaging in academics.

2. How are public schools collecting information about the needs of students and their families and the ability to engage in distance learning? How many students (and their families) lack consistent internet access? How are schools providing educational material to those students (including laptop computers, instructional packets, and other materials), and what federal resources and flexibilities do you think would be helpful to improve the distance learning experience for students?

As previously mentioned, limitations beyond the HIDOE's control prevent some students from accessing educational material or services. In light of these challenges, teachers have done a tremendous job in regularly connecting with their students to provide learning opportunities and to also check on their well-being and the welfare of their families. Teachers are able to assess their students' ability to engage in distance learning – whether it is digitally or via instructional packets. This comprehensive student information is compiled by teachers and reported to the principal at their respective school.

A perennial challenge in effectively implementing distance learning is providing enhanced learning activities for students in remote areas. The HIDOE is currently able to provide devices to our students, but is unable to guarantee connectivity for online access. The number of students not receiving regular access to educational material closely correlates with the number of students lacking internet access. Please note though, that at some schools where connectivity is a challenge in the community, the teachers have created a system for loading a computer device with curricular materials, with a refresh every couple of weeks.

While achieving online access for all students remains the HIDOE's optimal goal, we have had to pursue creative ways to address this ongoing inequity issue beyond our packet-distribution and electronic device provision efforts. One successful alternative has

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been the establishment of partnerships with PBS Hawaii, Olelo Community Television, and Kamehameha Schools to employ educational broadcasting to provide students without internet access with supplemental learning activities through television. HIDOE continues to listen to those on the front lines of servicing our students at the school-level in adjusting and innovating the methods of how we connect with all students.

Internet platforms continue to be the most efficient and effective methods of distance learning implementation. As such, we will continue to work with and rely on our federal governmental partners in the ongoing quest to improve internet infrastructure to ensure access for all students. Funding through the recently passed Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF) are examples of federal resources that the HIDOE will leverage to provide better internet access to students, particularly those who live in our remote areas. These sources will allow the HIDOE to purchase and distribute instruments such as mobile wifi hubs, while looking at innovative methods such as digital buses that can be physically posted in rural areas for our students. The HIDOE will also continue its use of existing federal funding sources such as Impact Aid and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) title programs to supplement CARES and ESF resources in achieving better internet infrastructure for our students.

Finally, personnel are utilizing the Electronic Comprehensive Student Support System (eCSSS) to document the delivery of vital services to our most vulnerable students. Programs, such as the Education for Homeless Children and Youth, School-Based Behavioral Health, and the English learner programs, provide a more efficient structure for coordinating meal pick-ups, facilitating mental health counseling and treatment, and ensuring the continuity of instruction for our English learners.

3. How many public schools are providing some kind of education? For schools that may not be able to provide distance learning, if any, how is HIDOE directing resources and guidance to those schools?

All 293 public schools are providing their students with educational activities, whether these activities are delivered electronically or via instructional packets. To support continued learning during the extended period of school closure, the HIDOE's Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design has created and launched two resources: An internal website for teachers, administrators, and staff and an external website for students, parents, and caregivers. The external website provides continuity of education resources with tips, best practices, and activities. Both websites are updated daily with adjustments based on feedback received from internal and external users.

4. What is your expectation for how often a student connects with an educator? Are there data systems where you are logging these interactions, and, if not, then what federal resources would be helpful to make sure students are connecting with educators? How are non-classroom teachers being used to promote learning?

The HIDOE is keenly aware of the diversity of our students and communities. Teachers consistently tailor their lessons and class assignments to the specific needs of their students. The unique character of each classroom is ably guided by teachers and the HIDOE confers wide deference to teachers with regards to implementing their lesson plans, which includes how often interactions occur and what methods teachers utilize to track any progress. The HIDOE does, however, maintain expectations of teachers to regularly engage with their students, which has varied from a few hours daily to longer periods fewer times a week. The goal is to ensure the maintenance of as comprehensive an approach to instruction for enrichment, remedial, or intervention activities.

The HIDOE does not currently have a centralized database where educators are logging their interactions with students; however, individual schools maintain this information on each student. The HIDOE continues to research various ways to centrally capture learning experiences of students in light of the strict privacy considerations that we must maintain pursuant to the Federal Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA). Additionally, the HIDOE hopes to utilize ESF funds and CARES Act flexibility to explore ways for educators to better connect with students, such as the previously mentioned investment in connectivity instruments and digital buses equipped with Wi-Fi, particularly for remote areas.

Non-classroom teachers continue to support classroom teachers with the development and delivery of their learning activities, while helping to connect with students to check on their educational needs and well-being. These individuals are an important component to the effective delivery of a comprehensive education in the era of distance learning and will become more essential to allow teachers to focus on the creation and implementation of their unique lesson plans.

5. How many public schools are going beyond enrichment to provide some kind of education? For schools that may not be able to provide distance learning, if any, how is HIDOE directing resources and guidance to those schools?

All 293 public school institutions are providing access to some form of educational enrichment. The provision of this enrichment through distance learning methods is a response to the unprecedented challenges posed on schools by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Beyond enrichment activities, the HIDOE high schools are also providing instruction to enable students to earn the credits they need for graduation and successful transition to post-secondary education and careers. While most educators are providing educational activities for their students, students who need more intensive support are being provided with remedial or intervention activities. For the schools that face obstacles in fully implementing distance learning, the HIDOE has worked directly with principals to deliver the necessary resources. Complex Area Superintendents are in constant communication with these schools to receive updates on needs assessments, which is then communicated to the appropriate state office within the HIDOE. To date, all 293 public schools have successfully implemented some form of distance learning.

News of the anticipated establishment of COVID-19 as a seasonal illness akin to the flu has compelled the HIDOE to look at formulating a permanent distance learning platform that is integrated parallel to traditional in-class instruction. This will allow for the continuous and uninterrupted delivery of educational instruction for all students, including those with special needs and with limited access.

6. Are there any other school districts across the country that offer effective models and best practices?

School districts across the nation are currently experiencing similar challenges in dealing with school closures and issues related to the end of the school year. The HIDOE regularly engages with other states and educational organizations to discuss challenges and effective approaches to address these challenges.

All HIDOE staff and faculty are equipped with video conferencing capabilities through platforms such as Cisco's Webex to allow for virtual meetings, including check-ins between teachers and students.

Kansas has provided an effective model in providing stakeholders with clear guidance on implementing various frameworks for the continuity of learning as well as practical implementation guides. The HIDOE continues to review the Kansas framework in addition to other practices and will continue to be part of the network of best practice sharing, borrowing from others while contributing our best practices. As such, the HIDOE will soon be distributing guidance with input from complex areas and school leaders. However, some refining is still required of our frameworks and implementation plans for establishing effective permanent distance learning platforms across our tri-level structure – schools, complex areas, and state offices.

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Additionally, Gilford, North Carolina has outfitted 75 school buses with wi-fi and strategically deploys the buses throughout their district to provide students with connectivity. The HIDOE is currently meeting with potential partners to engage in discussion for the establishment of similar measures in Hawaii. This will help to address one of the most significant challenges of providing students in remote areas with internet access.

Finally, it is worth highlighting that the HIDOE has been experimenting and exploring different models of distance learning and blended learning for our most rural and remote schools (Kau High and Pahala Elementary, Lanai High and Elementary, Hana High and Elementary) prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. These efforts have aided the expeditious implementation of distance learning to provide the continuity of learning during the abrupt closure of our school facilities. We look forward to building on this success as we progress to the full integration of distance learning into the HIDOE's comprehensive educational experience for all students.

7. What offices within HIDOE are developing and implementing COVID-19 related guidance? What can we do to support HIDOE and these offices moving forward?

- Office of the Superintendent/Office of the Deputy Superintendent
 - Monitoring, oversight, and guidance for the response to the COVID-19 pandemic to HIDOE leaders
- Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design:
 - Guidance on Long Term School Closure (Continuity of learning and student supports, grading, dual credit, graduation and commencement ceremonies, robust online summer learning programs)
- Office of Student Support Services
 - Guidance on Long Term School Closure for Students with Special Needs
 - Guidance on partnership with Hawaii Keiki to provide telehealth services
 - Coordination with Hawaii Department of Health on COVID-19 issues to inform guidance
- Office of Talent Management:
 - Guidance on Telework
 - Guidance on Evaluations
 - Agreements with HGEA HSTA, UPW
- Office of Facilities and Operations:
 - Guidance on Grab & Go Meal Program
 - Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfecting Facilities
 - Providing guidance to bus companies on cleaning and disinfecting buses

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- Office of Information Technology Services:
 - Guidance for employees on HODOE Technology
- Office of Fiscal Services
 - Planning and revisions to the HODOE Operating and Capital Improvement Projects budgets
 - Guidance on Refunds (i.e., school breakfast/lunch, student activity fees, A+ program)
- Office of Strategy, Innovation and Performance:
 - Applying for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSERF)
 - Guidance on US Department of Education waivers for fiscal and programmatic requirements of ESSA
 - Providing internal and external communications

The HODOE is currently planning to transition from the continuity of learning to a robust summer learning program and a new school year of 180 days of formalized instruction, whether this instruction is delivered in our classrooms or through distance learning. We will need to upgrade our infrastructure for the delivery of instruction and data collection, continue to train our staff in preparation for different modes of instruction, prepare our families and students for different modes of learning, and determine how to continue to deliver the educational services as well as meal and health services should we continue with distance learning. Clear guidance will be provided to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

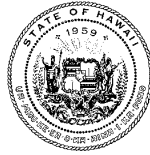
As HODOE engages in these new endeavors, we will remain in regular contact with Hawaii's Congressional Delegation to share our progress and any obstacles we may confront. Mahalo for your continuous support of Hawaii's public schools and please reach out with any additional questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto
Superintendent

CMK:wk



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

April 29, 2020

Ms. Cheri Nakamura
Hui for Excellence in Education
4348 Waiialae Avenue, Suite 322
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

Dear Ms. Nakamura:

Since Governor David Ige's initial emergency proclamation in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE) has placed the health and safety needs of our students and staff as its highest priority. During the past five weeks since the Governor's "stay-at-home, work-at-home" mandate, Hawaii's economy and way of life has come to a sudden and catastrophic halt. This crisis continues to leave an indelible and devastating effect on members of our HIDOE 'ohana, most especially our haumāna.

Both the Hawaii State Board of Education (Board) and HIDOE have acted with haste to secure the health and safety of our HIDOE 'ohana while implementing a response to the abrupt loss of in-class instructional days and securing sources of food for our students. Our initial food distribution sites came online within a week of the first stay-at-home proclamation and we have since increased our meal distribution to 74 sites across the state. While coordinating this critical meal delivery endeavor, our leadership team was simultaneously conducting daily virtual meetings with staff at the state, complex area, and school levels to immediately develop a plan to ensure the continuity of learning in light of the unanticipated and immediate loss of classroom instruction. These daily meetings resulted in a multi-faceted approach that includes the distribution of educational materials, created and compiled by our outstanding teachers, both online and via instructional packets; resources for students, families, and staff available through our Continuity of Education website and individual school websites; and educational programming broadcasted on television.

As you may be aware, many of our families are juggling a multitude of challenges both at home and at work. Our goal in implementing the distribution of both food and educational materials for students was to provide both ease of access while limiting the exposure of students, families, and staff to COVID-19 infection through strict adherence to the guidelines issued by the Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention. Every critical decision was centered around doing what was within our control to mitigate pressure on our HIDOE families for the duration of the pandemic.

As this crisis progresses and we react to rapidly changing conditions, shortcomings in our system are revealed. Instituting a more permanent platform to effectively execute distance learning throughout our public school system has become a clear necessity. The diversity of the communities and the student population we serve requires flexibility to adequately adapt to the unique needs of our schools. This allows us to hone in on our most vulnerable student populations who are in most need of support. Establishing an effective system that ensures equity of access and the continued academic progress of all students through distance learning without hindering any momentum towards achieving their educational goals is essential.

The HIDOE is currently working to obtain a comprehensive distance learning platform, which every school can implement in parallel with traditional in-class instruction. Leaders at the complex area level are working with principals to assess the capacity of their schools to institute distance learning by the start of the upcoming 2020-2021 school year. Plans to include variations of distance learning for summer school instruction are currently under development. We are also committed to providing credit recovery and credit attainment opportunities with continued attention to seniors who require extra support as they prepare to graduate and proceed with post-secondary educational and workforce opportunities.

Throughout this process, we have been in regular contact with our relevant stakeholders, including our students and their families, the members of Hawaii's congressional delegation, Governor Ige, members of the Hawaii State Legislature, the United States Department of Education, the Hawaii State Teachers Association, the Hawaii Government Employees Association, and other community and business organizations. This communication and collaboration have been critical in forging a path ahead during this unprecedented time. The dialogue we have engaged in with our partners has proven effective in assisting us with developing policy solutions and making budgetary decisions for the Board's consideration.

As Superintendent, I am exceedingly humbled and awestruck by the dedication, commitment, and innovation of our entire organization. While many similarly-situated organizations were struggling with the concept of teleworking, our capable and devoted staff and faculty were able to coordinate and execute alternate plans in the face of sudden challenges. This ingenuity and desire to connect with their respective communities is evident in the dedicated outreach which is uniquely individualized on school websites and based on the strong relationships that exist between the schools and their communities. Together with our tremendous aforementioned partners, we are successfully prioritizing and addressing the needs of our students during this extraordinarily difficult and chaotic time. The dedication of our frontline teachers who continue to innovate their content and methodology to reach all of their students and meet their educational and social emotional needs is nothing short of inspiring. Collectively, they are more than just educators; they are also mentors, counselors, and cheerleaders.

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I am pleased that you are in regular contact with members of the HIDOE's staff as you seek answers to similar questions that every school district across the country struggles to address. Please keep the HIDOE updated with any suggestions or constructive plans your organization may have to assist in addressing the unique challenges that our communities face today. Thank you for your continued interest in our public school system.

Sincerely,



Dr. Christina Kishimoto
Superintendent

CMK:wk

c: The Honorable Catherine Payne, Chairperson, Board of Education
Members of the Hawaii State Board of Education
Members of the Hawaii Congressional Delegation

Shawn Kimball
High School Teacher
Pearl City High School

6th May 2020

Testimony for May 7th, 2020 Board of Education General Business Meeting

Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent
Phyllis Unebasami, Deputy Superintendent
Brian Hallett, Interim Assistant Superintendent

Dear Board,

Please accept this testimony in response to the proposed pay cut to education. I have proudly served as a dedicated educator in Hawaii for thirteen years; volunteering, and feeling pressured to work beyond school hours to provide students additional opportunities and experiences. Early in my career, furlough Fridays were implemented in response to the financial crisis resulting in missed learning experiences for all public school students. Currently, it is not uncommon for teachers to run short of time and face the choice to teach with fidelity and provide intentional rich learning experiences instead of rushing through content for the sake of completion. I implore the board to reject the proposed pay cuts for the following reasons which will have a long lasting impact in the economic progress of our state and residents quality of life. Instead, please consider the many alternate solutions.

There are many concerns among educators and those we service. A disgruntled staff with low morale, reduced quality of education for pupils, loss of aspiring educators, not to mention the litany of financial burdens and fear of one's ability to be financially prepared for future emergencies and retirement.

The immediate effects of such salary reductions will be a mass exodus of teachers eligible for retirement to preserve their retirement benefits by retaining their highest three years salary. Hawaii has long struggled to retain teachers primarily for financial reasons. To reduce salaries now will be detrimental to the tremendous efforts and expense poured into the promotion of the profession, investment in post secondary education programs, and recruitment of teachers. As I'm sure you agree, education of the workforce or lack thereof will impact all sectors and statistics. Of greatest concern is crime, thus impacting our greatest resource - tourism. The ripple effect will likely impact our state for decades to come.

There are many solutions to our financial deficit that need to be recognized, and policies need to be amended. General fund monies are misused and wasted frequently; policies protecting teachers on paid leave for years due to allegations of misconduct must be dealt with quickly, and repeat offenders must be terminated. Ineffective teachers unable to improve must be terminated. Educational assistants and support staff need to be monitored and evaluated for effectiveness just as teachers are. Grants and consultants need to be vetted; school improvement initiatives should only be implemented if teachers workload allows and should be used statewide especially when paid consultants are involved. The timeline to go green needs to move forward at a faster pace. All positions in government need to be reviewed and held accountable for annual goals and quality output. The government needs to operate as a business; to make these improvements we need smart educated leaders. Where will they come from?

Thank you for hearing my concerns, please oppose any pay cuts for education in Hawaii. Penalizing hard working efficient teachers should not even be on the table.

Sincerely,

Shawn Kimball



On the issue of salary cuts (teacher testimonial)

Alyssa Bailey to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 01:01 PM

From: "Alyssa Bailey" <alyssa.bailey@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern:

My name is Alyssa Bailey and I'm a secondary science teacher at 'Aiea High School. I've lived in Hawaii for three years and only taught for one, but this year has easily been one of the most extraordinary ones in my life.

As a new teacher coming from the mainland, I knew I had my work cut out for me not only in terms of salary to cost-of-living ratio but also due to cultural differences between me and my students. The students I teach are so diverse and different from any I'm used to on the East Coast. They're all teenagers, sure, with the same teenager problems that I'll always be willing to listen to; but it is new to me to teach a responsible and happy student then learn that her father had died the week prior. It is new for me to teach students who are homeless or living alone. It is new for me to teach students who walk over a mile to and from school every day and still arrive early in the morning before I do. It is new to me to help a 14-year-old student think of what to make for dinner for her and her three younger siblings when the only food at home is canned corn and rice.

I'm writing this today because I love being a teacher. I love it so much more than I ever thought I could love a career. In high school and even college, I thought I would be someone who would have a job and just go through the motions of adulthood, but teaching has changed my life. My students, my colleagues, my administrators, my mentors, everyone I've interacted with since beginning to teach at 'Aiea has helped me grow professionally and personally. I am so grateful for everything I've gained and I want to continue improving. I don't want any other job. I know this is what I'm meant to do.

I implore you: please do not cut teachers' salaries. With my current salary, I am making ends meet, but without room for reduction. Unlike some millennials, I don't live with my parents; I have a car loan, rent payments, electric and internet bills, and school loans from my undergraduate degree and teaching certification. I love being independent and I'm tremendously grateful for having necessities, like an apartment and a car to commute to the school. A cut in my salary would mean that I would not be able to afford all of these.

As I said earlier, I love teaching. I hope I don't sound spoiled when I say this, but I don't want another job. I don't want to quit teaching because my salary won't cover my bills. I don't want to pick up a second job just to afford necessities. I don't want to come to school exhausted from working multiple jobs and without time to devote myself to my students.

I want to be a teacher. I want to stay at school late, grading papers and calling parents. I want to supervise clubs. I want to work with my colleagues on curriculum maps and pacing guides. I want to ask my students how they're doing, if they're feeling okay, what's bothering them. I want to comfort them when they're sad, and I want to make them smile when they learn. I want to have the energy to devote myself to teaching and helping my students. I want to be there for them.

This issue is unprecedented, like every media outlet says, and I know this request is selfish. Our state government needs to decrease the budget somewhere--that much is clear. But I know the people of Hawaii are caring, considerate, and friendly. They would give you the shirts off their backs if need be.

We can develop a solution to this necessary budget cut which would prevent displacing and losing teachers, who nurture the next generation. We, as adults of Hawaii, cannot allow our keiki to suffer because we could not come up with an appropriate solution.

Please, please, do not cut teachers' salaries. Please let me become the teacher I know I can be. Please let me continue helping and inspiring students to achieve and excel. **Please reconsider this proposal.**

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Testimony From A Teacher

Kathy Tanita Ohama to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 01:02 PM

From: "Kathy Tanita Ohama" <kathy.tanita_ohama@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Kathy Tanita Ohama

Social Studies Teacher

Pearl City HS

Teaching for 29 years in the State of Hawaii

To Whom It May Concern,

Hello. I hope all is well. I have never written to the BOE before even though I have lived through Governor Waihee's taking one of our paychecks, Governor Lingle's Furlough Fridays, Teachers' Strike and etc.

This time around I am writing to implore the BOE not to go through with the 19-20% pay cut. Isn't there a substitute fund that can be utilized at this time since we did not use any subs over the past 2 months? Or some rainy day fund that can be used?

I am a single mother and this would hurt me financially. Many of my teacher friends have a second job or sell things online. I'm sure that a 20% pay cut will hurt them also.

Thank you and take care. Be safe.

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testimony - pay cuts

Rhea Asuncion <rasuncion@haaspcs.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:04 PM

Aloha,

I would like to submit my testimony against any Hawaii state pay cuts being considered at this time.

It is a known fact that Hawaii already has a teacher shortage and even more so a highly qualified teacher shortage. This directly impacts the students of Hawaii. Currently in this pandemic, tourism is being highlighted as the primary economy being hardest hit. If Hawaii wants to slowly diversify the state economy, then we need well educated students to rise up and choose to remain here to work and contribute, we need to allow the local population the educational opportunities to become competent business entrepreneurs, engineers and innovative thinkers. By cutting teacher salary, from the already low rate that it is, this would drive out a large percentage of the current and seasoned teacher staff, in addition make it much harder to recruit quality educators. When Hawaii state offers competitive and livable wages, we are allowing for a sustainable economic state, one that is not so fragile and based on tourism alone.

When residents have money to spend, they spend it, by cutting pay, the effects will take the economy farther down, rather than helping it rebuild.

Mahalo for all the efforts going into finding alternative ways to balance our budget.

Aloha,
Rhea Asuncion
Hawaii Academy of Arts and Science
Teacher, grade 3
Pahoa, Hawaii



Balancing the Budget due to COVID

William Stinefelt to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 01:07 PM

From: "William Stinefelt" <william.stinefelt@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hello,

My name is Steve Stinefelt. I am a Physics teacher at Mililani High School. My job is to teach 11th and 12th graders valuable skills they will need as they move forward in their education. I have been in the teaching profession for 19 years. My primary message to you is this; **DON'T BALANCE THE STATE BUDGET ON THE BACKS OF HAWAII'S PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATORS!** I know that tough times are coming economically, and concessions must be made to keep the government functioning. Here are my reasons why I think cuts should NOT be made to teacher compensation:

1) **The state is already getting our services at bargain basement prices.** The teachers have always stepped up in the past and made concessions in tough economic times. This has led to many teachers' salaries (mine included) to be compressed compared to employees in other government sectors. I think it's time for other unions to take their turn and step up while you give us a break. **However, if you can fix my compressed salary, then I would be more than happy to step up and accept whatever pay cuts would be imposed on other state employees.**

2) **There is currently a shortage of qualified public school teachers in our state.** Do you think that part of the reason for that is due to low teacher pay? I do. While I cannot speak for other teachers, here is my take on this. If I knew I would be working so hard, for so little compensation, I would have certainly entered another profession. While I relish in the fact that I am in a position to better the lives of our state's young people, I need to remember that I should try to take care of myself first.

3) As a 59 year old that has invested wisely over the years, I am in a position to successfully retire. However, I do not want to. I want to continue to use my skills to educate our youth and help make Hawaii a better place. I have done the math. **If a 20 percent pay cut were to be instituted, I could make more money if I retired from the DOE early, and took a part-time job.** However, I don't wish to do this as it would not be as intellectually satisfying for me.

4) This last reason only pertains to me, and other teachers that started their teaching careers in the middle of the school year. I have always said that I would finish out the entire school year before retiring. I have always said this because both of my daughters had teachers retire mid-year and be replaced with long-term substitutes. When this happened, they did NOT receive quality education in those subject areas as qualified replacements could not be found due to low teacher salaries, etc. **If you decide to balance the state budget on my already overburdened back, I may decide to retire mid-year and leave my students to fend for themselves with an unqualified teacher.** While I would feel sorry for the students that are left to do so, I would sleep well knowing that I have done MORE than my share for the students over my entire career.

In summary, I am willing to do my part to step up and help the state economy recover from these unforeseen circumstances. However, I am only willing to do so IF the state is willing to step up and do its part and level the playing field for teachers (see reason #1 above). Do the right thing and do NOT continue to shortchange public education.

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

Pandemic on the run

Cynthia Luafalemana <cynthia_luafalemana@icloud.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:07 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Board Members,

As school comes close to an end, I want to give a round of applause to every teacher, administrators, school staff and parents who are working real hard to keep our children safe, healthy, and love. To the meals that are provided daily, I am thankful because with 10 grandchildren living with me until it is safe to return to Oahu, this would be a hardship for me.

As a grandmother of 10 and a 3rd grade teacher of 10 students, it has been a struggle. If there was one thing that I believe the BOE could do is provide broadbands to students and their families. I live on the island of Molokai with a limited internet service because I live off the grid. I am sharing my hotspot with my grandchildren and then trying to connect with my students and my colleagues. Each grandchild has their own work on the internet or paperwork, but time is of the essence!

Who is paying the bill for these internet services?

This is my only default that I have for our educational system. If we were to continue long distance learning, how will we be able to assist families such as myself to get internet services. My grandchildren haven't left our property since the pandemic hit Molokai, but to grab lunch. So, before you think things are going well, think again- on line learning means internet services and money!

Think about that? Thank you Cynthia Luafalemana

Sent from my iPhone



Please NO PAY CUTS for teachers
Tricia Sumstine to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 01:07 PM
From: "Tricia Sumstine" <tricia.sumstine@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha.

My name is Tricia Sumstine.

I am a secondary mathematics teacher at Pearl City High School.

First off, I want to say that I love teaching.

During this crisis, I have realized that being in the classroom is vital to the lives of our students, our community, and especially to me. I have been teaching for over 20 years and I enjoy everyday that I am with my students. But, as each year passes, I see how all schools are suffering from the teacher shortage, resulting in the hiring of long term substitutes. The long term subs are doing the best job they can, but students' education gets short changed when they are not being taught by a trained teacher. Then the domino effect happens when teachers have to reteach topics that students were supposed to learn the year before. My job is to push my students so that they can reach their educational goals so that when they leave high school, they have the tools to compete and succeed. Now, teachers do not have enough time in the day to do the basics. Students are suffering because they are behind in their education. Before the school closures, I would stay at school till 6-7pm every night to adjust and improve my lesson plans, call parents, etc. I did this for my students and not for pay. Teachers have always gone above and beyond for their students. But now, I see teachers barely surviving each day because they are overworked and stressed about their paychecks being reduced. College students do not want to become teachers when they see that our pay does not reflect on how hard we work, especially when we sacrifice time from our own families and spend money out of our own pockets.

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries.

Thank You.

Tricia Sumstine

Mathematics Teacher

Pearl City High School

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

No Teacher Pay Cuts

Laureen Tonaki Coumas <laureen.tonaki_coumas@k12.hi.us>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:15
PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear BOE Leadership,

In your upcoming deliberations regarding the budget, please consider what impact a pay cut for teachers will have on the children of Hawaii. We talk of student-centered decisions all the time. Our students deserve a qualified teacher in each of their classrooms to maximize learning. Cutting teacher pay will severely worsen the teacher-shortage crisis in Hawaii. Potential new teachers will be discouraged to enter this profession because it doesn't provide a living wage in Hawaii. Beginning teachers will be forced to look to the Mainland where teachers are paid more and the cost of living is less. Demoralized seasoned teachers will seek early retirement and take with them valuable experience and practiced excellence.

What is your message? Education is all important. Teachers are essential workers and valued members of our society and future...but they don't deserve to be paid for it?

What will be YOUR LEGACY?

Sincerely,
Laureen Tonaki-Coumas
Teacher

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Item #5 5/7/2020

Pualani McKeen <pualanimckeen@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:18 PM

‘O ke kahua ma mua, ma hope ke kūkulu. ‘O nā kahua, ‘o ke kai ‘oe, ‘o ka ‘āina ‘oe, ‘o nā akua ‘oe, ‘o nā kūpuna ‘oe a ‘o nā kumu ‘oe. ‘O ia mau kahua ‘o ia ho‘i nā kumu, ‘o ia mau kumu ‘o ia ho‘i ke kahua. ‘O Hope Pualani McKeen ko‘u inoa and I am here to submit testimony on Item #5 speaking to teacher pay. I’m a teacher at Ka ‘Umeke Kā‘eo Hawaiian Immersion School in Hilo.

There first must be a foundation, and then the building after. We as teachers are the foundation for our students, as our teachers were a foundation for us. this ‘ōlelo no‘eau highlights the importance of having a Kumu to guide, support and learn from. It shows the importance of setting strong foundations to build later. It shows that it is not a new idea that teachers are in fact important to building strong communities.

We are at an unprecedented time in public education. This year we worked tirelessly to remedy previous acts of balancing the budget on teachers and public employees, by advocating at the legislature to reinstate step movements. The DOE and BOE instituted pay differentials for hard to staff, SPED and Hawaiian Immersion positions. Let us not negate all that hard work and support we gained by instituting and again devaluing teachers and shortchanging students by cutting pay.

I am a Special Education Hawaiian Immersion teacher currently teaching online. My day starts at 7:55 am and ends well after 3 pm on any given day. I am tasked with making the very best attempt to service my students by collaborating with my colleagues, reaching out to families more than 5 times a day, meeting one on one with my students to address specific learning goals as well as document all my contact with children and parents every day. To put this in perspective, I barely even get a lunch break and many days forget to eat because I’m juggling all of these duties for my caseload, AND I’m considered having a small caseload of 14. It is beyond me how any SPED teacher could manage this with larger numbers. This hurts our students because they’re getting stressed out Kumu with not enough time to plan. Add a pay cut to that, I don’t know how many SPED teachers would be willing to stay in SPED for even less pay.

Furthermore, we already have a huge shortage of Hawaiian language immersion educators and teachers leading some classes CANNOT speak Hawaiian. That means their students aren’t being given a proper immersion education. But I worry this shortage will only worsen if we have to endure pay cuts or the shortage differentials end. Please find the funds to give our keiki the immersion education they deserve. Please support the foundation of Hawai‘i by supporting fully licensed and skilled Kumu in teaching our keiki by giving them the professional pay they deserve. Please do not cut teacher or other employees’ pay. It’ll again, put a crack in the foundation of our future.

Na'u nō
Hope Pualani McKeen



Please show your support for teachers & do not reduce our salaries

Eileen Carr <eileen.carr@manoaschool.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:24 PM

To Chair Payne and the Honorable Members of our Hawai'i Board of Education,

My name is Eileen Carr, and I am a 4th grade teacher at Manoa Elementary School. At the end of this school year, I will be relocating to Moloka'i where I will teach 4th grade at Kualapu'u School. This is my 4th year teaching with the HIDOE, and my 20th year teaching in total. I am passionate about our profession, and a firm supporter of public schools and public education.

I am writing to ask for your support as we move forward in a very chaotic and uncertain time. Please do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Public school teachers in Hawai'i are already nationally acknowledged for their shamefully low pay. We consistently vie for last place when it comes to teacher pay adjusted for cost of living (see WalletHub's explanation [here](#) and further explanation [here](#)). Honorable Board Members, we are all here because we know the value of a strong public education system, we know the importance of building and sustaining a strong and devoted teaching force, we know the benefits of quality public schools for our keiki, and we know that our schools are only as strong as their individual components.

We need you to stand by our teachers, and we need you to urge the governor to find a better way to balance the state's budget than reducing teacher pay. We know that other ways of balancing the budget exist, and we need you to advocate fiercely for our state to continue paying teachers their current salaries. Once this has been ascertained, we need you to support previous efforts to improve our pay.

I am absolutely not in this profession for the money, but I will not be able to survive in the expensive state of Hawai'i if my pay is further reduced. I accepted a \$20,000 pay cut when I relocated to the HIDOE from the NYCDOE, but I don't know how much lower a 20-year veteran teacher consistently ranked as "highly effective" can go. Before coronavirus struck, I was already working above and beyond the call of duty to serve my students and their families the best quality education time and energy could afford. Now, in the time of Covid-19, I have worked tireless hours to transform my curriculum and pedagogy into something that can be relayed virtually, through a screen and keyboard. Just last week, my 4th graders published their first virtual newspaper-- and every single one of my students published an article (link [here](#)). This week, we've immediately launched into our second edition, this time with a focus on statistics and statistical interpretation. I'm reaching out to every student and family, and making sure everyone has what they need to be a part of this.

In the time of Covid-19, I'm working so hard for my students. Harder than ever. I beseech you: please stand up for the incredibly hard working teachers in our state's public schools, and do not allow our pay to be reduced. There are other ways to balance our state's budget than to take more away from some of our state's hardest working public servants. Public school teachers have proven themselves to be incredibly valuable during this pandemic. Please show them that you value their efforts, you recognize their contributions to society, and you will advocate for improvements (not reductions) to their pay.

Thank you for your time.

Aloha,

Eileen Carr

P.S. I'd like to extend a sincere MAHALO to Chair Payne for spending time in my 4th grade classroom this past year, showing my students that the highest level of our state's education system is listening and deeply honors the work that is happening on the ground. Mahalo, Chair Payne, from all of Class 4-20!!!

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Visit Class 4.20's website at: <http://manoa20.weebly.com/>



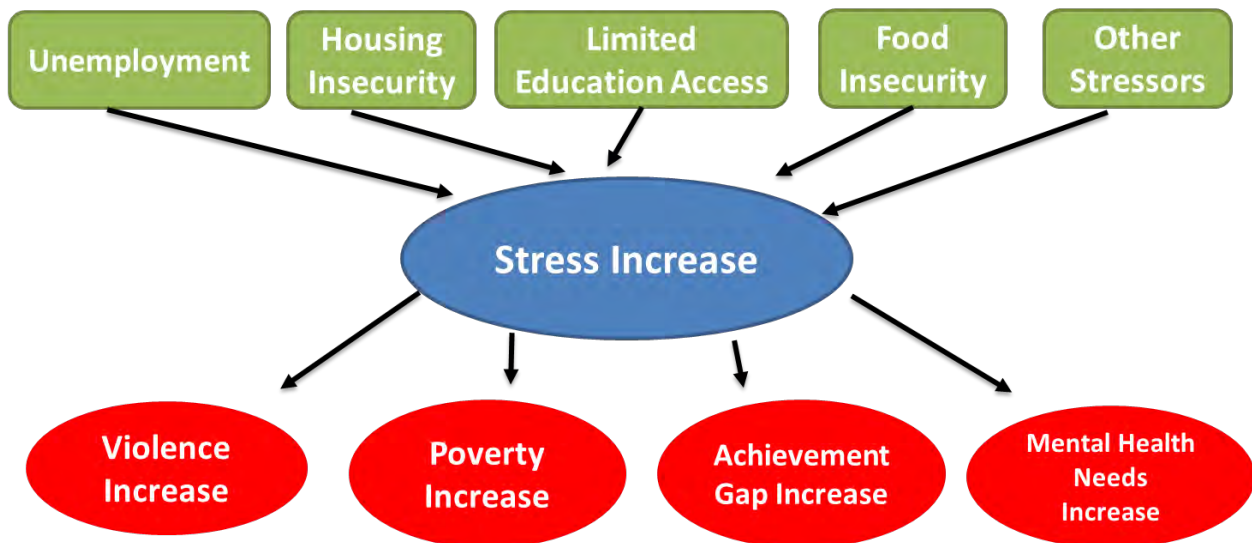
TO: Chair Payne and Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)

DATE: May 7, 2020; 1:30 p.m., General Business Meeting

RE: Agenda Item V, Discussion Item A (Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act") K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process), and **VI Community Open Forum**

We strongly encourage the BOE to urge the DOE to efficiently gather and analyze data about community needs, particularly regarding our most vulnerable keiki, so that effective solutions, including budget decisions, can be crafted and executed to best serve all of Hawaii’s children. While we understand that the DOE has adapted and that enormous efforts have been made to provide virtual enrichment opportunities during the pandemic, we also realize that there are many unintended consequences of a global pandemic and a statewide stay at home order that has put additional stress on children and families.



With the increased stress that many families are facing, we encourage the cross-sector collaboration to think about how our education system can continue to provide a system of support for our children and families and that keeps our keiki engaged. Some needs are being met and some simply are not due to current circumstance. We strongly believe that, like Maslow's Hierarchy depicts, each child (and every human) needs to have their basic needs met, feel safe and experience love and belonging first and foremost BEFORE learning, growth, or anything else can occur. With widespread unemployment and a growing demand for basic needs across our state there are increased stress levels and a growing concern around issues of child abuse, domestic violence, achievement gaps and poverty and its detrimental impacts, especially on children. Typically, our schools have been places where children can receive basic needs, safety, love and belonging, and esteem for many of Hawaii's children. Our schools have been the bridge to resources for children and families who need to be connected. With the statewide stay at home order, an unintentional void has been created for many of our children and families. We applaud the DOE for their efforts to continue to feed our keiki – a critical basic need -- and hope that continued efforts will be made to connect with students, especially the under-resourced and disenfranchised. Data around how many students we are reaching or not reaching would be extremely helpful to inform decisions moving forward. Our DOE, our teachers, are our biggest and broadest line of communication to the keiki and families across our state and can serve as a critical lifeline during these trying times.

Parents And Children Together has a 50+ year history of working together with vulnerable children and families in our communities to develop meaningful relationships and hope-filled future stories. We have established strong roots in the communities we serve by working with individuals, organizations and leaders who share our vision of creating safe and promising futures for our children and families. We know this work cannot be done alone and thank our partners, like the Department of Education and especially your dedicated Principals, teachers, and school staff, who continue to work with us in the best interest of Hawaii's keiki. PACT has continued to partner with various DOE schools on various projects including *Sunday's Project* and *21st Century Schools*, to educate and serve our communities.

Our organization was born in the heart of Kalihi, in one of the largest and densest public housing complexes in the nation. We work with families living through the daily stresses of deep poverty and walk alongside families as they navigate some of life's toughest challenges – the chaos of economic instability, family instability, violence, abuse and neglect, substance abuse and mental health issues. During this COVID-19 Stay At Home timeframe:

- We greatly recognize the inequity gaps between the “haves” and the “have nots” and cracks in our systems that do little to support our vulnerable families are only further exacerbated due to the current situation. We must seek equity, especially for our keiki.
- We have seen the rise in attendance at our grab and go meals line and our weekly food pantry distributions.

- We have expanded and adjusted services to assist the influx of clients needing to file for unemployment and those seeking financial assistance for rent and utilities.
- We have witnessed the decline in child welfare cases largely due to caregivers like teachers and doctors having limited contact with students. We continued to be worried about these unreported cases as we know there will be a tsunami of cases once school resumes.
- We have heard from educators how difficult it has been to reach and connect with students and families.
- We have seen firsthand how children and families are struggling to stay connected with their schools/teachers because of lack of technology, internet access, and/or lack of engagement (due to work or attendance not being counted).
 - For many families, the free internet options were not viable due to past delinquencies making accessing affordable internet virtually impossible.
 - To help close achievement gaps, our organization worked to secure additional funding to purchase devices to support our families in public housing and continues working with our neighboring schools to contact and deliver packets to students who are at risk of failing. We are committed to partnering with our schools to collectively reach and serve our keiki.

Again, we humbly ask that the BOE continue to urge the DOE to gather and analyze data to inform a cross sector plan that will best serve our keiki, keeping in mind that there are increasingly more vulnerable keiki and families because of the pandemic and that a systems approach is sorely needed. We thank the DOE for their efforts thus far and continue to lend our support for community partnership as we navigate how to best serve Hawaii's keiki.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 18 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, and poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you to the BOE/DOE for allowing us to be partners in this work together. If there is any additional support that we can provide, please don't hesitate to reach out. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.



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

Testimony in response to potential pay cut for teachers

Celeste Barcia <cbarcia@haaspcs.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:25 PM

Aloha,

I am writing to oppose pay cuts being proposed for our hardworking teachers. While I realize we face an unprecedented economic crisis, reducing the pay for teachers should not be part of a plan for economic recovery. This would further devastate our economy. Teachers in Hawai'i are already making some of the lowest pay in the country, in one of the most expensive places to live. A cut of any kind would be detrimental to our system, potentially creating even more of a teacher shortage. A teacher shortage would leave students with unqualified teachers and crowded classrooms. Thus, reducing the quality of education the students of Hawai'i would receive.

I implore the state to maintain their word to our teachers, and the families of Hawai'i by taking a pay cut of any kind off the table.

Mahalo for hearing the voices of our dedicated teachers,

Celeste Barcia
Hawai'i Academy of Arts and Science Public Charter School
Grade K-6 teacher

--

Celeste Barcia
808-965-2189
Seaview Community School
Hawai'i Academy of Arts and Science



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

Please do not reduce teacher salaries!

Lea Kitamura <leakitamura@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:27 PM

Hello,

My name is Leatrice Kitamura, and I am a first grade teacher at Waimea Elementary School. I have seen the effects of a teacher shortage at our school. Both, on our teachers who are trying to support the emergency hires that were put into our classrooms to teach our students, and on the effects of untrained teachers on student learning. Imposing a pay cut would only make these situations worse, since licensed teachers who are able to retire, are thinking of retirement. And, for teachers who are thinking of leaving the profession entirely, a pay cut would just give them more reason to leave. Overall, this pay reduction would then compound the effects of unqualified teachers in our schools.

Please reconsider reducing teacher salaries, and look for alternative solutions.

Thank you,

Leatrice Kitamura



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

Please Do Not Cut Teacher Pay

Jeremy Bowlin <jeremy.bowlin@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:28 PM

Cutting teacher pay will severely worsen the current teacher shortage crisis to a level that Hawaii cannot handle. Experienced teachers will be forced to retire to avoid decreasing their retirement. Younger teachers in some areas will be forced to find work outside our state or even leave teaching all together. The number of teachers that a pay cut would force out cannot be replaced with the limited number of long-term subs available. DoE will end up scraping the bottom of the barrel, and come up empty-handed. This will leave classrooms with no one to support learning. Those of us who are committed to the communities we love would be left with massive caseloads and class sizes.

I will do what I have to in support of my students and my community, but please do not cut our pay. It will place us and in a dire situation.

Respectfully,
Jeremy H. Bowlin

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

Hawaii State Board of Education

Aloha Members of the Board,

My name is Jan Dumarán and I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate School in Ewa Beach, Oahu.

I am submitting testimony to urge you not to reduce teacher's pay. As a long time teacher of mathematics, I know how kids (and their parents) feel about math when they enter middle school. In elementary school, students are okay with basic math skills, only to be overwhelmed in middle school when math starts getting more conceptual and more reasoning is required. This is when anxiety towards math starts to set in making it a struggle for students to focus their energy on math concepts.

I share this with you because I enjoy teaching math to my middle schoolers and have been enjoying it for nearly 19 years. My colleagues and I collaborate extensively to develop and apply strategies to help our students overcome their anxieties about math. Without the support and collaborative efforts of teacher colleagues, tons of effective "tried and true" lessons may never make it to the classroom. As a result, our students will struggle with math in middle school.

That being said, teachers need to stay the course to help our students. Cutting a teacher's salary will have a negative impact on teachers, students, families, and our communities. When the profession is unable to support a teacher's living wage, more teachers will leave with no one to take their place. College kids will not want to become teachers, they will look elsewhere to choose a career for higher pay.

Please do not reduce teacher's pay.

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Jan Dumarán, 7GMath
Ilima Intermediate School

To: Superintendent Dr. Christina Kishimoto and the Hawai'i State Board of Education
From: Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i Board, by Deborah Bond-Upson, Board Member
Date: May 6, 2020
Re: Testimony on Teacher Pay

Parents for Public Schools of Hawai'i has been offering support and learning from families for over ten years. The most value we have heard from our many surveys and meeting queries is the importance of qualified teachers. Teachers are appreciated above all when families consider education. When we ask, what do you love about your school? The answer is "our teachers!" almost every time.

Even families struggling in our high cost of living state economy see the importance of raising salaries to reasonable living wages for education attained and effort demanded. Teachers should have more respect is a consistent refrain.

For the past four or five years, as a group, we have worked to see teacher salaries increased via a special GET tax, the Con Am (constitutional amendment for a property tax override) and more. These efforts have failed until this year. Finally, in work between the DOE and HSTA some agreements were made to address some of the compensation problems, namely— the teacher salary compression and increases for hard to staff special education and Hawaiian language program teachers.

With the enormous pressure on teachers now to learn new ways to teach, to address the difficulty of supporting students and families under increased stress, we cannot afford to fall further behind in attracting and supporting qualified teachers.

The status of teachers-- their respect within our society, their compensation, and full teacher staffing to support our keiki are critical objectives, made yet more important at this time.

We feel that it is critical that the possible 19.62% cut in effective teacher salaries be rejected. Please find other ways of accommodating the shortfalls while protecting and continuing to improve teacher salaries.



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

TESTIMONY

Cynthia Nagamine <cynthia.nagamine@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:34 PM

My name is Cynthia Nagamine & I am a third grade teacher at Manana Elementary School in Pearl City. I started teaching at Kohala Elementary in September of 1993 & have also taught at Nanaikapono Elementary School prior to working as a resource teacher at the Leeward District Office and now as a teacher at Manana.

I am very grateful for the position that I currently hold yet feel that through all these years of teaching, working in Hawaii's Department of Education has NEVER been an easy task. Beyond things such as a lack of professional development and limited funding and support at the state level, constantly fighting for our rights & pay as educators is not what I expected teaching to be.

Thankfully, my students and fellow teachers make it worth it.

At least until now.

While I am approximately 6-7 years from retirement, and while I would not want to do so, if teachers receive a pay cut, I may seriously need to leave the DOE. Other opportunities that will provide for my family & I with the financial support that is needed, especially during these challenging times, need to be looked at & pursued.

The idea that a pay cut is being considered for educators appalls and discourages me beyond what I would be able to describe in words. This sentiment is not mine alone. This sense of discouragement is most definitely not of benefit for our students. They deserve teachers who are supported and motivated.

My hope is that our state and Board of Education would rally around those who work with the children within our state, not continue to degrade and fight them. This would be your way, as a Board of Education, to ultimately care for your students and their families who trust you with their well being and learning.

Cynthia Nagamine

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

Please Support Teacher Pay

Clint Labrador <sakai7825@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:36 PM

Aloha Board of Education,

I am currently a special education teacher on Molokai with 18 years experience. At my school there are currently 3 vacant positions that are filled with long term subs. At our high school, prior to the latest negotiations, many teachers were going to retire. However, because of the recent pay differential compensation that was agreed upon, they ended up staying. Teacher shortages are truly affecting our island of Molokai. Cutting our pay will not help the situation. Please consider other options other than a 20% pay cut which would seriously affect teacher retention and recruitment. Our keiki deserve a quality education.

Mahalo,

Clinton Labrador

Special Education Teacher

Kaunakakai Elementary School



Testimony

Lisa-Anne Tsuruda <lisatsuruda@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:37 PM

I would like to express my extreme displeasure and sadness at the governor's proposal to cut State Workers' Pay 20%, especially for Public Education Teachers, across our state. This shows a lack of respect for the profession and the thousands of people who each day choose to give of themselves to our youth. Now, more than ever, the public recognizes the many hats and proverbial "balls in the air" our educators juggle. People need to understand that while parents and guardians have had to step in to teach their own children during this pandemic, but teachers have always had to teach many students at the same time, and now, like other parents, guide their own children as well. We should be looking for ways to increase teacher pay, not lessen it.

Our state is in a teacher-shortage crisis and this will only exacerbate the problem. A number of my friends have stated that if there is a cut, they will be forced to look for another career as it is already difficult to make a life here due to our high cost of living.

Having proudly spent 23 years of my own teaching career in the Hawaii DOE at both Waianae High and Mililani High, I gave of myself every single day to my students and can attest that even now as they are adults and parents themselves, I am still a part of their lives. We are not only teachers; at times we are their counselors, cheerleaders, guides, family members, and in extreme cases, the only thing standing between them and certain death and a life of poverty. I can't tell you how much pride you can feel when your students succeed and create a compassionate and successful life for themselves; to know that you had a small part in helping them along the way.

I left the DOE four years ago and am now teaching in the private sector and that was due to economics. Both of my children attend private school and it is the only way in order to see them through both high school and college graduation. I love my current school as being there allows me to give my children the gift of being at schools that best suit them. My school

also recognizes my worth and has continued to support me so that I can do the work that I am meant to do without the worry of a pay cut. I also continue to give my best to the DOE through my work with the Ka'i Program working with secondary DOE students in the Palolo/Kaimuki Complex. This is something that I gladly choose to do with my limited time.

I am worried for my DOE brothers and sisters who are beginning to show cracks in their seemingly impenetrable shining armor. They LOVE being DOE teachers, working with kids, and making a true difference! But, a pay cut will literally break them. How can they do their best work if they are worried about having to take yet another job in order to pay their bills? Where will the money come from in our current harsh economic climate?

Having been the Hawai'i Milken Award recipient in 2009, I have used most of my award money towards my Legacy Scholarship for Future Educators at both Waianae High and Mililani High. I have committed to supporting 40 high school seniors over the course of 20 years and I am just over my halfway mark this year. What am I to tell my two recipients from the Class of 2020? How can I say that one doesn't go into teaching for the pay? It is true to a certain extent, but, with a 20% or any pay cut for that matter, making a living wage should count for something. A portion of that 20% would have surely found its way back to the classroom in order to support student learning and achievement. It's what teachers do.

Lisa-Anne L. Tsuruda
'IOLANI School
Upper School English
Formerly of Mililani High School and Waianae High School

Sent from my iPhone



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

No Teacher Pay Cut

vianney tapanan <4vianneyjr@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:37 PM

My name is Vianney Tapanan Jr and I am a alumni from James Campbell High school class of 2016. I believe teachers should not have a pay cut. Teachers are essential to keiki and should not be neglected. They help build the future and foundation of our community. We are in tough times but that shouldnt be a reason to put teachers in the back burner. They are more important to the community than we know!



Cutting teacher pay is short-sighted and unacceptable
Elizabeth Laliberte to: testimony.boe 05/06/2020 01:39 PM
From: "Elizabeth Laliberte" <elaliberte@viking.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

My name is Liz Laliberte and I've been a special education teacher in Hawaii since 2006. I teach high school students who have struggled through their school years. However, they are hanging in there and working hard to finish their high school degrees, so they can go on to college or enter the workforce and be a contributing member of our community. The majority of my students lack things like two parents, a working car, stable housing, good health and other basics most take for granted. Not all, but some of our students look forward to school because they not only learn, but enjoy hot meals, a place to charge their phone and a social support system. As high-schoolers, they mostly consider friends as their 'family' but a good many would also say their teachers are part of their extended family. At my school there are teachers who are more of a parent than their actual legal parents. They are stable, trusted adults who form the bond of resiliency with these so-called at-risk kids. Remember that famous study? The longitudinal study that partly took place on Kauai which showed that ONE trusted and significant adult can change the trajectory of a child's life for the better? Our schools are full of those trusted adults. What students don't receive from their home life, they often find at school.

Teachers and schools are a critical resiliency factor in our communities. Resiliency factors keep kids off drugs, out of the courts and jails, and on track to be economically self-sufficient. As a result, our communities spend less money on police, drug treatment and prisons. On the one hand it costs an average of \$40,000 per year to incarcerate a person in Hawaii. Schools, on the other hand, currently spend \$14,000 per student per year on average. Seems like a bargain to put funds into schools now, to save lives and money later.

Cutting teacher pay affects TITLE I schools more intensely than those in wealthier communities. Almost all Hawaii schools are TITLE I schools. TITLE I schools usually have the highest teacher turnover rate, which leads to the most unqualified teachers and long-term subs. Serving the neediest students means TITLE I schools should be the most stable, well-funded, well-equipped schools but unfortunately the opposite is true, and this crisis could make it much worse. At-risk students need *more* stability in their learning environments, not less. How is stability achieved? By ensuring people, programs and procedures stay constant, especially during times of stress and uncertainty. Study after study shows stable, trusting relationships between teachers and students are a key resiliency factor in student success.

Imagine three months from now, when (hopefully) students can finally return to school, how important it will be for our schools to offer this stability and continuity. If it's true that Hawaii is already experiencing the highest percentage of unemployment claims per capita, we know many of our students' families will be affected. In extreme cases there could be evictions, utility shut-offs, extended family moving in together, cars getting repossessed among other disruptions. When arriving on campus, instead of breathing a sigh of relief, students may instead find unfamiliar faces and even fewer resources than before. Schools, instead of being a safe haven staffed by caring adults, could end up being yet an additional source of stress. Cutting teacher pay will undoubtedly force some teachers to retire early or move to the mainland. If teacher pay is cut in addition to first responder pay, my husband and I will take a 30% pay cut. We're not sure we can afford to live here if that's the case. Cutting pay for essential service such as police, teachers, firefighters, correctional officers is literally punishing people who are the backbone of our communities, who protect, serve, teach and help. With fewer of us, more students will find themselves with teachers they don't know, who may not be qualified and trained, and who may not come back the following year. Cutting teacher salaries is a short-sighted 'solution' that will only create more serious and long-lasting problems down the road.

Sincerely,
Liz Laliberte

--

Elizabeth Laliberte

Hilo High School

Teacher, Sped Department

Advisor, Speech and Debate

(808) 313-5663



Agenda Item #5

Alison Gronley <alisongronley@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:43 PM

Aloha,

My name is Alison Gronley and I am a science teacher at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School on Oahu. I also live in the Ewa Beach area with my husband, who is a first responder, and my 2 children. I have been a teacher for 6 years.

I am writing in response to DOE Agenda Item #5 - Potential impact of Covid 19 on State funds for schools.

The proposed budget changes (which are pay cuts even if the government is pretending they aren't) will have a significantly negative impact on our lives. Even with both of us working full time my husband still has to pick up overtime shifts just to cover our monthly bills. While we do pay a mortgage we don't have any other debts that we pay. I cannot even imagine how this will crush people that have car payments and student loan debt.

If these proposed cuts go through my family will lose 30% of our income. **30%!** That is absolutely terrifying. How will we pay for our house? How will we buy groceries for our kids?

There has to be alternative options to reducing teacher salaries. What about getting rid of 12 month workers at the DOE and changing them to 10 months? What about not paying to bring in out of state consultants and instead using local individuals or online meetings? There are also a lot of positions at the district and state level that are redundant and don't directly benefit teachers or students; maybe those positions could be changed. What about looking into reducing the premium paid for Blue Cross/ Blue Shield Insurance policies?

Please, please, take a moment to slow down and realize that we already have a huge problem keeping certified teachers in Hawaii. Don't make this problem worse by forcing teachers you already have to quit teaching because of a lowering their pay. There are alternatives.

Please support the future of our islands, and stop taking financial issues out on teachers.

Mahalo,
Alison

Alison Gronley
808-561-5302
alisongronley@gmail.com
Ewa Beach, HI 96706



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

Don't cut Teachers Pay!

Charlotte Husen <husenhawaii@outlook.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:43 PM

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

My name is Charlotte Husen at Hilo High School. I teach English Special Education. I have a Master's degree in Special Education, earned because I have always wanted to work with children and young adults with disabilities.

I am the sole provider for my family. My salary pays the mortgage, utilities and all the incidentals of living. It will have a huge financial impact for my family if my pay is cut.

By cutting teacher pay here in Hawaii, it will make teaching a less desirable profession for potential teachers and many teachers near retirement, will do so. This will create an even larger shortage of qualified teachers in the classrooms of Hawaii.

Our children deserve to have the very best teachers educating them.

Please DO NOT cut Teachers pay!

Sincerely,

Charlotte Husen

Board of Education General Business Meeting – May 7, 2020 at 1:30pm:

- V.A. Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education*
 - VI. Community Open Forum*
-

May 6, 2020

Aloha e ka Papa Ho'ona'auao (BOE),

“O ke kahua ma mua, ma hope ke kūkulu” is an ‘ōlelo no‘eau that loosely translates to, “First secure the foundation and then build.” COVID-19 has presented educators and families alike with a kahua (foundation) that is uncertain and yet, during such a time, we are being tasked to kūkulu (build).

As a School Community Council, we take our roles seriously and work with our Principal to find the best solutions. However, after meeting with our Principal last night, we understand that the best solution is to advocate on behalf of those we represent. The SCC was recently informed by our Principal on May 4, 2020 that the SCC’s assurances for the school's academic plan for SY2020-2021 is due to the Complex Area Supervisor on June 1, and that all complex area plans are due to HIDOE on June 5. The newly revealed timelines for academic plans presented by our Principal, on behalf of the HIDOE Castle-Kahuku Windward District, are unreasonable and counterproductive to our school-strengthening goals.

Therefore, the Pū'ōhala School Community Council (SCC) is writing with considerable concerns about the impending deadline to hastily approve our school's 2020-21 academic plan, and respectfully requests that the deadline for this important, final plan be postponed until later in the summer when the COVID-19 shutdowns have been lifted. Late July or early August 2020 is a more reasonable deadline given these unprecedented times. Given how COVID-19 has impacted communities, Pū'ōhala likely isn't the only school experiencing this strain.

Our families, our teachers, our school community as a whole, deserve the opportunity to weigh-in on such matters at a time when outside stressors are minimized, when equitable access to discussion can be available and some sense of normalcy returns. To finalize a plan by the early June deadline would not allow for the type of community feedback and careful review that a document of this nature requires and deserves. Furthermore, as the academic plan will set the priorities for the upcoming school year, our SCC posits that it is premature to be finalizing plans without a thorough understanding of what the "new normal" will be during the 2020-2021 school year.

We again respectfully ask that the BOE review the HIDOE newly imposed timelines for school academic plans and postpone deadlines to a time where COVID-19 shutdowns have been eased or lifted and when we have a more thorough understanding of what the “new normal” will be during the 2020-21 school year.

Me ka mahalo,
Pū'ōhala School Community Council

Alex Concepcion - Chair
Waiānuhea Walk - Vice-Chair
Daylin Heather - Secretary
Bob Suchy
Pāhōnu Coleman



School budgetary concerns

Tom Norton <rtnorton57@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:58 PM

Aloha BOE members -

I am writing about the discussion of potential pay cuts being considered in the economic response to the Coronavirus Pandemic. My concern is that enacting across the board pay cuts regardless of how it is implemented will have more deleterious effects in the long run to our state than the alternative.

I find it plausible based on projections from some economists, that the decrease in revenue caused by reduced funds from teachers and other government employees will increase the negative impact on the state economy. I doubt few people are setting aside current income as savings so any less money they have doesn't reach another business in the state.

The other effect I believe it will have based on the anecdotal evidence I have seen and heard in discussions with other teachers is that this will force many teachers to find other opportunities for income, although realistically they might not be available. Even worse, this would likely create a drastic economic burden on many teachers who couldn't find other sources of income and couldn't reduce their current economic obligations forcing them to move, sell, or possibly lose their housing situation all together.

Finally, I believe this would create long lasting resentment towards government in general as those people who have been in the forefront of much of the response to the pandemic, going above and beyond to help ameliorate the effects of the pandemic, would now be asked to add economic loss to their list of contributions.

One suggestion as a first step if you feel you need to reduce payroll costs as part of your response to the situation would be to make the various possibilities of leave without pay voluntary to those who could afford it and would be willing to do it.

Respectfully,
R. Thomas Norton
Lahaina Intermediate School



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

Don't cut my teachers pa

Toby Aspirin <toby.aspirin@whea.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:02 PM

Please don't cut my teachers pay they do a great job even with the little pay they still have. I think that they do it for passion for our classmates. But if you cut their pay then they won't be able to afford to live here anymore and they will have to move away and then the school will have to hire underqualified people altering our learning for the future and the next generation.

From,
Toby Aspirin, Whea 6th grade



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

PLEASE do not cut funds to our schools!!!!

Cory Crockett <corycrockett@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:02 PM

Aloha,

As a mother of 2 boys who have attended WHEA (a public charter school here on the Big Island), I am writing to ask you to PLEASE consider another way to save funds from the budget rather than cut the salaries of our certified, amazing teachers!! We are so fortunate to have teachers who care and are vested for the long term, especially here in Hawaii where the population tends to be very transient. I have taught in schools and can see a HUGE difference between certified teachers and long term substitutes and know that would be an extreme loss to the future of Hawaii- our Keiki!! If the teachers get a salary cut, they will not be able to stay in Hawaii, with our high cost of living. Please do not let our keiki suffer because of this.

Mahalo for reading,

Cory Crockett

(Mother of 2 boys in Big Island Public School System)



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

Do Not Reduce Teacher Salaries!

kwhuggins@yahoo.com <kwhuggins@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:00 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Kevin Huggins and I am a teacher at S.W. King Intermediate school in Kaneohe. I urge you to not reduce teacher salaries due to budget shortfalls. We need to keep our teachers, not push them into leaving the profession. Already too many of our students are being taught by long-term subs and other unlicensed people. Since David Iges 20% cut announcement I've heard of three senior teachers deciding to retire. If we lose any more teachers we are not only letting down our community but our future generations.

Sincerely,

Kevin Huggins



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

teacher paycuts

Trever Veilleux <tveilleux@haaspcs.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:04 PM

Dear Board Members,

Cutting teacher salaries will have a negative effect on Hawaii's schools and keiki and will not help Hawaii's economy. Please do not cut teacher salaries.

Thank you,

Trever Veilleux

Math and Music teacher, grades 9-12

Hawaii Academy of Arts and Science, Pahoia Hawaii

<https://uhero.hawaii.edu/tap-fed-lending-facilities-to-support-local-economy/>

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/04/cutting-teacher-pay-is-an-easy-but-unacceptable-solution/>



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

Teacher Testimony - salary reduction

Tyrus Lum <tyrus.lum@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:06 PM

Teachers can not afford a pay cut! Already as it is, this teacher shortage is taking its toll on student education. Teachers are not staying in this profession! With a pay cut this big, there will be an exodus of tenured teachers who will start retirement early, and many new teachers will no longer find this career appealing.

It's absolutely unacceptable for teacher salaries to be cut! Do not do it!

Aloha,
Tyrus Lum

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

Solution - State Furloughs

Lynette Zakabi <lynzakabi@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:10 PM

Since employees are working from home, or going to worksites on a social-distancing schedule, a Furlough seems like a better solution than an across-the-board paycut.

I have worked long hours and paid for additional classes to earn the hourly rate that has determined my yearly income. However, if Furloughed every monday, I would maintain my hourly rate, and in exchange I would have an additional day to work at a second job to make up the difference. A pay cut leaves me with no options to earn supplemental income during a work week.

Lynette Zakabi
lao School
7th Grade Math



Testimony in Opposition of Teacher Salary Cuts

Sui Lan Gomez <suilangomez@gmail.com>
Reply-To: SuiLanGomez@gmail.com
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:11 PM

Aloha Board of Education,

First of all, thank you very much for all that you do to help our schools to run as smoothly as possible in order to facilitate the most efficient teaching for all of our students. I appreciate your work, especially in these recent months, which has made your job incredibly more challenging.

I am writing to show my support for Governor Ige to find alternate ways to resolve our state's budget shortfall in light of COVID-19. I would greatly discourage him from cutting teachers' salaries to make up for that shortfall. If he were to cut teachers' salaries there would be a domino of negative effects:

- Veteran teachers would retire, leaving huge shoes to fill, which would realistically be filled by unqualified substitute teachers. I've experienced a few years in my school when substitute teachers have taught classes for the entire year and sometimes saw multiple sub teacher changes per class during one school year. The students in those classes suffered from having unqualified subs as well as instability in their school year.

There are several veteran teachers in my school whom we may lose, should the cuts be imposed. This would leave huge gaps for our students. And the reality of filling those gaps with qualified teachers is slim. Already, with about 1,000 positions not filled by qualified teachers, Hawaii must recruit from the mainland...and those recruits are already dealing with Hawaii's much higher cost of living. How much more difficult will it be to recruit mainland teachers with Hawaii's high cost of living in the face of a 20% salary cut?

- I, along with many other teachers, will begin to shift my focus from teaching...to then focus on what I'd need to do to make up for my income shortage to be able to adequately cover my monthly expenses. I would explore the option of seeking weekend jobs. I would also want to recover 20% of my work week (1 school day) for the 20% cut imposed on me. I would use that day to work at another job to help make up my loss of income. With my needing to split my attention and energies between teaching and monthly survival, my focus on my students will be watered down and fractured.

- Another effect upon teachers, should the cuts be imposed, would be a drop in teacher morale. Many teachers in Hawai'i felt a great victory this year when we received our long overdue pay differentials for hard-to-staff locations. Some of us felt like we could actually begin to breathe financially, not being so tight in our budget. Should the cuts be imposed, we will feel like insult has been added to injury...taking away a shortlived, long overdue salary increase and imposing a salary cut...for the professionals who have stepped up to the plate during this pandemic. It would make us feel that we are not recognized and appreciated for the many ways we have adapted and changed our teaching practices, by learning and doing things we have never done before... to reach out to our homebound students.

I urge you, in your conversations with Governor Ige, to make every effort to find alternate options to solving our budget shortfall than by cutting teachers' salaries. The net effect and most impactful of all...will be the loss of quality education for our students in Hawai'i. How tragic! Isn't that what we are all here for...to provide a quality education for our students to the best of our abilities?

Let us be creative, innovative and collaborative in finding solutions...in which our children will not ultimately have to suffer. Otherwise we would be working against what we stand for.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration,

Sui Lan Gomez
Kindergarten Teacher
Waimea Elementary School



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

paycuts

Nicholas Staples <nicholas.staples@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:15 PM

to whom it may concern

I am a first year teacher from New Zealand

I am older and could therefore cope with pay cuts better than most

However please don't cut teachers pay. I see how hard teachers here work , even harder I think than in NZ

it costs me so much to live in Hawaii and my family have all grown , however due to COVID I am supporting them financially as well.

I imagine cutting teachers pay will cause more hardship and those that can get other jobs will likely leave. Then more of the best teachers will be lost

Children are then the ones who suffer the most

Thanks for reading

A Kiwi now Hawaiian teacher

PS I love it here and the students are wonderful

they deserve the best that we can give. I am not the best but I try hard and will continue to try my best to make junior mathematicians and all round resilient and responsible young men and women

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Teaching the Next Generation

Marcus Nakama <marcus.nakama@campbell.k12.hi.us>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:18
PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Marcus Nakama and I am a Social Studies Teacher at James Campbell High School. I have been teaching for the past 8 years and have seen 20% of our staff leave each and every year. It is concerning to know that many of my former students have gone through multiple classes with long term subs with little to no understanding of how to connect the content with each and every student. The financial disparity of teaching in Hawaii is hard enough, but by cutting wages we exacerbate an already difficult situation.

While I do understand the realities of the COVID-19 impact to the economic stability of Hawaii. I do see this as another argument in the re-evaluation of creating a separate funding source for our public education. If teacher's pay or general educational development and spending is tied directly to the GET and general fund, it will constantly fluctuate and unfortunately leads to situations that we are currently discussing. The continual parade that HSTA and the Dept. of Ed have to go through to justify the importance of public education has led to the disparity between public and private schooling and many other countless issues with the current system.

I believe that during this time we should re-evaluate all options now that we have the time to take a step back and reflect about the future of Hawaii's children and the legacy of this administration in history.

--

Marcus Nakama
James Campbell High School
Academy of Creative Media
Social Studies- Psychology/Sociology & World History

Rm: P-40
Phone: 305-3826



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

Cutting Hawaii State Employee's Pay Is Not An Option

Heather Doughty <heather.doughty@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:18 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

For the last year and a half I have been working for the Hawaii Department of Education as a Behavioral Health Specialist on Maui. This means that I provide both counseling and behavior therapy to students who have IEP or 504 plans. Two months after working the position, I was asked to start covering a second school, meaning that I was working two full-time positions for the DOE. Four months after that, my counseling partner got incredibly sick and I spent five months covering a third full-time position for the DOE. Eventually they found a replacement for my sick coworker, but I have spent over a year working two full-time positions for the state. Due to the nature of my contract, there has been no way to pay me a cent more than my original base salary. Even though I've saved them the salary of one and a half employees.

This is how DOE employees are treated in Hawaii. The salary I make is technically classified as "low income" for the state of Hawaii. My job requires that I hold a masters degree and be on my way towards obtaining a license, both of which are true of me. It is an incredibly difficult, strenuous and highly skilled position, for which I make practically the same income that I made as a caterer.

It is absolutely not an option to cut the salaries of any state worker in Hawaii. With most of the state already being laid off due to the collapse of tourism, it is the state and other essential workers that are single handedly supporting the families and economic systems of Hawaii. To make this massive of a pay cut would devastate the education system for years to come. Educators would fall below the poverty line, or more likely, move to the mainland. This will significantly increase the already significant shortage of professionals. This happened in 2008 and the outcome was terrible, why are we considering it again? If this decision is made, who does the state think is going to physically show up to work? There won't be people here to choose from. How is shutting down the education system a viable option? Alternatively, what I know will happen is the remaining staff will be asked to double or triple their work loads, classroom sizes, etc., all while sustaining a career ending pay cut.

Not to mention that Hawaiian educators were officially ranked 49th out of 50 for salary level compared to cost of living. How are these the people the state wants to take money from? It is shameful the way that education is funded and under-appreciated in this state. I can hardly even address how horrific it is that pay cuts are also being considered for first responders. All of these essential workers should be receiving pay increases during this time.

What are we doing with the billion dollar rainy day fund? Does this not qualify as a rainy day? What are we doing with the 4 million that was proposed to market tourism to Hawaii? When will the residents, the keiki, the people who make meaningful contributions to this community, ever come first? I understand that there are technical constraints within a budget, but I do not feel the state is being nearly resourceful enough. If there were ever a time to set the foundation for making us less dependent on tourism, this is it. How is it not obvious Hawaii needs to shift it's values?

One of the things that bothers me the most is knowing that in 2018, Ige gave himself and his staff a 30% raise. And in 2018 hawaiian teachers salaries were ranked 50th out of 50. The message is clear:

teachers, keiki, and education as a whole is invaluable to a state that can gouge itself on the pockets of the rich and privileged. Well what happens now that we don't have access to their wallets?

It is clear more needs to happen at the federal level. In addition to this email I will also be contacting our senators. I assume the person reading this (if it is being read) aligns with my viewpoint, and I would like to thank you for your work. I love living and working in Hawaii and I deeply hope I will have the ability to continue doing so.

While we're at it, can we please make individual school districts for each Island? Oahu making laws and decisions for all of the other islands is one of the primary reasons that staffing educators is so difficult to do here. It is such an easy and obvious call. Let's use this time to do that!

I appreciate everyone who is fighting against these proposed cuts.

Sincerely,
Heather

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

Testimony: Reject the proposal to cut teacher salaries

Aura Wong <awonglhs@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:19 PM

To: The Hawaii Board of Education
From: Aura-Rae Wong, Teacher - Hawaii Department of Education
Subject: Proposal to cut teacher salaries

Please add my testimony to the thousands of teachers in the Hawaii Department of Education that adamantly oppose the proposal by the State of Hawaii to immediately cut teacher salaries by 19.62% this school year. Among the many reasons I oppose this pay cut is that 1) a pay cut would financially hurt teachers and they will be faced with a tough decision to leave the position for a more lucrative pay. 2) more students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. 3) students in the classroom would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers since new and existing teachers would leave the profession.

Thank you for your consideration.

Aloha.



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

Please let Teacher Salaries remain the same!!

Tonya Duncan <tonyaduncan1983@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:21 PM

Aloha,

Our state, country and entire world are experiencing economical impacts because of this pandemic.

Certainly are state budget is impacted! I am writing you this email to urge you to look at other alternatives rather than cutting teacher salaries. Most teachers already don't make enough to buy homes and afford the cost of living here. Many teachers have other jobs and roommates to make ends meet. Cutting salaries for teachers would force them to leave the profession and likely the state. I know if my salary was cut, I would not be able to continue teaching in our state, or I would have to get another job. This would impact my daughter and make me unavailable during the weekends. This is assuming that I could find a second job given that most places have laid off people and are closed. Cutting teacher salaries would also not allow teachers to contribute back to are states economy. We simply would not be able to afford it. In the end and most importantly, our childrens' education would suffer. Children would be taught by exhausted and overworked teachers, or adults that are not qualified teachers!

Mahalo,
Tonya Duncan
Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School



Testimony for May 7 BOE meeting

Mike Landes <jmlandes@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:22 PM

Aloha Board of Education -

I understand that the superintendent will be presenting possible budget scenarios at your May 7 meeting, including the possibility of a 20% reduction in pay for teachers. I also know there are many options out there to avoid such a drastic outcome, including use of federal funds, grants and loans, and our state's recent budget surplus and rainy day fund. I implore you to reject the idea of any salary reductions whatsoever, and to encourage the governor to use the various options that exist to keep state employees working and paid.

My wife Megan and I are both teachers, and we know firsthand the effects of salary reductions on state employees, having both previously been forced into furloughs and DLWOPs so the state could balance its budget on the backs of the teachers. Our family finances were in a terrible situation as we both saw a cut to our pay, and we still have never fully recovered from the financial strain our family suffered during those years. Not only that, but children throughout the state suffered from a loss of instruction due to the shortened school year.

As a social studies teacher, my students learn about how economic cycles work. When spending slows and the economy goes into a recession, we have to find ways to increase spending to reverse the negative economic trend. Austerity measures (like furloughs, DLWOPs, or pay cuts), mean even fewer people will have money, there will be even less spending, and the economy will experience a larger and longer recession. Now...there are over 13,000 teachers in this state, and thousands of other public employees. If pay gets cut for tens of thousands of working families in a state with just over a million people, the economic consequences would be disastrous. How can we ever hope to restart the economy if we take money from the wallets of those who are working? How can we expect working families to spend and support local businesses if they have no money to spend? My wife and I have friends who have lost jobs, and friends who fear that their jobs may soon be lost, and we are trying to do the right thing by spending what we can at local businesses so they can stay open and keep paying their workers. But how can we do that if our pay is reduced yet again? And are we supposed to tell our children about the value our state places on them and their education?

Please help us. Please encourage the governor to use all available options to fund the salaries of state employees. We are still working, as we should be, providing an essential service to our students and their families. Keep us working, and keep us paid. Please reject any proposals to reduce our pay.

Mahalo for your time.

- Mike Landes
Lahainaluna High School
Social Studies Teacher



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

Budget

Karen Oliver <koliver25@hotmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:24 PM

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

Dear members of the Board of Education,

My name is Karen Oliver and I am a special education teacher at Mauka Lani Elementary School. Please do not cut the teacher's salary at this time. So many teachers families are already hurting due to this COVID 19 emergency. Cutting the teachers' salary will only hurt them further. I know teachers who have spouses who have been laid off, and they will be unable to live in Hawaii and pay the high cost of living if their household income is cut further. Also, teacher who may be able to retire have told me they will move up their retirement date if this happens. This will impact our students because they will not have licensed teachers to teach them. Teachers will not be able to pay their bills which will further impact our economy negatively. Please find other ways to balance the budget. This will make our teacher shortage much worse. Thank you for considering this information.

Sincerely,

Karen Oliver



Testimony Re: Potential Teacher Pay Cut

Denise Mazurik <dmazurik808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:30 PM

Aloha,

I will graduate from UH-Manoa next weekend, earning a post-baccalaureate certificate in secondary social studies education. This is a midlife career change for me. I graduated from law school in 2012 and previously developed research funding proposals in higher ed. Despite the fact I knew I would be taking a pay cut, I still decided to pursue a career in public education because I believe it can be a driver of social justice. I was ready for a career more aligned to my values. Now I'm worried I won't be able to afford to teach here.

Hawaii's teachers are already some of the lowest paid in the nation once cost-of-living is taken into account. Nobody became a teacher for the pay, but now we are once again talking about balancing the budget on the backs of teachers. Right now every teacher I know is working harder than they ever have before-- transitioning to distance and online learning, trying to connect with students to make sure they and their families are okay, responding to the social-emotional needs of children who are overwhelmed and scared, and many more responsibilities that start at daybreak and continue through the evening.

Yes, there are many out of work now and there may be some need for shared sacrifice in Hawaii, but it cannot and should not be teachers again bearing the heaviest burden. I am frustrated. Many teachers are all too familiar with the level of unemployment in Hawaii as they have lost their second (or third) job that they need to make ends meet. We already have a teacher shortage in Hawaii and a pay cut will only exacerbate this shortage. It is our students and our future economic prospects that suffer when experienced teachers are driven out of schools.

If there is any type of pay reduction it should be explicitly a temporary proposition and should not come anywhere near 20%. That large of a pay cut will further hurt the economy of Hawaii as teachers will have no disposable income to spend. Veteran teachers were expecting a pay raise this year as compression created by the last recession was finally to be addressed. Now the thought of not only no increase, but an actual decrease is just demoralizing.

The last four years I have worked at a Title I school on the Big Island. One-hundred percent of students at my school receive free school breakfast and lunch. Most of the students live in poverty and many are also English Learners. I think we all know that the day to day inequities faced by these populations have only been increased by the pandemic. When these students return to school in August (whatever that looks like), they are going to need teachers ready to support them and help them process what they have lived through. Many will return having been isolated for months, the stress of lost wages or ill family members having taken its toll. It will be teachers that help them find a new normal and get back on track academically, socially, and

emotionally. This will be no easy undertaking. We will be asking a lot of our teachers. Let us please be innovative and find other ways to save money so our teachers can focus on saving our children from falling so far behind they won't be able to catch up.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Denise Mazurik



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

No Paycuts for Teachers

Heidi Veilleux <hveilleux@haaspcs.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:29 AM

Hawai'i's economy already makes it very difficult to live and be a teacher in Hawai'i. I protest any pay cuts to teaching positions because more students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement and students would be left with long-term substitutes and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawai'i's high cost of living on a reduced salary, resulting in lasting damage to Hawai'i's public education and our keiki.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Heidi Veilleux

--

Heidi Veilleux
Elementary Teacher Grade 4
Aloha Academy
Hawai'i Academy of Arts & Science
Pahoa, HI 96778



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

school year 20-21

Sheri Falls <sheri.falls@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:35 PM

To whom it may concern.

I've just been informed that discussion will occur on a possible teacher pay cut of 19.62%. Why is this still on the table when even our state's representatives have already spoken up against this when Governor Ige was trying to do this? It's disturbing to continue to hear about this while trying my best to be resilient and teach our students daily.

Teachers are always the first to be cut when we have one of the most important jobs which is teaching the keiki of our future. There's already a shortage, which also has been shared over and over again with everyone.

I am one of the veteran teachers who are already impacted with less pay due to the compression that was supposed to be remedied this new school year with an increased pay for my family of \$6267.00 annually. I've accepted the reality that this may not come to fruition due to the pandemic, even if that's what I'm owed with my sixteen years of service to the State. To take an additional 19.62% would be financially devastating for my family. I have one child graduating in class of 2020 and going to college, with another one graduating in 2021.

Please consider the keiki as well, who are already with substitutes in their classes, and the families of teachers as well. They would all lose out. This could also start another chain of reaction with more veteran teachers retiring, and newly high school graduates deciding not to go into this field of study due to financially not being able to survive in one of the most expensive states.

This shouldn't even be a topic to consider to cut state funds moving forward, ever, but rather budgeted as a higher priority.

Thank you.

Sheri Falls
Washington Middle School
6th grades social studies

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

Reject Salary Cuts

Louiegy Ponce <louiegy.ponce@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:36 PM

Aloha,

My name is Louiegy Ponce. I am from the island of Moloka'i, but currently I reside on the island of Oahu. I am a mathematics teacher at Radford High School. I served in the United States Marine Corps for 8 years. Then I returned to Hawaii to get my mathematics degree and pursued a teaching career. I served my time honorably in defending this country. I moved on from the military to serve the community of Hawai'i. Specifically I wanted to serve the children of Hawai'i. Implementing budget cuts is a disservice to the entire community of Hawai'i. The children are struggling already as it is. They need consistent and effective teachers. How do you expect for anyone to be consistent and effective in their job with lowered pay? This is officially my first year as a full-time teacher. The way things have gone so far, I do not know how much longer I can afford to be in a teaching position that barely pays for my bills and expenses. I have many other job prospects where I would not be in a financial bind. Implementing budget cuts would effectively force me to leave the profession. You will force veteran teachers to retire early. You will force new teachers to seek employment elsewhere. How will you have a team to consistently and effectively teach our youth? Everyone knows there is a problem in education. From retired teachers in their elder years to the young children in elementary school. Your job is to lead. Your job is to manage. Your job is to ensure the community of Hawaii can best serve our children and our leaders of the future.

Respectfully,

Louiegy Ponce

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

Teacher Pay Cuts

Kathleen Royer <k_royer@lahaina.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:49 PM

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to keep teacher salaries untouched. My husband and I are both teachers, a paycut would be devastating for us. We already struggle keeping teachers in Hawaii- with a pay cut, we will lose teachers who can no longer afford to live here. It is already challenging enough. Please do what is best for Hawaii's students and teachers----no pay cuts!

Thank you,
Kathleen Royer



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

Testimony against reducing teacher salaries

Tiffany Yango-Au <tyango-au@aieahs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:51 PM

Aloha,

I am writing this message to show my support of students and teachers. Please do not allow pay cuts for teachers. I am a veteran teacher, finishing my 20th year of service. Since the stay at home order started, I have been spending hours restructuring curriculum, learning new technology to facilitate instruction, and providing feedback, encouragement, and support to my students as they deal with these uncertain times. At the same time, I am helping my own children as they try to adapt to the changes distance learning brings. I am inspired and touched by the way my children's elementary school teachers have truly reached out to every student. I am inspired and touched by the way my own ninth grade house team has done the same, trying to contact each student for a check-in and conversation, so they know someone is thinking about them. We are still working hard and will continue to work hard for our students. Salary cuts will just lead to early retirement or relocation, leaving the children of Hawaii to suffer the burden of vacancies and substitutes not trained for teaching in general, much less the kind of teaching that we are all having to learn now. Please consider this testimony as you review the budget options presented by the Superintendent.

Thank you for your time,

--

Tiffany Yango-Au
Aiea High School
Lokahi House ELA Grade 9 Teacher



Teacher Pay

Alicia Jacobson <ajacobson@haiku.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:52 PM

Aloha BOE,

First and foremost, the long term repercussions of cutting teacher pay will not be positive. I have been a public school teacher for over 20 years and I am appalled at the misuse of taxpayer monies by the DOE. We have over half of all positions going to non-classroom teachers whilst classrooms are occupied by unqualified subs that may or may not stay for the duration of an absence. Chasing test scores is not the best course of action. Reality is that our scores have not changed significantly over the past 10 years, yet the money thrown at curriculum has ballooned. Could this money be used to secure qualified teachers to work with smaller groups of children, to buy technology for the underprivileged, and providing adequate facilities for students and staff? The entire system is inefficient and needs to be overhauled. A district resource PE teacher, who does not work with students? I do not understand, and challenge you to look at positions in depth. NOW IS THE TIME. We do not need to be spending money on all these high dollar programs and "resource" teachers. We have plenty of resources, we need our teachers to be paid properly, so they can live a decent life in Hawaii and stay to educate our keiki with the autonomy that a professional deserves.

Please take time to look at the budget and make frontline teachers a priority. I have an undergraduate degree in Business for UNC-Chapel Hill and worked in business for years, before acquiring my MA in Elementary Education as a career change. I also have sources to validate my claims. PLEASE look into redistributing money and positions within the DOE. STOP creating positions that are not efficient and put these veteran teachers back in the classroom and pay us all the wages that we deserve. If you do not,

--

A hui hou,

Alicia S. Jacobson MAED

Grade 4 Teacher
Haiku Elementary School
(808) 727-3757

Haiku School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Desiree Sides, Haiku School Principal. [105 Pauwela Rd. Haiku, Hawaii 96708.](https://www.haiku.k12.hi.us) desiree_sides@notes.k12.hi.us
ph# 808-575-3000.



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

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries

Kuuwainani Eaton <kuuwainani@kalo.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:52 PM

Aloha to the Board of Education,

My name is Ku'uwainani Eaton and I am a Kumu with Kanu o ka Aina New Century Public Charter School. I am honored to serve ohana and their keiki in grades K-5 with our online/blended program called Ka Oha.

I know that there are many ohana around the world who are struggling but I do believe that these are exciting times too! This is a time of creativity and innovation. There are many teachers around the world and definitely in Hawaii who have taken on this unique challenge to continue to serve the keiki of Hawaii during these times.

There are many examples of people in history who went through hard times and created inventions and companies to benefit others. Like these early pioneers, teachers are being creative in coming up with different ways to serve and connect with keiki and their ohana. Times are hard enough as it is, why make it harder for those who give their aloha to serve our future leaders of Hawaii and possibly the world (our keiki).

Teachers add value to others - to keiki and their ohana. Healthy ohana make a healthy society. Healthy societies make a better world. Please show us that you value us - don't reduce our salaries.

Mahalo nui me ka haahaa,
Ku'uwainani Eaton



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

No to a cut in pay

Sharon Weeks <10028435@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:56 PM

Before I begin, I hope everyone is healthy and happy.

I would like to express my concern if the state decides to issue a pay cut. My husband has been out of a job because his line of work is considered non-essential, so we have been trying to make due on my salary and the economic impact stipend. It will take a while for the economy to pick up which means he will be feeling it for a while since his trade is more of a luxury than a necessity.

As a teacher, I am still working hard trying to provide some type of normalcy for my students and their families. Learning how to use WebEx, creating packets for my students, making YouTube videos to teach them how to do their projects, daily check-ins with families, small group lessons with limited resources, plus multiple faculty, staff and IEP meetings are just some of what is on our plates right now.

I earned my special education teaching credentials in CA. After 8 years of teaching, I was earning almost \$70k, w no medical premiums for a 90/10 ppo for my entire family and a \$500 a month retirement match. We ended up having to move back to Hawaii because of an ailing family member. When I was interviewing, I had several principals comment on the dramatic pay cut I was going to take, but I had to because I had no other choice at the time. After working just 3 years here, I left the teaching profession because the stress and having to find a second job wasn't worth the embarrassing pay. The hours I was putting in on the weekends and before and after school. Trying to compete w social media and motivate MS students to want to learn the curriculum was hard. Remember, parents have a hard time with just one child, imagine having to work with 25-35 at a time, some of who police have to deal with when not in school. It wasn't until the pay raise that I decided I might be able to return to my passion since it seemed it might be possible to survive as long as my husband had a second income. It has been nice to enjoy my job without having to take a second one.

Hawaii is very expensive, but it is where we now call home. If there is a pay cut, I foresee us moving back to the mainland in a couple of years once my youngest graduates HS. Please do not cut our pay because our classrooms are now being filled with competent individuals who have a passion for their students' lives.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and have this discussion.

Sincerely,

Sharon Weeks

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Testimony Regarding a Reduction in Teacher's Salaries

Sarah Tochiki <sarah.tochiki@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 2:58 PM

Aloha Hawai'i State Board of Education,

My name is Sarah Tochiki and I am the Band Director at Chiefess Kamakahalei Middle School in Lihue, Kaua'i. I am in my 12th year as a teacher in Hawai'i. I was born and raised in here and went college on the mainland. I chose to return to Hawai'i because I wanted to make a difference in the lives of the students we have here. I knew coming home to teach would mean challenges navigating the high cost-of-living with our typically low educator salaries.

Educators acknowledge that we are facing an economic crisis. With the complete halt of tourism and the influx of money into our state from outside sources, I understand the gravity of the situation we are in. Nevertheless, I urge the BoE to not reduce salaries or implement furloughs for educators in order to balance the budget.

Here is some justification for my plea:

- When you look at the actual number, educators seem to make a decent amount, but when you factor in cost-of-living, we are second from the bottom. \$65,000 is considered low-income in our state, which is about 50% of our educators. We ask our students to work hard so they can go to college and get good jobs, yet if they decide to become an educator, that job cannot sustain them.
- 58% of educators have at least one additional job to make ends meet. Many of those jobs will not be available because they are tied to tourism and the service industry. Therefore, not only were educators not paid enough in the first place, they will not have access to 2nd or 3rd jobs to supplement their inadequate salaries.
- We already have an educator shortage in our state and any reduction in salaries will require people to find employment elsewhere. If this pandemic has proved anything, having qualified educators with students in classrooms is the optimal method for learning. Online lessons have supplemented the experience while it is not safe to be on campus, but students want to be back in school, learning with their peers and an in person, qualified educator. We had 1,000 open positions prior to the pandemic, what will that number look like if educators flee the profession?
- At least half of our educators spend between \$250-500 of their own money on supplies for their own classrooms. Some report spending more than \$1,000 annually. This is because school budgets come up short for being able to provide for basic necessities. With an anticipated budget reduction and educator salary reduction, how are we possibly going to be able to provide basic learning opportunities for our students? Educators will great creative, but at what expense?

I understand that times are difficult and many are out of work. I spend the last two weeks volunteering to process unemployment claims during the day, while spending the evenings developing online enrichment activities for students. 20% of our salaries is not extra that is lining our savings accounts. It will be spent right back into the community: rent, groceries, utility bills, mortgage payments, medical expenses, precious toilet paper, supporting the local businesses that are open, etc. We need to keep money circulating in our state. The majority of educators barely make ends meet. We do not put 20% away for our rainy day fund. Educators cannot afford to have one in the first place.

We ask our students to be complex thinkers and problem solvers. We ask them to think creatively because the easiest solution may not be the best solution. A reduction of salaries is the easy solution, but is not the best. Perhaps we can forgo SBA testing for a few years and save those funds? Perhaps we reevaluate all of the parts of EES to make it cost less? Which professional development consultants are we contracting with from outside of the state that we can do locally? Can we negotiate with our large vendors, like

Achieve3000, for better prices? Let's work together to find a solution. The budget has been balanced with the wallets of educators for too long because that is the easiest solution. But without qualified educators in every classroom, can we ever have good schools in Hawai'i? The number one factor for quality of a child's education is not their access to standardized tests, but to a qualified and trained master educator.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Sarah Tochiki



Testimony for the upcoming meeting

Sara <sbj04609@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:08 PM

Aloha!

My name is Sara Hathaway and I am just finishing my third year of teaching kindergarten at Kihei Elementary School on Maui. I will start off by saying how much I love my job. It gives me such joy and satisfaction to work with children and help them learn and grow. This is important to mention because it is this love that makes me so sad about how little Hawaii schools are treated financially. This is an issue that we have been fighting the entire three years I have lived on Maui. We started to feel a little hope with some of the proposed legislation this year to raise teacher pay, however the recent talks of cutting pay to help balance the budget have created widespread fear and anger.

I feel that cutting teacher pay, even suggesting it at this time, is like a slap in the face to teachers all over the state. Our entire job description and expectation changed basically overnight and we now have a choice to do our jobs on the antique and unreliable technology provided by the DOE or use our own personal equipment.

Cutting teacher pay will drive qualified teachers from the state, a state where there is already a significant teacher shortage. This shortage is going to get much worse. I, myself, may need to leave Hawaii for the mainland if the proposed cuts happen.

The thing that is the saddest part is that it is the children who will truly suffer. Already thousands of children are taught all year by unlicensed substitute teachers, this number will increase. Plus, what message are you sending to them about the importance of education?

Please do the right thing and find another way to support the budget.

Mahalo,

Sara Hathaway



Sacrifices

Brian Tsutsui <tsutsuib001@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:10 PM

To whom it may concern:

My name is Brian Tsutsui. I have been a teacher for 28 years, currently at Pearl City High School. My wife has been teaching for 25 years; she teaches kindergarten at Pearl Ridge.

I want to start off by saying I truly understand that in these tough economic times, sacrifices need to be made. As teachers in the state of Hawaii, my wife and I accepted these conditions in becoming teachers. We sacrificed being able to afford and own a house and lived in small, older townhouses for the past 27 years. We sacrificed our rightful pay increases during the last economic downturn and never got them back. We sacrificed our retirement and refinanced, not once, but twice, to afford sending my two children to college, yet they and my wife and I still are saddled with student loans. This proposed 20% pay cut, which would impact BOTH my wife and myself, is a sacrifice that I do not believe we will be able to bear. My children already are contemplating living on the mainland where it's more affordable, and it's been tempting in the past to consider that possibility. I don't know how'll we'll financially make ends meet and stay in Hawaii if we have to take such a financial hit as these 20% pay cuts for both of us.

These pay cuts would irreparably harm our state's economy and slow consumer spending the very time we need it to increase to recover.

I love my job. I love my students. I've been blessed to be a teacher for these past 28 years. I never thought my family and I could be put in such a possible financial situation to cause me to leave the school and state that I love just to survive financially.

Please reconsider these pay cuts.

Sincerely yours,

Brian Tsutsui
Pearl City High School

Sent from my iPhone

May 6, 2020

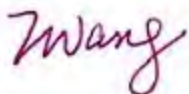
Dear Hawaii Board of Education,

Aloha! My name is Nicholas Wang, a fourth grade teacher at Kihei Elementary School, a Title I school on Maui. This is my third year teaching and second year teaching in Hawai'i. I am writing to you in regards to the possible salary cuts of our dedicated and passionate teachers, including myself.

As you are aware, Hawai'i teachers are one of the lowest paid professionals in the nation with a very high cost of living. It has been nearly impossible to deposit any amount of my paychecks into a savings account for the future. However, teachers are still spending their own money purchasing supplies and other educational materials for their students. We do this because we understand the value of education and helping all of our keiki succeed and developing a love for learning. We are physically in classrooms and know what is needed. We are committed to our keiki! Our commitment has been shown more than ever since school buildings have closed due to COVID-19. Teachers continue to spend countless hours working to teach themselves and practice how to teach remotely, effectively support their students with and without access to technology, keep consistency in their education, and communicate with their keiki and families.

A salary cut, no matter when it may happen, is disrespectful and telling teachers that the work we do for our keiki does not matter. Hawai'i has one of the lowest number of teachers in the country and a very high turnover rate. A salary cut will force qualified veteran teachers to retire early and many new teachers to leave this much needed profession and/or the state. A salary cut will destroy consistency in schools for our keiki with a rotation of substitutes, if there are even enough to cover classes while they are without a teacher. A salary cut will force many teachers to fall behind on their bills, including rent or mortgage payments. A salary cut will further impact our education system negatively and we will not recover quickly. Salary cuts are not the right choice during this pandemic or any time for our teachers!

Sincerely,



Nicholas Wang
Kihei Elementary School
nicholas.wang@k12.hi.us



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

Support Teachers

Penny Beisch <pennybeisch@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:14 PM

Please support teachers!

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

I



Personal Testimony for 5-7-2020 Budget Hearing

Victoria Zupancic <victoriazupancic2386@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:21 PM

Aloha Board of Directors,

My name is Victoria Zupancic, and I am a Mathematics Teacher at Lahainaluna High School on Maui. I would like to begin by stating I love my job, and I want to stay in my position for many years to come. This is a luxury.

Each year the school year ends, I take count of how many teachers we lose, and I begin to guess how many empty positions we will begin the new year with. One year, there were fourteen open teaching positions. This year, there was no tenth grader who had a licensed and highly qualified English teacher. At least one of the subs that filled this position will not be coming back. Year to year, students walk into a class with no teacher. And what is becoming apparent is that they do not even complain about it. It is like it is expected. I cannot imagine private school students or a well funded district telling parents the school year is beginning with empty classrooms. I cannot imagine my own experience as a student with that reality. It is a clear message continually sent to students about the value of education.

The pattern of teachers leaving varies. It is not simply first year teachers who realize the profession is not for them. It is veteran teachers who took a position in Hawaii and refuse to work at a rate less than they're worth. It is home-grown educators leaving the State because they cannot afford to raise their children here, and they must uproot the family ties and connections in order for their family to survive. It includes highly qualified and passionate educators who love their students but are forced into a decision about their own livelihood.

What is it really like? What do teachers actually go through?

I began my teaching career in Maui taking home \$450 a week. I lucked out touching down on Maui, finding a room to rent for \$400. This was eight years ago. As I began to look for a place to live on my own, I realized this was never an option. A one-bedroom apartment would have consumed my entire monthly salary. I consented that as a degree-holding and competent professional, I may have roommates my entire life. Today, the \$400 rooms are gone. Rent has not only increased in that time, but the increase of short-term vacation rentals has made applying for a place to rent a competition in Lahaina.

I've lived in a converted garage with three other roommates, a two-bedroom condo with three other young women, and a string of month-to-month places until finding something long-term. Each move someone makes costs money, and it was only with the intervention of financial support from my family that got me through my first years. The gains in our pay and contract made the next few years livable. Fast forward a few more years, and our most recent contract,

along with pay differentials, put me in a position of breathing comfortably each month. Last school year was the first I did not consider moving off-island. I saw a future. My family once again invested in me, and I secured a placement into a workforce housing program with the help of their downpayment. My projections of contract raises, along with my investment into my own education, would raise my pay to be able to afford a home in the community I teach in. With a roommate.

The announcement that a 20% reduction in salary is being considered sent a shockwave to the long-term viability of my effort and work to stay in Lahaina. And I'm only still here because of the financial support of my family. It is demoralizing as a professional, but it is absolutely absurd and unfair to the students in Lahaina and Hawaii that educators who want to be a part of their life cannot because they cannot afford it. Personally, a 20% reduction in salary could ruin my financial future.

I implore you to consider alternative options to reducing pay. I ask that you think of the scenario as it appeared in the beginning of this year, when all parties finally started to understand that this is a real problem. We are hemorrhaging teachers from Hawaii, increasing the rate of attrition yearly, and a massive reduction in pay will exacerbate the issue. Aside from the personal lives of teachers that will be impacted, every family in Hawaii will feel this cut.

Sincerely,

Victoria Zupancic

--

Ylfwruid#} xsdqflf

Secondary Mathematics Educator

470 Front St

Lahaina, HI 96761

+963, ; 9703756

victoriazupancic2386@gmail.com

[kwsv=22vkhv1jrrjdh1frp 2vkh2y1fwruid}xsdqflfsruwirdr2](#)



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

(no subject)

Susan Lee <slee@haaspcs.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:21 PM

Hi, I hit send accidentally. Didn't even get to proof it! Sorry about that.

Anyhow, I'm a teacher on Hawaii Island, @ Hawaii Academy Of Arts and Science. I teach 5th and 6th grades.

Pay cuts are a bad idea because it would be harmful for our children. It will mean that lots of teachers will retire or leave because they CAN'T afford to live here on that salary which means we will have lots of classroom staffed with subs. If you are serious about educating our children, do not issue pay cuts. Also, it will not achieve the goal of helping the economy - contrarily, it harm the economy as well.

Kumu Suzie

I implore you to NOT cut teachers salary.

Discovery Heights

[Quoted text hidden]



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

Teacher salaries reduction,

Vijay Thangaraj <vijayinhi86@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:22 PM

Dear BOE,

My name is Vijay Thangaraj , I teach 5th grade at King Kamehameha III school in Maui.

Please reconsider your options to reduce teachers salaries. It's always amazing to witness how financial institutions and other businesses all somehow get bailed out and continue with business as usual. I'm sure you will try to help us.

Thank you.



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

Opposition to any proposed pay cuts

David Tanabe <dct@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:25 PM

Board members:

I teach students. I am a social studies and AVID elective teacher at James Campbell High.

I understand that an agenda item for Friday will be to consider pay cuts to teacher positions as a response to unique budget difficulty from the pandemic. I stand with my colleagues to oppose any pay cut in this instance or any other instance.

Damage to the body politic - disservice to the students and future voting members and tax paying members of Hawaii - is but one likely consequence of the constant assault on the teaching profession. The state of the profession is unhealthy as noted in years of prior legislative attempts to fund equitable teacher pay. Raiding the already budgeted monies for teacher salaries, already recognized as being among the worst nationally, would likely further impair educational gains and compliance with federal obligations.

Your public deserves better. Your public schools deserve much better. Your public school students deserve the best you can afford. You must afford them that.

Please, choose wisely.

David Tanabe
James Campbell High
Social Studies and AVID Elective

"I touch the future. I teach." - Christa McAuliffe.

Sent from my iPhone



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

Board of Education - Reject the salary cut options

Andrea Fitzgerald <andrea.fitzgerald@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:26 PM

Aloha Board of Education members,

I am a Social Studies teacher at Radford High School and am writing this message to express my opposition to salary cuts or any decisions leading to reduced pay for teachers (furloughs, DLWOPs, etc.).

Two years ago, I fell in love with Radford High School, its administration, supportive teachers and the student body that emulates the Aloha spirit. I was hired as an emergency hire and launched into a Masters in Teaching with initial licensure while I taught classes in SpEd, inclusion, and AP. I just graduated this past Friday and am now proudly a provisional licence, and serving as an encouraging teacher to the students at Radford High school. This is not my first career after more than 10 years in business and 10 years staying home with my children, but teaching is the career I CHOSE for the next 20+ years!

Daily, I am inspired and motivated by the camaraderie, kindness and encouragement, and teacher support that my fellow colleagues at Radford give each other. We all strive to put students first and better our practice and instruction with shared ideas. We seek after continuous improvements to our instruction rooted in differentiated instruction and social-emotional learning.

Teaching is a career that I love and enjoy and I do not want to even consider having to abandon it in order to pay for basic housing and needs of my personal children. Please do not force our hand. WE TEACH because we LOVE it and love our students. We want to help them succeed toward college and career!

Many teachers are still recovering from the prolonged situation caused by the Great Recession a decade ago. We sacrificed much during that period, and many of us do not feel that we've completely recovered or have yet been fairly compensated. The furloughs/DLWOPs were a mistake that all educational "stakeholders" should have learned from - a mistake that deepened the teacher shortage and that, if repeated, would surely lead to an even worse predicament for public education in Hawaii. A 20% pay reduction would force many younger teachers out of the state or out of the profession, would cause many older teachers to retire early, and would encourage mid-career teachers such as myself to embrace other options such as employment at private schools or international schools abroad.

The fact that, after everything we endured a decade ago, pay cuts for teachers are even open to discussion is a matter of deep distress to many of us. We would be grateful to the Board if it would not only discourage any proposals that might lead to reduced pay but also send a strong message to the governor's office that the very motion towards such discussions will in itself be rejected.

Sincerely,

Andrea Fitzgerald

Social Studies Teacher

AP Economics, AP Government & Politics

Econ/American Problems, World History

Radford High School

[4361 Salt Lake Boulevard Honolulu, HI 96818](https://www.google.com/maps/place/4361+Salt+Lake+Boulevard,+Honolulu,+HI+96818)

808-421-4200

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Testimony re: Proposed Teacher Pay Cuts

Anthony McCurdy <amccurdy808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:30 PM

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to you as both a teacher and a parent of public school students. I am finishing my third year at James Campbell High School and have taught special education English and social studies as well as photography in the Fine Arts department. My daughters are finishing their junior years at Kapolei High School.

I am very concerned by the proposal to cut public school teacher salaries in response to the pandemic we are currently experiencing. Yes, it will take time for our economy to recover and our state may be digging its way out of debt for some time as a result of these highly unusual circumstances. However, the idea of balancing our state budget on the backs of our public employees, especially our teachers, is a truly terrible idea.

Hawaii already has a massive teacher shortage, due in very large part to our state having the lowest teacher salaries in the country when you adjust for cost of living. We simply cannot hire enough qualified teachers to provide an adequate education for our keiki, either by bringing in teachers from the mainland (that was me three years ago) or by growing our own here in Hawaii.

If we cut teachers' salaries for any length of time, we are going to lose a lot of teachers, thereby exacerbating an already dire situation and likely sending our public education system into a steep decline. The problem is that the quality of our education has a direct impact on our economy - in other words, if we shortchange our keiki now, we are going to pay for it later. Cutting teacher salaries would be penny wise and pound foolish.

I know other teachers will be severely impacted and we will lose a lot of newer, younger, single teachers who already have to work at least one extra job just to make ends meet here. However, I will tell you that if I lose 20% of my salary, I'm going to be looking for a new job and it will likely be on the mainland. My wife will leave her job and my daughters will leave Kapolei High School and you will lose a teacher with thirteen years of experience because of these proposed measures. I had planned to spend the rest of my life here, accepting that my wife and I would never be able to afford to buy a house, but it is already a struggle without losing my income and not being able to afford rent.

Cutting teacher salaries will have a long-lasting, deep and devastating impact on our public school system in Hawaii. Please vote against it to keep our schools as healthy as possible.

Very respectfully,

Anthony McCurdy, JD/MAED
Academy of Creative Media Lead Teacher
James Campbell High School
[91-980 North Road](#)
[Ewa Beach HI 96706](#)
808.305.3801 (Direct)
808.675.6859 (Cell/Text)

--

Anthony McCurdy
808.675.6859

amccurdy808@gmail.com



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

Pay Cut Testimony

Ryan, Jamie <ryanjami@msu.edu>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:36 PM

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

This is my fourth year as an educator in the state of Hawai'i, I love my students and I love working here. While it's been known that Hawai'i educators are amongst the worst paid in the nation, I didn't realize just how little the career is valued. Being a teacher isn't easy. Work is often brought home, taking up time in the evenings and on the weekends, even over "breaks". We have to create and implement lesson plans that engage and inspire students that vary greatly in their capabilities. We are expected to constantly go above and beyond to make sure that our students are getting the best education possible. Distance learning has been another challenge, something new to learn and implement on the fly. When we do return to school in the fall we will face even more challenges as we modify our curriculum to fill in the gaps. Our job is getting more and more difficult, meanwhile, we are facing a pay cut that doesn't value our hard work and dedication. Many teachers will struggle to pay their bills and many will leave the profession or the state for better pay. If you want to support the education of our students, you have to support their teachers.

-Jamie Ryan
Honolulu HI



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

Don't cut teachers' pay

Abraham Nahulu <oshen_boy@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:37 PM

Aloha, this is email is to show our continued support for teachers and is completely against cutting teachers' pay. Since furlough Friday's, Teachers already took a 5% cut and an increased medical premium, and now another 20% cut. What's the point of getting a higher degree, if their pay keeps getting cut. Trust me when I say that the shortage of teachers will only increase with this pay cut. There needs to be options that we can choose from. Teachers are more than willing to help out, BUT we need options. For example, will the 20% be reinstated once this budget shortfall is cleared up? Also, having that 5% extra reinstated from Linda Lingle's furlough Friday's would also help.

This will be a big mistake that will lose a lot of educators, and really hurt our children's education. Teachers are already contemplating another profession. Please kokua, Mahalo!



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

Testimony

Melisange Ouellet-Beaucaire <melisange.ouellet-beaucaire@campbell.k12.hi.us>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at
3:41 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

My name is Melisange Ouellet-Beaucaire I am a new teacher for the DOE. This is my first year of teaching and this proposal of salary cuts has truly got me angry!!! AWE ! Shame on you. I had to struggle for years by working full time and going to school full time to pursue my dreams of being a teacher. To have a career here in Hawaii. With a Mercedes benz worth of student debt and two small toddlers with daycare tuitions more than my rent. How am I supposed to survive when what we are paid is already not enough to pay all our bills? How dare you think of cutting teacher salaries in this crisis! We already struggle to retain teachers in this state. So many schools have long-term subs and as a state we know this is an existing problem. I grew up in Hawaii, I am a product of public schools. We are better than this. Let's show our communities that education is at our core value. Teacher pay cuts of ANY short is just shameful on so many levels and heart breaking.

Mahalo nui for your time,
Melisange Ouellet-Beaucaire



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

Teachers deserve better

Julia Cheek <julia.cheek@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:39 PM

Hi,

My name is Julia Cheek and I have been teaching for 3 years at Nanaikapono Elementary School on the westside of Oahu. A possible 19.62% pay cut would be devastating to my husband (also a teacher at Waianae Intermediate) and I. We would not be able to afford to continue living on island and would have to move back to the mainland. We both love teaching and the beautiful state of Hawaii. We work so hard for our students and families. Please do not cut our pay! Sincerely, Julia Cheek

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

Possible 19.62% Pay Cut

Ryan Winslow <ryan.winslow@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:49 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am honored to be teaching at Nanaikapono Elementary School in Nanakuli on the island of O'ahu in the great state of Hawaii. I have been in education for many years now but I gave up my position and tenure in California to move out to the West Side of Oahu after receiving my M.Ed. to teach at a title 1 school and hopefully make a difference. I grew up in foster care and went to a title 1 school myself and my teachers are the reason I am a success today. We moved at a cost of over \$15,000 and almost immediately we were robbed in our home of over \$15,000 more. After purchasing a 500 square foot condo for \$300,000 just to be able to live in the community where I teach and everything else that has happened I am beyond tapped out. All my family wanted to do was move to a community that we could be a part of and make a difference. After losing my position teaching after school activities and my husband losing his salon in Waikiki due to the Covid-19 outbreak a near 20% pay cut could possibly be the end of that dream. Please consider the weight of the decisions made. If this pay cut goes through we may well lose everything we have worked so hard for and have to abandon our new community to find work. Please don't take away our livelihood, please don't take good educators away from our keiki!

Thank you,
Ryan Winslow
Nanaikapono Elementary
5th Grade, K-103
808-305-7857
ryan.winslow@k12.hi.us

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

Please Do Not Cut Our Teacher's Salaries

Chelsea Welcker <chelseawelcker@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:50 PM

Aloha,

My name is Chelsea Welcker and I am a third grade teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary School. I have taught for the past 15 years and I love my job. We are currently in a teacher shortage and cutting salaries will hurt our communities and our children. This pandemic is temporary but by cutting our salaries many of us will have to make the hard choice of staying here or moving to a place that has a lower cost of living, where we won't be living with a mountain of debt. I can't afford housing here. I work a side job 20 hours a week and every summer, fall, winter, and spring break I work full time. I know it hurts my teaching. I am exhausted. Just think of what I could do if teaching afforded me a living wage?

Please continue to support our teachers.

Thank you for you time and support,
Chelsea Welcker



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

Future endeavors

cwethall92181 . <claudiawethall@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:52 PM

Hello there,

I currently teach Kindergarten at Waihee School. 2020-21 will be my 2nd consecutive year teaching, but altogether I have taught for 4 years within the DOE. I had to take a break from teaching to raise my daughter for 2 years because it was cheaper to stay home than to pay for childcare. I was devastated because at the time I loved my students and my school but unfortunately, I made more money with house sitting, nanny gigs and teaching online.

I was so grateful to land a teaching position at an amazing school close to home and find feasible childcare for my daughter. This year has been so rewarding despite COVID-19. I'm sad to say that if our pay is going to get cut at all, unfortunately I have to move to the mainland to stay with family. I love my students and have been really upset that I will not see them again this year.

Since working at a school that Hawaiian Homes feeds into, I have enjoyed this experience and have a newfound respect for the people of the islands. I love the people, the children, the land and the culture and will deeply miss it if I have to go. Please reconsider pulling any more funds from education. Not only does my families future depend on it, but so does yours.

Much thanks and warmest wishes,
Claudia Wethall



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

Testimony Regarding Teacher Salaries

Jones, Sarah <sarah.jones@wilcoxhealth.org>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:53 PM

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

Aloha,

I am writing as a concerned citizen, mother of three children who attend a public charter school (Kanuikapono PCS in Anahola, HI), and wife of a hardworking middle school teacher. When my family moved to Hawaii, we initially lived on the island of Lana'i, and my husband was able to receive an emergency certification to teach at Lana'i High & Elementary School. It was a wonderful opportunity for him, as it turned out that he is an amazing teacher and is especially well-liked by middle schoolers! When we moved to Kauai, he was able to begin teaching at Kanuikapono, and, as on Lana'i, has had a great rapport with his students and has become active as a leader among his teacher colleagues. When Governor Ige said a few weeks ago that teachers may receive a 20% pay cut, we were aghast that he would choose teachers to bear the brunt of balancing the budget. As a chaplain, I do not make a lot of money, and my husband, from starting as an emergency hire and now working in a school that doesn't provide tenure, is at the lower end of the pay scale for teachers. A 20% pay cut will mean tightening our family's budget, which means less money going into the local economy, and seems like an all-around terrible decision for the Governor to make. Surely there are other places in the state's resources where the money to balance the budget can be found.

Thank you for receiving my testimony,

Sarah Jones

Rev. Sarah Jones

Chaplain | Pacific Health Ministry

Serving at Wilcox Medical Center

[3-3420 Kuhio Highway | Lihue, HI 96766](#)

Phone: 808-246-1668

Email: sarah.jones@wilcoxhealth.org



Creating a *healthier* Hawai'i

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

Pay cuts should NOT be an option

Kristi Kakiuchi <kristi.kakiuchi@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:56 PM

To: The Board of Education

As a Special Education Teacher born and raised in Hawaii- I have to wonder why? WHY would cutting teacher's pay even be an option when teachers already use their own money to purchase materials and goods for their students? Cutting a teacher's pay would mean that less of this can be done... Less goes to education and educating our keiki with pay cuts. Teachers who already have a hard time affording their own living will have added worries to their minds- which takes away from Hawaii's keiki. In addition, if pay cuts do happen, many of our senior teachers will leave. So, not only would we lose many of our experienced teachers, but we would have to hire more uncertified teachers to work with our keiki. Is this not a big enough problem already? I thought the whole point we were focusing on for a LONG time now, was to increase the number of certified, highly qualified teachers? A pay cut to Hawaii teacher's salaries is not attractive to aspiring teachers, current emergency hires, or highly qualified teachers.

Please consider what pay cuts will do to our state and who they will ultimately affect.

--

Thank you,
Kristi Kakiuchi
Special Education Teacher
Kula Elementary

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

Teachers Pay Shouldn't Be Cut

Hope Bourne <hjbourn7@gmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:57 PM

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

Hi,

I wanted to send a email in regards to teachers pay being potentially cut. I have a dear friend of mine that is a Freshman English teacher at Maui High School. She works so hard for her students and has been taking Personal Development classes to enrich herself for her students. Teachers are already underpaid for all the work they put into raising young student minds.

I see my friend continually placing so much care and love into her job. I strongly disagree with a cut to teachers because they have navigated teaching during this difficult time. Kids depend on their teachers and placing a pay cut to teachers will only push people away from teaching. A loss to their pay will drastically affect the quality of education provided for our Hawai'i community. Please do not cut teachers pay. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Hope Bourne



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

Testimony - teacher pay cuts

Nathan Patry <n_patry@hotmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:03 PM

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

Aloha,

I am a fourth grade teacher at King Kamehameha III school in Lahaina. I also have a family with two boys in the Lahainaluna Complex. A pay cut will severely impact my ability to remain on the island as a public school teacher and I oppose it. Even of greater concern to me is the impact it will have on my children's education. I have students in my class that have gone large portions of previous years without a consistent classroom teacher. Just an endless parade of subs with no coherent class direction or education goals. That is not OK, and will only be more widespread here in the islands if you follow through with the plan to cut teacher wages.

School is not daycare. It is not about just having warm bodies. These children will be expected to take over the world from us and need to be educationally equipped to accomplish it. Highly qualified, compensated teachers will provide this for my children, and the children of the other families of our great islands. Please do not lose sight of the forest through the trees, making a short term pandemic a generational handicap.

Thank you for considering my testimony,

Nathan Patry



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

Take care of the teachers, take care of the keiki

Evelyn Ibonia <evelyn.ibonia@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:06 PM

To whom it may concern,

As you make decisions about the budget for the upcoming school year, please keep all the keiki in our state in the back of your minds. They deserve to have a certified teacher in their classroom. They deserve to have continuity of a certified teacher in their classroom. We already have too many classrooms with long term substitutes in them, if there even is one. This cannot be our "normal" here in Hawaii. We already have a shortage of teachers, I can't even imagine what it would be like if teachers were imposed a pay cut. As a teacher, we put in everything we have on a daily basis because we love our students. We already do more than we are paid to do, please don't take our pay. If you continue to take care of your teachers, we can continue to take care of Hawaii's keiki.

Thank you for your time,

Evelyn Ibonia
Kihei Elementary Teacher



budget paycut testimonies

Janelle Torres <jtorres@kaiserhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:10 PM

As public school teachers, you ask of us the impossible every single day. Our class sizes range from large to larger (I have one this year that is 40 students and the rest range from 30-33) and yet you ask us to form meaningful relationships with each and every one of them (that's almost 180 students in one year for us at the high school level). You ask us to differentiate for each learning type so that we give our students every tool possible to succeed in life. You ask us to develop meaningful and rigorous lesson plans that engage and capture our students in a way that will move and motivate them. You ask us to maintain classroom management with student to teacher ratios of 40 to 1 at times. You ask us to counsel students and know when something is going on in their lives so that we can help in every way we can. You ask us to not only teach them our subjects, but also how to be a good citizen and person in the real world so they can contribute positively to society. You ask us to do all of this with a very limited supply budget which forces most of us to use our hard earned money to buy supplies for our students because we care about them so much. You also asked us to get an online program up and running in a matter of two weeks so that students could still learn while they are not allowed on campus's. Teachers went above and beyond that. They came up with creative ways to learn and also reached out to their students and families to make sure that they were doing ok.

We have no assistants or aides to help us xerox, input data, finalize our calendars, write emails, compose memos, update websites, call parents, or do any of the little things that require time. While we are teaching, we can't do any of these things. Therefore the majority of us work all day at school, prepping, planning, implementing, counseling, forming relationships, putting out fires and everything and anything else that could and can be done and then we go home to our families only to work some more once they all go to bed because there isn't enough time in the day to do the impossible. But we do it. We do the impossible day in and day out for our kids. We have done it without being acceptably compensated for the past ten years. It has taken a toll on our profession. We took a 8% paycut during furlough fridays and look at what that did to the education system in Hawaii... we are short qualified teachers who can make a difference in a child's life. And now you want to cut our pay once again...not 8%, but 19.62%. This is unacceptable and shameful to even suggest. Your teachers are the backbone of the future in Hawaii. They are there to help mold and shape a child's outlook on life. This is because a large chunk of a kid's time is spent at school with their teachers. Cutting our pay by this much would almost guarantee an escalated teacher shortage. Teachers will not be able to live in Hawaii with the cost of living so high here. If we do, we will have to get a second job and all that extra effort we put into our students learning in the evening/night hours (which we are not even paid for) will

be gone. Not to mention... why on earth would you want unqualified people spending that much time with our kids?

There are many areas of the budget in which expenditures can be cut, programs that are not necessities at the moment (international baccalaureate programs and other professional development that we outsource for example), resources that can be done without, etc etc. If highly educated people, such as yourselves, took some time to really look at the state and DOE's itemized expenditures, I bet we could find monies to cut instead of taking it away from our teachers.

I sincerely appreciate the time you took to read this.

Janelle Torres

Kaiser High School

AP Biology, Marine Science and Sport, Exercise and Science Teacher for the past 15 years



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

Testimony Against Teacher Pay Cuts

ryan monico <ryanmonico@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:14 PM

Aloha BOE,

My name is Ryan Monico, and I am a sophomore English teacher at Maui High School. I am writing to urge the Board of Education and the State of Hawaii to find alternative methods to balance the budget instead of cutting teacher's pay. Growing up in Hawaii making ends meet has been a constant struggle for me and my family. I, like many of my colleagues, already feel underpaid and undervalued. Reducing our pay would force me to reconsider my career as a teacher here in the State of Hawaii. Please do not reduce our pay. Reducing our pay may result in the State not having any teachers to pay. I for one will not teach if my pay is reduced.



Testimony about pay cuts

Jadee Fong <jadeemtanabe@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:18 PM

To whom it may concern,

Cutting teacher pay (or anyone's pay) during this time, is really frightening. Realistically we are already living paycheck to paycheck. We buy things out of our own pockets for our students and our classrooms. We still need to provide for our families and that's difficult with the pay we are already receiving. I believe that cutting our pay would only further hurt our economy because we will not be able to put money into the economy like you want. Our money will be spent on necessities. Even at that, things might have to get cut from our home....things that most people take for granted such as internet/wifi and preschool. If our pay were to get cut, we probably won't be able to send our son to preschool. Our household has two DOE workers and I'm sure we are not the only ones in this predicament. So not only are you hindering us as teachers, you are making a negative impact on students and their families.

If our pay were to get cut, we will probably need second jobs, or even third jobs, to make ends meet. Lots of people will have a difficult time making mortgage payments and we would be one of those families. Another option is that the state will lose a lot of good teachers. Teachers will be forced into early retirement or will just leave the profession altogether. We wouldn't even be able to file for unemployment because we have a job, but we can't pay our bills. That's sad, frustrating, and demoralizing. Then what will the students be left with? A teacher shortage...people that are NOT highly qualified or teachers that are burning the candles on both ends...is that the best scenario for our students? Definitely not, but that's what's being considered.

We don't become teachers because of the glamorous pay. We do this because we love working with students. We want to make a positive impact on their lives because we believe we can make a difference. However, by cutting our pay just feels like a slap in the face. It feels like education isn't important, but it should be.

I'm sure you have a lot on your plate during this pandemic, but I urge you to think outside the box. Think about the people of Hawaii and what kind of impact your decision will have if you decide to cut our pay. Yes, it looks enticing to cut pay from the biggest group of people, but by cutting our pay, this big group of people will NOT be able to put money back into the economy. I don't believe this is in the best interest of our communities, our state, and most importantly, our students.

Thank you for your time,
Jadee Fong
Holomua Elementary School, 5th grade



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

Teacher Testimony for Proposed Salary Reduction

Brian Cole <brian.cole@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:21 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in regards to the potential salary decrease that is being proposed for teachers. This should not occur at any level. Some of the reasons are as follows:

Cutting the salary of teachers would set a terrible example to any potential teachers who are thinking of moving to Hawaii to work. Hawaii is already at a deficit when it comes to the number of teachers in the state who are qualified to teach our Keiki. Seeing the way that the state is talking about treating its employees, would turn off any future out of state applicants. This is especially true when they have to consider the high cost of living that residents have to endure.

Another reason that salaries should not be cut is that teachers already get paid very little. I have been teaching for 12 years and make just over \$50,000 a year. If I was single, I would have to live in my van. I am very fortunate to have a spouse who helps keep my family above water, but many teachers find themselves living paycheck to paycheck and asking if this is the job for them. Cutting their salaries would make that decision a lot easier.

The amount that is being discussed to cut from teachers is around 20%. That is how much I take out from my salary to put away for my future. If I cannot depend on that money each pay period, I would find myself having to work until I died. That was not the future that I had envisioned for myself when I became a teacher. Once, teachers were a respected part of the community and now they are being looked at as being disposable.

Let me ask you. Would you negotiate the price with someone who was about to perform surgery on you? Would you fly an airline that pays their pilots less than the other airlines? Would you pay your police force a wage that just allows them to scrape by? Of course the answer is no to these questions. So why would you play Russian Roulette with the future of Hawaii's children?

I ask you to vote against cutting the salaries of our educators. The children of Hawaii deserve better.

Sincerely,
Brian Cole
Grade 7-8 Teacher
Ilima Intermediate School

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

Say no to 20%cut in pay for teachers

Danyel Panui <d.panui@seariders.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:23 PM

Aloha,

My name is Danyel Panui and I work in the Leeward District at Waianae High school as a 10th grade World History Teacher. I am writing to let you know that both my husband and I are teachers and this would mean a 40% cut on our total income. We can't afford to live in Hawaii already with our pay, if you cut our pay this would put us into poverty and maybe need to move out of our home. We have student loans and bills that need to be paid on time.

Please consider my story when voting. It would be a tragedy for me and for many teachers out there. We are underpaid and the state/city has the audacity to ask for raises during this time of hardship. That wouldn't only be a slap in the face, it's more like a knife in our back that cuts us daily. Maybe some of you could live with a 20% cut, but my family would have a 40% cut. We can't live like that and we would have to apply for food stamps and free medical. In which we would get denied by a couple of dollars.

Do the right thing, say no and if you do give in I can only do a 3% cut in pay. It would still kill our living wages but at least my kids can eat. I would be eating the leftovers from my kids. Think about that before you go to bed.

Danyel Panui



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

(no subject)

Lisa Johnstone <lisa.johnstone@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:23 PM

Aloha BOE Members,

As we know this is a challenging time for the State of Hawaii, our country and world we live in. There have been many changes and challenges for educators during this time and I believe we have risen to the challenge. I strongly believe teachers, Counselors, SSC, and Administrators are working harder than ever before. We are trying to figure this whole new way of working and teaching out while managing our families and households. Hawaii already have a teacher shortage we already have to give incentives to try and get teachers into the classroom. If the pay for teachers is cut I can envision a mass exit of teachers able to retire as well as teachers who can no longer afford to stay in the profession they love. Prior to the COVID pandemic there were talks about adjusting the pay for teachers so that we could be receiving the pay we should be based on our years of service. That was exciting to hear that people were recognizing how some of us had been subject to no pay increases over the years. I know that that isn't an option anymore and completely understand. But to give us a close 20% pay cut many of us will never be able to catch that back up with our remaining years of service. So why stay?? The other option is furloughs. This seems crazy when we just lost a quarter of instruction because our superintendent decided we couldn't move forward with learning. How can we tell the public we are cutting school days? To me this seems irresponsible and looks as if education isn't valued. But then I think that's the message here. Do we as a state value education? Value our educators? It doesn't appear that way. I know I am extremely fortunate to have a job during this time and I believe families in our communities are as well because we are providing consistency on a time where there is so much confusion.

I hope that the BOE can see the value in educators and see the value in having licensed, qualified teachers in every classroom. Please protect us by not agreeing to cut out pay. Don't give us our raise that's fine but please don't cut our pay.

Thank you for your support!

Lisa Johnstone
SSC Radford High School

--

Ms. Lisa Johnstone
Student Services Coordinator/Counselor
Radford High School

Please be sure to update my email address in your contacts. My new email is
lisa.johnstone@k12.hi.us

This is a staff email account managed by Hawaii Department Of Education School District. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.

Karen Kohagura, Elementary Teacher at Pahoa Elementary School

General Business Meeting (Virtual) on Thursday, May 7, 2020 at 1:30 p.m.

V. Discussion Items - A. "Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ('CARES Act') K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process."

I have read the "Draft COVID Re-Balancing Framework" and ask you not to balance the state's budget on the backs of teachers and the keiki we teach, our students.

Many students at our school, Pahoa Elementary, have been taught by substitute teachers instead of licensed teachers over the years. Do not reduce the salaries of teachers because it will cause an even greater teacher shortage. If our salary is reduced, many of the senior teachers will be forced to retire, and many younger and newer teachers will leave the profession. Teachers will not be able to afford the high cost of living in Hawaii on a reduced salary.

I am very concerned, furthermore, about how the reduction in my salary will negatively affect our financial situation. My husband, Paul, is retired and collecting Social Security. I am a 30-year veteran educator, and I also have to collect Social Security to supplement our income. This looming pay cut will be disastrous on our finances and livelihood as we still have a mortgage to pay as well other living expenses.

Do not balance the state's budget on the backs of teachers and students! Our students have already missed the fourth quarter, a total of 46 days of instruction. They need to return to classrooms with highly qualified educators teaching them. These students are our future citizens and leaders. They are the future of the state of Hawaii.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit a written testimony.



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

No pay cut for teacher!!

Roxana Hollifield <roxana_hollifield@baldwin.k12.hi.us>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:27
PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

My name is Roxana Hollifield and I am a Spanish teacher at Baldwin High School. I am writing this message to share that I am against cutting teachers' salaries as part of the Covid19 Rebalancing Framework. We have already been suffering from a shortage of teachers in Hawaii and I have seen first hand the negative consequences of students being taught by unqualified and unlicensed long term subs. If Hawaii teachers are forced to suffer reduced salaries how can they afford the high cost of living in our state. More teachers will leave the profession and Hawaii students will suffer. We need to prioritize education, and the future of our children by finding other ways to balance the budget.

Roxana Hollifield



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

testimony opposing cuts to teacher salaries

Cynthia Franklin <cfrankli@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:33 PM

Dear BOE members,

I write to strongly oppose cuts to the salaries of K-12 teachers. They are already underpaid for doing work that is crucial to our future--educating young people.

It is shameful enough that teachers already have difficult making ends meet and are the lowest paid teachers in the nation, factoring in cost of living. I believe it is for this reason that each year the Hawai'i DOE already has approximately 1,000 vacancies and emergency hires to fill. Decreasing salaries will likely lead to more quality teachers retiring, making teacher vacancies even higher. And because it can cost up to \$20,000 to replace each teacher, salary cuts are penny wise and pound foolish.

I know these are challenging times, but given the importance of our teachers and the low pay that already makes their lives so difficult, cutting their salaries simply should not be an option.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Franklin

Professor

Co-Editor, *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly*

Department of English (KUY 224)

University of Hawai'i

1733 Donaghho Road

Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822

cfrankli@hawaii.edu

May 6, 2020

RE: Proposed Salary Cuts for Teachers

Dear Members of the Board of Education:

I strongly urge you to reject balancing the budget cuts that are surely coming on the backs of teachers. Public school teachers are generally hardworking individuals trying to make a difference in the lives of their students.

I am writing to you today as a teacher of 23 years. I began my career as a public school teacher and after the teacher strike in 2001, left to teach at a private school. I stayed away from the DOE for 15 years. I returned to the DOE and am currently teaching English/Language Arts to freshmen and sophomores at Maui High School. This came at a significant financial cost to my family. I took a \$20,000 pay cut to do this. I have taken on additional work in order to make up the difference.

We are already facing a teacher shortage. My 14-year-old twins have lost time in the classroom because qualified teachers were not available. My daughter had a long term sub for a significant portion of 4th grade. They both lost one year of math instruction in 6th grade because their certified teacher left for a better opportunity on the mainland. My son lost a year of technology instruction because a teacher left due to a higher paying opportunity. The class couldn't be staffed, so it was a completely missed opportunity. At Maui High School there are many classes staffed by either emergency hires, long term substitutes or day-to-day substitutes because there aren't enough people willing to work for the pay offered.

If the goal is to provide quality education, then you need to pay for quality people to fill those positions. Hawaii is already facing a significant teacher shortage. Reducing pay in any form will only exacerbate this problem. Not only will positions remain vacant, but more good teachers will choose to leave the state or leave the profession entirely.

As a teacher, I am doing the best I can with the resources I have because I care about my students. All I'm asking in return is that you respect the job I am doing by protecting my livelihood.

Very truly yours,
Naomi McCall, ELA Teacher
National Board Certified, AYA/ELA
MEd



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

Public School Education Need to Reopen

Calvin Endo <CalvinEndo@msn.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:48 PM

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

Aloha Board of Education Members,

My name is Calvin Endo. I'm on the Waianae Neighborhood Board and Chair the Education Committee. I also sit on the State PTSA Board and other committees and boards in the Waianae community.

I was very concerned when they shut down our schools, knowing the various types of households there are in Waianae, and what home life is like for many of our school aged children. Having meals was a big concern, since the only real meals many students have are the meals at school. It is good that they have been serving meals at most of our schools, but for many, the school is not within safe walking distance. The online classes are a good idea, but they only service those who have parents and family members who know and have the technology, and care about education. Some teachers don't seem to have made online classes available to their students. My wife is helping two first graders who have different teachers at Maili Elementary School, one has to use paper packets for her work, and the other has her work online. I became very concerned when I began to hear of the problems facing our students, families and teachers.

Many of our **students** are not being educated since the shutdown because there is no one overseeing their education. Many are homeless, living in shelters or transitional homes or even low income housing. Most of these families don't know much English or even have the communication skills to ask someone for help. We are working with a few Micronesian students whose parents don't speak English and I'm sure there are many of our ESL students in the same situation. Many families don't even know that there are internet service providers that will provide internet service for free for students. No one is reporting the amount of suicides or attempted suicides, or even the amount of domestic violence that has increased. Hiding the truth of what's taking place in many of our homes, increases the problem.

Most **parents** today have a hard time helping their children with school work because the content is like a foreign language for them. Throw in the use of technology, and many parents have no clue on how to help their children. My biggest concern are those children who come from dysfunctional homes, where abuse and violence increased because they are locked in their homes, and no one is watching the abuse that is taking place. Parents are

under much pressure from losing their jobs, to the possibility of losing their homes, so their children's education has taken a back seat.

Teachers are having a hard time caring for their own families' needs, and trying to teach their students online. I do want to say, at this point, that we have some amazing teachers, who are doing amazing things to keep their students engaged in learning, and having interactive online classrooms. But for most teachers, it's been hard, because now your classroom door does not close at the end of the day. The internet does not send students home when the bell rings. For many teachers it's time consuming to work with individual students everyday.

If we do not open our schools soon, we will face bigger problems in the future. I wish our leaders would see the bigger problem than a few people getting the virus. Hundreds will suffer long lasting effects because of the school closures.

This is the voice of those who have no idea you are having this meeting and even if they did would not know how to voice their concern.

Calvin Endo
Cell 808-429-0132



Testimony about teacher pay

Jennifer Kramer <jenkramerteacher@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:48 PM

Dear Board of Education Personnel,

I am sending this letter for the second time just in case there was an issue with the first one--I realized I forgot to include a subject. I really wanted to make sure you get it.

My name is Jennifer Kramer. I am a second grade teacher at Keone'ula Elementary. I am very concerned about teacher pay cuts and want to urge you to consider other options.

I believe pay cuts will harm teachers. Prior to this epidemic, an Oahu family of four bringing in \$93,300 or less was considered low income [according to the U.S. Housing and Urban Development](#) guidelines. While many people are suffering, [median home prices continue to increase and are at \\$810,000. Median condominium prices continue to increase and are at \\$435,000.](#) While the federal government is infusing money into the system on a national level, our state government is considering cutting some of the lowest paid professionals' salaries. Fully certified teachers in Hawaii start at 63% of HUD's low income qualification and a 20-year teacher with the equivalent of a doctoral degree is still low income according to HUD guidelines. While many teachers have relied on second jobs to supplement their salaries, many have lost those jobs and rely solely on teaching to get by. The problem is many of them can't get by and are leaving Hawaii, resulting in the current teacher shortage crisis.

I also believe pay cuts will harm children. Already, many are not being taught by qualified teachers. What will happen when teachers leave because they simply can't afford to stay here—or retire, because this makes more sense financially than continuing to teach? (Some teachers may choose to supplement retirement with part-time jobs like substituting and actually make more than they would teaching.)

Pay cuts will also be harmful for the long-term future of Hawaii. Already, teacher pay was cut during the 2008 recession—and has never recovered. Now, to cut that pay again sends a clear message to anyone who would consider becoming a teacher in Hawaii. Please consider that people already don't want to teach here. I have taught K-2 for many years, and I remember when the majority of my students wanted to become teachers. Now, second graders tell me that they would never become teachers because teachers do not make enough money. What message are we giving to our children about respect for their own education, and for spending money on four years of college to become future teachers? Education is the foundation of society, and all of Hawaii will benefit from a well-educated community.

Please consider other ways to save money:

1. Taxes. Going back to home prices—During this unprecedented time, very wealthy people live in, and will continue to move to Hawaii. While the Supreme Court struck down the proposed constitutional amendment to use property taxes to fund public education due to unclear language in 2018, certainly now is a time to question whether a constitutional amendment to use property taxes on the highest end properties to fund state programs should be considered—and part of that money can certainly benefit public education.
2. The DOE can save a lot of money by putting non-classroom teachers into classroom positions.
3. I think we should reconsider the Smarter Balanced Assessment and other high-cost items. Questions to consider include: How much does the DOE spend per pupil on SBAC? Do they pay more than other states for the same tests? Can they consider foregoing those tests during the 2020-2021 school year?
4. The DOE can consider other programs that it has purchased. We are a large group with negotiating power. Can we limit programs to those that have been most effective and negotiate lower costs?
5. The DOE uses a tremendous amount of copy paper, construction paper, and other classroom materials. They are often purchased by teachers on an individual basis or by schools on a school-by-school basis. What if such items were purchased in bulk and vendors had to compete for our business?

Thank you for your time. I hope that you will consider the effects of this decision along with the many ways we can avoid cutting teachers' pay.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Kramer



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

No teacher cuts.. already low pay raises

Kathryn Rose <mskathrynrose@yahoo.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:50 PM

Reply-To: "mskathrynrose@yahoo.com" <mskathrynrose@yahoo.com>

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

Good Afternoon BOE:

You can't allow our teacher pay to be cut.

First we already have a teacher shortage.

Second, as teachers we already make less than other states with no significant future pay raises or benefits.

Thirdly this will affect the quality of education, good teachers staying in the system,

Fourth this will affect the stability of our personal homes, children, by adding more responsibility to raise a family or finding other means to subsidize homes, mortgage, education opportunities, and basic food on our table.

Sincerely yours

Kathryn Rose

8084295888

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



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

re: Paycuts

Tracy Deshield <tracy.deshield@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:51 PM

Aloha BOE Members,

My name is Tracy. I've been teaching special education on Maui at Kalama Intermediate School for going on over 20 plus years.

What has happened to our economy throughout the world has been very devastating to say the least. I'm sure each state will need to find ways to balance their budgets. To hear that Hawaii wants to balance the budget on the backs of educators and our Keiki is devastating. These cuts would only further harm our already critical teaching shortage!

I teach special education which has been an area of critical shortage ever since I've been teaching in Hawaii. This drastic pay cut would set Hawaii back even more! I've seen so many teachers both special and general teachers, leave after one or two yrs because they can't afford to live here on their salaries.

We would have more students go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. This would leave students with long-term subs. From a special education side, this would put more work on the teachers because they would have to step up and do the IEP's because they aren't certified. It's happened in the past. This could set us up for law suites down the road!

I have been fortunate enough to own a home with my partner but if that proposed pay cut happens, we may lose our home. My partner is an essential worker working but not getting paid because there isn't enough business coming in and just barely enough to pay the business bills. I also have a student loan that isn't covered under the CARE Act because it's owned by a commercial bank. I'm terrified to think what will happen if I do get a pay cut.

I also have friends who would be taking a 40% pay cut because they are both teachers with a mortgage and plenty of children. How are we teachers supposed to go to work to give our keiki the best education Hawaii has to offer when we will be worrying about how we will pay our bills? Or, we will be looking to work 2 jobs. Gov. Ige mentioned that he was looking into alternatives to helping balance the budget. This still should be exhausted first but even then taking a pay cut that was proposed would only further hurt our economy but most importantly of "Keiki" education.

I ask you to please look at alternatives to balancing the budget. Think about how this would devastate our already critical teacher shortage.

Mahalo,
Tracy

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

Proposed Time-off without pay

Brian Harris <brian_harris@baldwin.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:52 PM

To BOE members

I would strongly encourage you to look to other sources of budget reduction rather than eliminating days from the regular school schedule in the vain of previously termed "Furlough Fridays" Our students will have gone 10 weeks without traditional instruction and if this proposal passes more instructional time will be lost. Some say we should not balance the budget on the backs of our teachers, I would take it further, and say please don't balance the budget on the backs of Hawaii's students, don't take away any more instructional time. Thank you for your consideration.

--

Brian Harris
Science Dept.(Biology)
H.P. Baldwin High School
[1650 Kaahumanu Ave.](#)
[Wailuku, HI 96793](#)



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

Possible 20 percent pay cut for teachers

STEPHANIE MCLAUGHLIN <smclaughlin808@gmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:53 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: Stephanie GOOGLE DOCS <smclaughlin@moanalua.hi.us>

I have been a teacher in Hawaii for the past 30 years. I cannot believe you are considering cutting teacher pay by 20 percent! We are the lowest paid teachers in the entire United States when you factor in the cost of living. SHAMEFUL! Do not "thank us" for all we have sacrificed for our students by cutting our pay. If you do, I will retire! Sincerely, Stephanie McLaughlin, Language Arts teacher, Moanalua high school

--

Stephanie McLaughlin

"Be the change you wish to see in the world."



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

no pay cuts!!!

Channa Uyetake <channaue@gmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:54 PM

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

Aloha! I am a newly tenured teacher and am extremely proud of that accomplishment. I never knew how much love, sweat and tears I would pour into my newly found career. I can only imagine what veteran teachers feel when hitting their 10-20-30 years of teaching. To even think that a proposal to cut our and other government workers pay by 20% is an insult.

Teachers who are on the track to retire soon and teachers who have just started in the profession or are new to the state will not stick around if feeling unappreciated. They will especially not stick around if they cannot afford to live here in Hawaii. I understand that the economy has taken a massive hit because of the pandemic, however, taking away what we already have will not solve the problem. It is not in the best interest of our keiki. More schools will have unqualified teachers and/or long term subs which will take away from student learning. How can Hawaii compete with the rest of the nation if we do not put the effort into the foundation of our future - the keiki?

--

~ channa m. uyetake ~



testimony regarding proposed teacher pay cut

Mia Molinaro <miamolinaro9@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:55 PM

Dear Board of Education Personnel,

My name is Mia Molinaro. I am a Kindergarten teacher at Kainalu Elementary. I am a 22 year veteran teacher with the DOE. I am very concerned about the proposed teacher pay cuts. I urge you to consider other options and understand how devastating this would be to our livelihood. We are hard working professionals that are struggling to pay our mortgages, pay off debts, and feed our families. This pay cut would directly impact our day to day living and the effects would be felt for years to come.

I believe pay cuts will harm teachers for many years to come. Prior to this pandemic, an Oahu family of four bringing in \$93,300 or less was considered low income according to the U.S. Housing and Urban Development guidelines. While many people are suffering, median home prices continue to increase and are at \$810,000. While the federal government is infusing money into the system on a national level, our state government is considering cutting some of the lowest paid professionals' salaries. Fully certified teachers in Hawaii start at 63% of HUD's low income qualification and a 20-year teacher with the equivalent of a doctoral degree is still low income according to HUD guidelines. While many teachers have relied on second jobs to supplement their salaries, many have lost those jobs and rely solely on teaching to get by. This will directly affect my family of four. I am struggling to keep my daughter enrolled in college. She is studying to become a secondary teacher and is seriously considering another career choice. She sees how little teachers are making and that they are not being valued and supported by Hawai'i legislatures. Her college tuition is increasing, housing and food costs are increasing while you are proposing drastic pay cuts. How will Hawai'i attract and keep teachers now and in the years to come?

I also believe pay cuts will harm children.. Many teachers will have to leave because they simply can't afford to live here. Others will choose to leave teaching to go into a field that pays a living wage or find a second job. Teachers will be emotionally, physically, and financially depleted from just trying to survive living in Hawai'i.

Please consider other ways to save money:

1. Taxes. Going back to home prices—During this unprecedented time, very wealthy people live in, and will continue to move to Hawaii. While the Supreme Court struck down the proposed constitutional amendment to use property taxes to fund public education due to unclear language in 2018, certainly now is a time to question whether a constitutional amendment to use property taxes on the highest end properties to fund state programs should be considered—and part of that money can certainly benefit public education.

2. The DOE can consider programs, costs, and assessments that it has purchased. We are a large group with negotiating power. Can we limit programs and assessments to those that have been most effective and negotiate lower costs?

Thank you for your time. I hope that you will consider the effects of this decision along with the many ways we can avoid cutting teachers' pay.

Sincerely,

Mia Molinaro



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

Testimony about teacher pay

Camilynn Saba <camilynn.saba@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 4:58 PM

Dear Board of Education Personnel,

During these unprecedented times, cutting teacher's pay would not be an ideal option. It will affect the lives of not just teachers but, the lives of many others. I want to urge you to consider other options.

The pandemic has already affected many Hawaii residents struggling to survive here. There are more than 200,000 unemployment claims and 100,000 people still waiting to get benefits. Cutting the salaries of 13,000 public school teachers in the state of Hawaii who oversee 283 public and charter schools and 185,000 students per year is not the answer. Collectively, 198,000 more lives will be affected by teacher pay cuts.

During this pandemic, teachers are still planning distant learning lessons, creating materials and resources for students, conducting online meetings, bridging academic gaps, communicating and reassuring families that we are all in this together, while managing their own personal families quarantined with them. I have been an educator for thirteen years. I am currently the only member of the household that is employed. Our home is the shelter of family members that have children and nowhere to go. Two of these household members are my own children who are distant learning from home. One is a senior and one is in the second grade. We are struggling financially and have to access grab-n-go meals or community food banks to survive. Nevertheless, I consistently ensure that my students and their families are connected and strive daily to keep them engaged. I work with my grade level to plan weekly lessons and resources for our students. The pandemic has not stopped us from doing our job. Infact, it is calling us higher to reach our students from a different angle. If another pay cut is made in our household this will affect our survival. I will need to find another job for us to all survive. How will this affect my students? How will this affect my family? How will this affect my health? Imagine 13,000 other teachers feeling the same way.

Hawaii teachers already make 11.6% less than the average Hawaii worker. As of April 2019, we are already losing 1,200 teachers per year. A 20% salary reduction would result in the loss of \$600 to \$1,800 in monthly income for teachers. Cutting an additional 20 % will inevitably worsen Hawaii's teacher shortage crisis. What kind of message does this send to teachers here in Hawaii? Who will be called to service the 185,000 public school keiki of Hawaii? Will they be qualified teachers? How will this affect our keiki in the long run if they are not qualified teachers? Will this short term financial proposal be the best fix for the future of our keiki? The answer is no.

Please consider other ways for the state to save money:

Access to the "rainy day" budget reserve fund is more than \$1 billion, and the CARES Act approved by Congress and President Trump has \$863 million to bolster government finances.

Sincerely,
Camilynn Saba
Keone'ula Elementary
Grade 2 - Teacher

--

With Much Aloha!

Camilynn Saba

Keone'ula Elementary School

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Testimony for the Hawaii State Board of Education meeting Thursday, May 7.

Nancy Halley <nancy_halley@baldwin.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:16 PM

Please accept and read my testimony against teacher furloughs and salary reductions in respect to the presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ('CARES Act') K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process," meeting Thursday, May 7, 2020

Name: Nancy Halley
School: Henry Perrine Baldwin High School
Subject: Chemistry and Biology
Grade level: 10,11,12

1. Cutting educators salaries by any amount will just inflate the financial stress of educators and their families and contribute to the economic downturn in our local economies.

Many teachers with partners and families are the only ones bringing home an income right now. Their family members and partners have been laid off or have had to shut their businesses down. Most teachers with partners and single teachers too, have more than one stream of income because it's next to impossible to live in Hawaii on a teachers' salary. Having their second source of income shut off has placed teachers under financial stress and many are now the sole income provider. Many people that have been laid off have not received U.I.C. yet. Making their educator husband or wife the only one "bringing home the bacon".

I rent out every spare room in my house to supplement my teacher salary so I can remain in my home. Everyone here, except me, is unemployed due to Covid19. I am the only one paying the mortgage and all other bills at this time.

2. By cutting teacher pay, the State will be lowering my earned pension benefits and I will be financially hurt by that for the rest of my life. I am an older teacher that plans on retiring in 3 years. These were to be my top 3 years and are important in the calculation of my pension.

Is this how my career with the D.O.E. ends?

3. Teachers are proactive and will be working extra hard through the summer.

Teachers will be working harder than most summers past to prepare for the opening of schools because there is a very real possibility that schools may open up only to shut down again regardless if it's Covid19 or a hurricane or any other reason and teachers need to be prepared to offer students continuity in learning.

Local schools individual departments are already, discussing what this “preparation,” will look like. This work needs to be done during the summer.

- a. Creating and putting together learning packets and manipulative hands-on materials ahead of time. As a science teacher, I need to come up with “kits” students can take home and work with.
- b. Learning and practicing how to proficiently teach via an online platform and purchasing any soft or hardware needed to accomplish this.
- c. Deciding on software applications for students learning from home. I’m a science teacher and I will be learning how I can offer students virtual labs from home.
- d. Teachers are discussing classroom set up and hygiene. Many teachers have concerns about going on campus with (in our school) 1500 students. Plans are being discussed regarding physical distancing and new norm classroom protocols.

4. Do not balance the budget on the backs of students

Furloughing teachers will only cut back on student instructional hours and place students months behind other schools across the country. Because of lack of preparedness by the B.O.E and the D.O.E and school level leaders, most public schools have not been able to offer continuity of learning during this pandemic since March 15. I am deeply saddened by the lack of preparedness and vision of the D.O.E. and our State government.

5. Do not cut teachers wages

Cutting wages will result in early retirements, younger teachers seeking employment elsewhere or leaving the State, and potential teachers deciding not to enter the field. This will lead to classrooms run by substitute teachers unqualified to teach the subject they have been handed - if we can even get enough substitutes. It will lead to overcrowded classrooms. How can we keep healthy and safe in this type of environment?

It will also result in teachers not offering or participating in school clubs, committees, extra-curricular activities, and offering additional help to students after school. ***We will be on our way to our second job.***

6. Be progressive. Look at a variety of options.

I suggest the State look at a variety of options such as:

- Conducting energy audits of all schools (and even State buildings) to lessen electric and water usage.
- Postpone non-essential facility upgrades (like the millions of dollars spent on our schools parking lot last year...what a waste of money).
- Staggering school hours for students, so they are not all on campus at the same time? For energy and food savings, and health reasons too.
- Investing in food farms in schools to help feed students, communities, provide for food security, and train more students in sustainable practices, science and agriculture. Could schools be more empowered to generate income?
- Revisit plans to build new schools (for example: Kihei highschool on Maui). Could the school be built smaller or differently, so that it is less expensive to build and

operate but also has been set up to keep offering education even if the school is closed.

Having people tell me they respect my profession does not put food on the table or keep the lights on. Frankly, I'm tired of always fighting for my salary. I work my akole off. I am also sincerely concerned for our students. They deserve a quality education.

Please do not furlough or cut teacher salaries.

Respectfully,
Nancy Halley

“Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (‘CARES Act’) K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process.”

Hawaii State Department of Education employees **received an email from Superintendent Christina Kishimoto** informing them of this meeting and presentation.

On page six of the presentation, under Draft COVID Re-Balancing Framework, there is a list of potential expenditure adjustments to rebalance the state’s general fund budget. It includes calculations based on directed leave without pay, or supplemental time off without pay, which amounts to a 19.62% salary reduction for our members and other state employees. This table is based on information provided by the state Office of Budget and Finance to the HODOE on April 24.

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Mission The mission of BHS is to develop a community of learners who have the competence and confidence to achieve personal goals and who are responsible stewards of our global community.

Nancy Halley
Chemistry and Biology
H.P. Baldwin High School
[1650 Kaahumanu Ave.](#)
[Wailuku, HI 96793](#)
School 808-727-3200, Classroom 727-3228
nancy_halley@baldwin.k12.hi.us



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

Salary Cuts

Jo Ann Mastin <jo_ann.mastin@campbell.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:18 PM

Aloha, BOE Members.

My name is Jo Ann Mastin. I am a teacher at James Campbell High School and a proud product of the public school system.

I am testifying on behalf of Jacob and Jillian Mastin, my son and daughter, who attend Palisades Elementary School. They have been blessed to have loving teachers like Mrs. Lee who recognized my son's need for continued speech therapy, and Mr. Villanueva who inspired my daughter to embrace her creativity and imagination. I am writing because I know how much of a difference they've made in my children's lives and countless others.

I am testifying on behalf of the young teacher who just did a Peer to Peer Professional Development with about 150 teachers and administrators from all over the state via Webex about SpEd. She explained how she continues to provide services to her students virtually so that they can continue to make gains in their goals. She does this while caring for her 6-month old baby.

I am testifying on behalf of the team of class advisers and teachers who spent two 12-hour days this past weekend to assure that the Class of 2020 experiences a special graduation ceremony - this on top of still conducting classes, and making contact with students and juggling their own families. I am sure that this is happening at every high school in the state right now.

I want kids like Jacob and Jillian to continue to have quality education - much of which hinges on the backs of teachers who are willing to do so much - like be flexible during a pandemic. You know the story. Teachers are willing to sacrifice a lot for the good of others - but at what cost?

I don't want good teachers to leave. I want good teachers to stay. I want good people to WANT to be teachers. I want good teachers to get paid their worth. Please consider other alternatives than to cut our salary. My kids deserve it. Every kid does.

Sincerely,
Jo Ann Mastin



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

Fwd: Please reconsider pay cut for teachers!

Monica Caserta <honoluamassage@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:20 PM

Mahalo

Monica Caserta
Wellness Advocate DōTERRA
honoluamassage@gmail.com
(808)870-1266

Begin forwarded message:

From: Monica Caserta <honoluamassage@gmail.com>
Date: May 6, 2020 at 5:05:57 PM HST
To: Testimony.boe@boe.hawaii
Subject: Please reconsider pay cut for teachers!

I'm writing today because I was just informed that the teachers may possibly be getting a pay cut. I personally think this is awful. The teachers are who are with my children For hours a day pouring their blood sweat and tears literally ! They are teaching our future leaders, salesmen and women ,restaurant workers, engineers etc. the future!!! They must be fairly compensated. The thought that they won't be able to make enough money to comfortably live their lives just doesn't make sense maybe think of another program to cut ? Thank you for your time concerning this matter!

Mahalo

Monica Caserta
Wellness Advocate DōTERRA
honoluamassage@gmail.com
(808)870-1266



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

Don't cut teacher pay

Leinaala Salausa <leinaala.salaus@hawks.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:22 PM

Aloha,

my name is Leinaala Salausa. I am the 9th grade World History teacher at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School. I love my career! I love serving my community! I love that I can live and work in Nanakuli. I see my students everywhere and I get to speak with their families as well. Cutting my pay will affect my job. I buy my own supplies for my students to use. No questions asked! You need a pencil, pen, markers, paper.... go and grab some. Cutting my pay will make this very difficult.

I have children as well. A daughter in college, a daughter that plays competitive club soccer, and a daughter in preschool. I want to raise my kids in Hawaii, cutting my pay will make this very difficult.

Please do not balance the budget by taking so much away from public servants! I understand that cuts need to be made but 20% is overwhelming!

Thank you for your time,
Leinaala Salausa



Testimony regarding Pay Cuts

Spencer Harris <spencer.harris@k12.hi.us>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:22 PM

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

Aloha,

My name is Iris Harris from Makaha Elementary School (Grade 6).

I understand how the state is financial suffering due to COVID-19, but I would like to implore looking at other options before cutting teachers' salary. Let's explore what that would increase an already suffering department:

A) Presently, teachers in Hawaii are already one of the LOWEST paid teachers in our nation. Keep in mind that Hawaii has one of the HIGHEST cost of living in our nation. This translates into teachers are currently just barely keeping their heads above water financially.

Pay cuts would mean that teachers would have to seek supplemental income to keep afloat. That would mean that teachers would not be able to work to their full potential because they would have to hold down two jobs instead of focus on one. Quality lesson plans takes time, that time would be lost because teachers would have to take on another job to balance their own family budget. Consider that the average rent for a studio apartment is \$1200. If a teacher is presently taking home a net pay of \$3000, that is already close to 50% of their income (after taxes). With a pay cut, rent ALONE would mean OVER 50% of a teacher salary is going ONLY to rent. Once you factor in the price for utilities (electricity, phone, etc), student loans, etc... that leaves very little for food and other personal expenses. Me, living alone, I can barely make it through with a grocery budget of \$400 a month. Imagine a teacher with a family of 4, or a single parent educator. The pay cut would not be supportive for that family.

C) Supporting students: It is no secret that teacher continue to spend THEIR OWN MONEY on supplies in the classroom. Whether it's an online subscription to a program, or basic supplies for our students,

teacher CONTINUE to spend their own money to support their students. A pay cut means this would be a loss for our students because there would be no money free to support students.

D) Finally, a pay cut would mean more teacher would leave the profession. There is already a teacher shortage in our state. A pay cut translates to teachers being forced to leave the profession to support their own living expense. Students would be stuck with substitutes (unlicensed teachers) in the classroom. Quality education would not be available for many of our students here on the islands. Hard to Fill places will become that much harder to fill. Doesn't every student DESERVE access to quality education?

For these reason alone: High cost of living, reduction in quality education, and less support for students I implore you to reconsider pay cuts for teachers.

Mahalo!

-Iris Harris

iPadから送信

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Setting foundations for middle schoolers; pronouns they/them; she/her; KUMU "Iris" Harris

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

Maui teachers

Benae <benae.basurto@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:25 PM

Aloha BOE,

It has come to my concerns that you are going to be cutting teacher pay and that will be horribly problematic. Not only will the teachers be impacted, but this impacts our keiki directly. My 5 children and the children of Hawaii deserve a quality education where they have qualified teachers that can help them reach their utmost potential. I am concerned that this will jeopardize schools this year and for years to come. We already have a teacher shortage with emergency hires and substitutes in many classrooms throughout the islands and this will deepen our problem. If we are truly doing what's best for our keiki we need to reconsider this decision. They are our future generation, our children, and they deserve the best we can give them.

Mom of 5
Benae. Basurto



"NO" to any cut to teacher salaries

Rachelle Ricardo <rkricardo3@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:35 PM

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

My name is Rachelle Ricardo and I am a 5th grade teacher at Manoa Elementary School. I am writing today to provide my personal testimony to you and implore that you do not allow this potential 20% cut to teacher salaries, or any cut, to happen. Attempting to sacrifice student learning in order to balance a budget is sending a very clear message to families and children throughout our state. This cut will have long lasting, negative effects to the lives of teachers, their families, and especially the lives of our keiki whom we serve.

I'm a life long learner and read a great deal about social economy and education. Professor Dana Mitra at Penn State University has done extensive research on these two topics and stated the following about her research on investing in public education in a paper from 2011:
Public education is a worthy investment for state government, with immense social and economic benefits. Research shows that individuals who graduate and have access to quality education throughout primary and secondary school are more likely to find gainful employment, have stable families, and be active and productive citizens. They are also less likely to commit serious crimes, less likely to place high demands on the public health care system, and less likely to be enrolled in welfare assistance programs. A good education provides substantial benefits to individuals and, as individual benefits are aggregated throughout a community, creates broad social and economic benefits. Investing in public education is thus far more cost-effective for the state than paying for the social and economic consequences of under-funded, low quality schools. (Mitra 2011)

If this cut or were to happen, you are taking away from the children. I am an advocate for equity in education I'd like to share some questions that my students brought up after they saw Governor Ige talk about it on the news.

- "Does this mean that the people in charge our state don't care about the kids who go to public school?"
- "Will teachers like you stop being a teacher because you'll be super broke and have to get a different job that pays better?"
- "Because we go to public school does that mean don't count?"
- "My parents said that we're lucky to have super smart teachers like ours at Manoa. They're scared that if this happens my younger brothers are gonna get all these junk teachers who are babysitters that just want a job and aren't real teachers."

Please think about the message you are sending to the children and don't sacrifice their future to balance a budget.

Mahalo for your time,
Rachelle Ricardo, M.Ed



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

Teacher budget cuts

Laura Masslon <lauramasslon@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:36 PM

Aloha,

I am a concerned parent of two elementary school children. I have heard about proposed budget cuts and I do not agree. I believe teachers are already underpaid and I heartily think that further reducing their pay would be a slap in the face. Teachers will leave Hawaii and seek employment elsewhere. My kids have had wonderful teachers through all their years in school and we need to retain the talent that is here. Both of my children's teachers have been fully present and available to us since the school closure. Both teachers present lesson plans and my children are able to continue their learning long distance. These teachers offer the children support and continue to facilitate a healthy learning environment. Please reconsider budget cuts to the teacher pay. Hawaii needs to retain the valuable resources it has which includes it's amazing teachers.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Laura Masslon
808-281-8376



Testimony

Dana Shishido <danesh1985@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:37 PM

To The Honorable Members of Hawaii's Board of Education,

I understand that this testimony may not be included in your meeting, as it may not have met the time deadline. I do hope though, that you will still be able to read it at your leisure.

My name is Dana Shishido Kobayashi and I am a third grade teacher at Wheeler Elementary. This is the 30th year of teaching for me in the public school system of Hawaii.

I am submitting testimony to the full board meeting, on May 7, 2020 for Agenda Item V, specifically the effects of Covid19 on State Funds for Education. I am against any form of pay cuts to educators.

I have two years and one month until I may file for retirement. Prior to Covid 19, I was hoping for a salary compression to bring me to the actual step of the salary scale that I should be; had I not had to face previous pay cuts, changes to our teacher contract, and furloughs. I love teaching children and have been working with children for nearly 40 years. I started as a junior leader in a private summer fun. I also volunteered as a facilitator for Training & Leadership Concepts as a young high school graduate and college student. I have been a volunteer for Special Olympics for over 15 years.

I feel I have much to offer the keiki of Hawaii. Allow me to quote a portion of a recent letter from one of my student's parent: "...she was so fortunate and blessed to have landed in your classroom...you are a super teacher, compassionate educator and so good at your job. Every once in a while a teacher comes into your child's life that will make an imprint on them in so many positive ways. That was you..." This letter brought me to tears as I feel shortchanged by Covid19. I still had so many lessons to teach and projects to work on with my students.

When I first heard of the potential 20% pay cut, I will not lie, I was angry, then hurt. I felt the sting of a slap in the face. As stated earlier, I have gone through previous cuts and furloughs, of which I have not ever financially recovered. As a single parent, through those times I struggled. Especially when I had to prevent my daughter from witnessing the struggle.

I am working harder now, than I normally would, prior to Covid 19. I have had to train myself on digital programs, create lessons that are interesting and relevant. I am up early in the morning, writing and answering emails, creating lessons, monitoring the children's progress on programs. Then, I volunteer at the Unemployment Department stationed at the Hawaii Convention Center for a few hours. Upon returning home, I continue with parent communications, conduct video meetings with my students, and continue working on enrichment activities and lessons. Last night, like many a recent night, my "workday" ended at 11:34 pm.

I just finished a recording of a read aloud book, as a parent had difficulty accessing it through a provided link. This past Sunday, I had a meeting (socially distanced, of course) with three students who were the weekly winners of my classroom contest. An optional contest that I needed to start to motivate students to complete provided work. A contest, in which the prizes are funded by my personal wallet. I specifically chose prizes that were craft items that the children could make into gifts for Mother's Day. Everything that I have shared is not out of the norm, as an educator. Yet, we are threatened by a cut in pay, for going above and beyond.

I know the reality is that I probably will not see the salary compression, and there is a dark gray cloud called "pay cut" looming over my head. Why should I stay in a career, where I am also facing cuts, whether professionally or personally, and always supplementing my classroom with money out of my own pocket? I

think I shall, at the end of my 32nd year of teaching, retire; and myself, continue being a lifelong learner in another career. I reflect back, though, to the words of that mother, mentioned above. It weighs heavy on me. However, just this once, I will think of myself. Who though will be left to suffer? The students will, after many educators like me, will have had enough. Currently, we face an annual shortage of 1000 teachers, what will the state do, if that soon turns to 2000 teachers? What, Board Members, will you do to prevent that from happening?

Please, do the right thing, do not support a 20% pay cut to the member of Bargaining Unit 05. Show the public school students of Hawaii that you are willing to stand up for them, by standing up for their teachers.

With great respect,
Dana Shishido Kobayashi
Third Grade Teacher
Wheeler Elementary
danes1985@gmail.com
808.375.1985
I have been working



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

Teacher Pay Cut Proposals

Laura Wittig <lwittig2017@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:45 PM

Dear Board of Education:

My initial reaction to the 20% pay cut to cover the states budget deficit as a result of COVID-19 was well at least I still will have a job...until I sat down and did the math. I was hired by the DOE seven years ago when I switched careers from social work to an elementary general education teacher and at that time I took a \$15,000/year pay decrease (hard to believe, but true) to pursue teaching. Unfortunately, to obtain this last master's degree in education I took out a student loan which currently is \$225/month and I believe I will be paying on this until I expire. During the seven years with increments of increase due to PD credits and raises negotiated by the union, I finally am making a salary equivalent to my last social work job in 2010. However, a 20% pay cut will revert my earnings very close to when I started working with the DOE. Meanwhile the cost of living continues to you go up as you are more than aware of for you yourselves experience it every day. I own absolutely nothing and I have absolutely nothing in savings. I am among the majority that are just trying to make it from paycheck-to-paycheck.

So what have I been doing since March 23, 2020, since I the schools are closed? I feel that I am even busier than I was before. Initiating, creating, contacting, chasing students to do their work, providing feedback takes a lot more hours than when you had all the students centralized in one location. Plus volunteering at school for Grab 'N Go breakfast and lunch and to assist the unemployment program, attending all DOE virtual meetings etc... In sum, I believe I have earned my paychecks for April and May.

Lastly, if for any reason the state still insists on pursuing pay cuts for all state employees, I believe a fairer way would be to prorate the percentage. Therefore, employees that are being paid over \$100,000 should be subject to the higher rates and reduce the percentage as the salaries shrink.

Sincerely,

Laura Wittig
Kauluwela Elementary
Second Grade
General Education Teacher



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

Are wonderful teachers

Heather Perez <madiryder2@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:53 PM

Aloha I'm writing to you about our teachers. Especially one in particular. Miss McCormick is a teacher at King Kamehameha III in Lahaina. She is by far one of the most amazing teachers we have ever come across. My son was entering 5th grade with so much anxiety. He begged me to put him in home school. Until he met this AMAZING human being. She taught him self confidence and to believe in himself. His test scores soared. Went from a second grade math student to a 5th or 6th grade math student in the school year. She is a blessing to our community and children. To take away their pay is unthinkable and disgraceful. She worked with him one on one throughout the school year and helped him become the student we now he could be. Please reconsider your decision. Without them all of our children will suffer. We will all suffer. Now he is going into 6th grade with the confidence of a high school student. We are so proud of the work he has done and owe it to her for her encouragement and reassurance. Please don't do this to them. Please listen to our emails and pleas. Thank you for your time. Mahalo and aloha!
From a very concerned parent.



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

Testimony

Nashea Kitaoka <nashea.carlos@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 5:58 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Nashea and I am the fully self-contained teacher at Waikele Elementary School. This is my second year teaching in this setting and I love being able to teach and see my students grow. In order to pay for my basic necessities, I have to work an additional job. Going forward with this pay cut will not benefit our students. I would need to take on more hours at my second job and would not be able to put my best foot forward for our keiki by being overworked and overwhelmed with the added financial stress.

Aloha,
Nashea



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

Teacher Testimony

Vanessa M <vanmytro@hotmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:00 PM

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

Aloha,

The COVID pandemic has affected everyone. The news of cutting teacher pay by up to 20% is jarring. Many of us teachers are already living paycheck to paycheck. If we lose 20% of our paycheck it would ultimately impact the children of Hawai'i in many ways.

In an effort to make up for the 20% pay cut teachers may have to pick up a second job to cover the difference. If more teachers are working two (or possibly more) jobs then that would take away planning time and take away valuable and meaningful lessons for the children of Hawai'i.

If a teacher has a second job once school resumes then they would have to leave school once their work day is complete- more than likely having to cut corners to complete their daily tasks including, correcting papers, reviewing data, planning lessons, collaborating with colleagues, communicating with parents, or even running after school clubs.

Many teachers use some of their already meager salaries to help supplement school supplies in their classrooms. I know that I have personally paid for students in my class to come on field trips. Myself and other teachers at my school have donated money to help families that are in need at our school. If our pay is cut then we would not be able to help the families in our community.

I personally was diagnosed with Shingles a week and a half ago. My primary care physician told me that more and more people are being treated for Shingles during this pandemic potentially as a result of COVID related stressors. Potential pay cuts are definitely a COVID related stressor.

Please find another way to balance the budget aside from taking pay away from teachers.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,
Vanessa Mytrohovich

Waipahu Elementary School
Grade 4 Teacher

Department of Education in the state of Hawaii,

As a teacher and parent of three I know that a budget cut to teachers will greatly affect teaching in Hawaii. It is not only expensive here, but the workload and teacher/mom life balance is a juggling act. During these last few weeks I have worked harder than ever in my google classroom, contacting parents and students, and making it work in my 5th grade class.

Teachers are not appreciated enough for all that they do. This is my first year teaching full time. I have been in education for 5 years previously. I never in my life imagined that the teacher life would be so draining and demanding. For the first quarter I even felt I may have wasted 2 years getting my Master's degree in Education as the pay did not cut it for the hours I put into my work and time I put in (even on breaks) with my students. I deeply care for my students and spend many hours of my personal breaks to ensure they were emotionally doing ok. I do not feel budget cuts would keep teachers in their line of work. There would be a lot of suffering to teacher's families. There is no way to get all the work done daily within the hours that we are in the classroom and contracted to stay on school grounds for meetings. The curriculum is already not set up and then time to grade, meet with parents, connect with students and families on deeper levels, and connect with staff about school matters outside of school time cannot and does not fit in a day/week/month.

There are so many days I am left leaving my children with limited time with me, staying up late hours to plan or grade, and figuring out how to make it more engaging just being a teacher. The way school is taught is the problem not the pay. There is a more efficient, effective way while still being engaged and entertaining. The obsessive testing and trying to keep up with the states is a problem. We are in Hawaii and losing touch with that and touch with students giving them so much to juggle as well as giving teachers so much to handle on the daily. We are not just teachers, we are

counselors, scientists, poets, parents, team players, coordinators, and hope for these young ones, our keiki.

Not only would it affect teachers it will affect students and their families. Families rely on education to support school in times where they are working and cannot be present, do not know how to teach their children, and for other means of support such as behavioral and emotional. It is not easy being a parent either. I am a single parent of 3 for the last 5 years with no child support. There are times I do not catch my children's weaknesses or strengths and teachers have shown great support to me during those times while bringing in the awareness of what needs to be addressed. I have been so grateful for the connections, support and dedication of teachers throughout the years. It is what made me want to live a life to teach and be a better community member.

I truly hope through reading all this as well as other emails you are about to receive you will reconsider what you are about to do to your state as a whole in the terms of education. Education is what makes the world go round and without teachers to educate the young ones about to step into adulthood with the right choices, being conscientious, kindness, and knowledge where we will be in 5,10,20 years from now.

Mahalo,

Jenefer McCormick
King Kamehameha III Elementary
5th grade teacher

May 6, 2020



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

Testimony against pay cuts

Gayle Fujita Ramsey <fujitaramsey@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:15 PM

I am a 2nd year educator who went back to school to obtain a dual Master's degree with certifications in SPED mild/moderate and Secondary education- social studies

I come from private industry and find it very odd that in lieu of a teacher shortage and our students not performing as expected according to standardized testing the first group you want to cut pay from are Educators.

This makes no sense to me if you want to improve and maintain what we currently have. I make more money in private industry and if I can't make ends meet I won't be able to teach my kiddos in a resource setting.

Find another way. Cut wasteful spending I see it everywhere. Why don't you?

Also, the money saved on all the emergency hires who are not certified therefore not making full pay should be more than enough to cover. Or what about all the \$ you are saving by schools being closed, light off toilets not flushing. Or what about the costs of transportation...

Think smarter don't take the easy way out cutting education.

Gayle Fujita Ramsey
Kailua High School
Social Studies Resource



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

PLEASE NO TEACHER PAY CUTS

Cara Nishijima <cara.nishijima@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:22 PM

Aloha,

As a third-grade teacher working on the west side of Maui, it would be short of catastrophic to cut our pay. Personally, I help take care of an aging parent and send her what I can every paycheck. As well, I have students that I like to make sure, have snacks, and a breakfast bar, if they haven't eaten before school. All this adds up and cutting our salaries would not only hurt us but also others that depend on us. Teachers have big hearts, we enjoy taking care of our students don't take that away from us, we already earn way too little for the jobs that we do.

Sincerely,

Cara Nishijima

Third Grade

King Kamehameha III

"A positive attitude is always win-win!"

Effective immediately, my new email is: cara.nishijima@k12.hi.us

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

Pay cuts

Michele N. <chele808@yahoo.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:26 PM

Reply-To: "chele808@yahoo.com" <chele808@yahoo.com>

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

To whom it may concern,

Please use any alternate measures rather than cutting teachers' pay. I am a single parent who hasn't received child support for many years. The proposed pay cut, Directed Leave without Pay, would be devastating to me and my child. We already live simply, yet we're still in debt, due to the high cost of living here in Hawaii. I am trying to be responsible and pay down my mortgage and credit card bill. But a reduction in pay would hurt. Please consider the other options, with pay cuts being an absolute last resort.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Michele Nakama
Grade 1 Teacher

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



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

No budget cuts!!!!

Leah Underdown <leah.underdown@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:28 PM

The last thing Hawaii needs is to take more from teachers. More budget cuts equals no quality teachers. Teachers already can barely survive especially in Hawaii. Please listen to the people on this one... This is a serious matter from mother to mother.

Leah Underdown



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

BOE Testimony

Erik Tanaka <isaiahsdaddy808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:31 PM

Dear BOE...

Please be careful in reducing teacher pay in the near future. We all know that something has to give with our tourism industry at a standstill over the past nearly two months. However, perhaps a compromise can be created. I believe that a 20% teacher pay cut will significantly affect teacher retention, of which Hawaii's keiki would suffer from not receiving quality education. Thank you very much for considering my plea.

Sincerely,
Erik Tanaka
Ilima Intermediate School
Special Education
Fully Self Contained



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

Testimony

Krystal Kekauoha <kkekauoha@benparker.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:31 PM

Aloha,

They say the keiki are our future! How will that be true if the Governor decides to give teachers a paycut?! It's sad already that we teachers are underpaid, let alone have to use our own money to buy things for the classroom. We did not receive our full 13% raise from our last contract negotiations, so how can you give us a 20% paycut?! If you truly want our future to have the proper education, PLEASE think about us teachers and do the PONO thing. A paycut will only result in teachers going on strike, the kids will be out of school even longer.. We barely get paid enough to survive here in paradise. In fact, many teachers have multiple jobs because the State lacks to take care of us, no teachers, no future. It will all be because of the Governor's selfishness.. A dominos affect.. Paycut=teacher strike/teachers leaving profession=no quality education for our children= uncertainty for our future, even YOURS!! Pay raise=happy teachers=better quality education=education fun for students= successful children=happy parents, happy families, happy communities! Stand up for us teachers, be pono, give us teachers a RAISE!!
Mahalo!



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

Dont cut pay for teachers actually teaching, trim the fat and entitlement instead!

Kimberly Keating <kimberly.keating@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:32 PM

State leaders,

Things to do instead of cutting pay for teachers in the classroom:

1-Put resource teachers back into the classroom to reduce the staff. When they tell you that they are busy working all day at their desks, THEY ARE LYING.

2-Fire all Educational Assistants not working in Fully Self Contained setting. There will be no behaviors to manage online and most do nothing already. Most learn alongside the kids or struggle in reading comprehension. Those that are competent put off getting a teachers license because they know being an EA is so much easier.

3-Trim the fat. So many are working in the DOE in higher positions or curriculum positions that do nothing for us actual teachers working with students every day.

The DOE was bloated and inefficient before this pandemic. If you cut the pay of the teachers in the classroom, you hurt the foundation of education. You will make the shortage worse and attract idiots.

Make sure you cut Administrator and department head pay at a much much higher rate, I run the IEP meetings, handle student behavior and teach.

Kim Keating
Sped teacher

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

Recent pay cut proposal- IMPORTANT!

Elizabethhaley Williams <elizabethhaley.williams@k12.hi.us>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:35 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

As an educator who has taught in Hawaii for the past 9 years, I am shocked at Governor Ige's proposal to cut the salary of most state workers by 10-20 %. This includes people at the front lines of our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic such as nurses, firefighters, and teachers. While sacrifices will understandably have to be made for our economy to repair from the damage that's been incurred, it's outrageous that the state would consider balancing its budget at the expense of Hawaii's youth. It is a well known fact that there's already a critical teacher shortage, with some students being taught by a long-term sub or unqualified teacher. I personally know many who have taken on second jobs for more financial stability- leading them to burnout on teaching and eventually quit. The keiki of Hawaii deserve to be taught by component and caring teachers, and cutting an already inadequate salary will only cause more qualified educators to leave the profession! These children deserve the best education they can possibly receive so they can pursue successful futures and give back to society. I am begging the Board of Education and Governor Ige to consider the long-lasting damage that will be caused by cutting the salaries of state workers & reducing teacher's pay.

Aloha,

Haley Williams
9th Grade English
National Board Certified Teacher

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

Proposed Teacher Pay Cuts

Christine Medaglia <christine.medaglia@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:48 PM

Aloha,

My name is Christine Medaglia and I am a teacher at Waipahu Intermediate School on O'ahu. Currently, I teach seventh grade Wellness. (Health and Physical Education) When I heard the news about school budgets being cut to help adjust for the COVID-19 pandemic, I was immediately worried. Anyone who has had to make adjustments to a budget due to less financial capital being available knows that the budget items deemed "low priority" will be cut first. Any teacher who teaches an "elective" - PE, band, chorus, art, a foreign language, etc. - should be worried. Yet, cutting a class like Wellness in order to balance the budget would only push the cost down the road. Students in PE classes around the state are taught valuable life skills; life skills that, if used regularly and correctly, can greatly reduce medical costs when the student grows up and becomes an adult. We teach students how to maintain their health through exercise and how to eat properly. We teach students sound decision making and avoidance skills. We teach them how to be responsible, respectful online citizens. The life skills taught through PE class far exceed what was taught when you and I were intermediate school students. In many ways, especially considering the world we live in now, the lessons taught in PE, and most other "electives" are just as important as math and reading skills. At the end of the day, if the students cannot maintain their own social, emotional and physical well-being, their academic ability will be hindered.

Thank you,

Christine Medaglia
Waipahu Intermediate School
Wellness - Grade 7

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Name – [Community Member](#)

Meeting (Student Achievement, Finance and Infrastructure, Human Resources, or General Business Meeting (full Board)) – [General Business Meeting](#)

Agenda item - [Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act \("CARES Act"\) K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process](#)

Position (support, oppose, or comment) - [Comment](#)

He'e penned a letter to Kishimoto about of the facade of productivity Kishimoto boasts of with distance learning. The letter to Senator Schatz that went for pages but said nothing is reflective of Kishimoto's evasiveness. How can the Board of Education discuss a budget when Kishimoto is silent on details of the reopening of school in the fall? Industries are reinventing as the state reopens. Before the Board addresses cuts, there should be a vetted plan for the delivery of education in 2020 and beyond detailing how teaching will look differently without sacrificing meaningful learning? How else can budget priorities be identified? How else can unnecessary positions and offices be identified for cuts? Community leaders, parents, and students have yet to be engaged about reopening schools. Covid has highlighted the social-economic gaps widened by deficiencies in archaic state systems. Education in Hawaii is no different. He'e has demonstrated great leadership by asking what's behind the smoke and mirrors. Society would deem anyone determining a budget without a plan as irresponsible. Board members will need the actionable plan for Fall 2020 to act upon its fiduciary duties.

Name with position/title and organization, if applicable – [Community Member](#)

Meeting (Student Achievement, Finance and Infrastructure, Human Resources, or General Business Meeting (full Board)) – [General Business Meeting](#)

Agenda item – [Community Open Forum](#)

Position (support, oppose, or comment) - [Comment](#)

I am a frustrated parent. Contrary to Kishimoto's reports, there has been no distance teaching or learning at my children's schools. My friends with kids' in schools in Honolulu are getting actual lessons from their teachers. Why is there a big difference in what schools are doing? Can the Board of Education explain to my kids who are sad when they see the disparity, and don't understand why they are being treated differently because they go to different schools? I've had to looked for resources and learning opportunities to fill my children's time. [Is Kishimoto's plan for education in Fall 2020 more of the same? My children's schools are still ill equipped to deal with the shutdown. If there is no plan to actually do distance teaching in the fall, the Board should consider giving private school vouchers to parents so we can invest in actual education for our kids. None of the private school parents or kids are](#)

complaining about their distance learning. Kishimoto and her staff should do better, or give up and set up a private school voucher program.



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

Re: Testimony

Jamie Lyn Tateyama <jltateyama@moanaluaHS.k12.hi.us>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:03
PM

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

Hi, my name is Jaime Tateyama and I have been teaching in the State of Hawaii Department of Education for 10 years now. After hearing again about perhaps there being talks about the pay cuts, towards the teachers, all I could think about was about my situation as a teacher and if I could ever be financially out of debt and start a family here.

Even with my pay right now, I am still using it to pay off my debt I have from graduate school and due to the high cost of living in Hawaii, it has been truly difficult to pay my loans and save money. I have been paying off my graduate loan since I started teaching here for the State of Hawaii DOE in 2010. In addition, My husband and I have been trying to start a family, but if there are any pay cuts that happen, I am worried I won't be able to take care of my debt and have enough to support my family. Please take my testimony consideration and please do not make it harder for the teachers and for our families.

Thank you for your time and for reading my testimony

Sincerely
Jaime Tateyama
Secondary Teacher

This user is a staff member at
Moanalua High School
[2825 Ala Ilima Street](https://www.moanaluaHS.org)
[Honolulu, HI 96818](https://www.moanaluaHS.org)
www.moanaluaHS.org



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

5.7.20 meeting

Leanne Dunn <leanne.m.dunn@gmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 6:53 PM

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

To the Board of Education,

I would like to humbly request for options to be looked at before teachers receive a 20% pay cut.

As a first grade teacher with a masters degree in education who is at class 7 in pay I still am not able to make ends meet. I was also working a catering job on the weekends and some evenings as well as working the after school program at our school.

Most likely if there are 20% cuts I will have to move to the mainland to live with family there. I won't be able to live in the state I call home and be with the upcountry community where I have taught for 8 years. During this time more parents have expressed their thankfulness and appreciation than ever before. I have FaceTimed, Zoomed, texted, called, emailed and used our Class Dojo more than ever before to stay connected with my students and their families.

The possibility of a 20% cut has given me anxiety and prevented me from sleeping at night. This is only my story. There are 13,999 other stories to be told.

Again I appreciate your consideration into looking at other options for state workers.

Leanne Dunn
Makawao School, grade 1
808.280.8861

--

null



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

School gardens have food that is not harvested

Lillian Coltin <lcoltin2016@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:03 PM

Aloha

Many teachers, students, parents and community volunteers have worked on developing school gardens that provide access to healthy local foods. With school campuses shut down, Food is not being harvested and distributed when families are experiencing food shortages. Volunteers are willing to go onsite and safely harvest and distribute food. School gardens are a valuable asset on many campuses and could continue to provide for communities through the summer and beyond. Individual schools are waiting for HDOE leadership to provide guidance on accepting the generous help of nonprofits to keep the gardens productive.

Mahalo for your support and recognition that so many knowledgeable organizations are standing by to help students, families, and school

Lillian Coltin

Sent from my iPhone



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

Please Don't Support Cutting Teacher Pay

Sarah Milianta-laffin <sarah.milianta-laffin@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:08 PM

Aloha Hawaii Board of Education,

My name is Sarah "Mili" Milianta-Laffin and I teach STEM Lab at Ilima Intermediate in Ewa Beach. I've been teaching public school for 14 years, and the salary I make teaching in Hawaii is less money than I made as a first year teacher in Texas 14 years ago.

My salary covers rent only, and without my partner, I could not afford to teach in Hawaii. I love my job. I've missed my students so much over this quarantine period. I'm going to miss them more if our pay gets cut because we've just done our family budget and if I lose 20% of my pay, we will barely be able to make it another year here.

Please stand up for teachers as professionals and fight any potential pay cuts.

Mahalo for Reading and for Standing Up for Teachers Like Me,

Sarah "Mili" Milianta-Laffin

--

Sarah "Mili" Milianta-Laffin

[Ilima Intermediate](#) STEM Lab Teacher, PAEMST 2019 Finalist
Science Department Head & STEM Department Head
Faculty Sponsor: 2020 GLSEN National GSA of the Year: Rainbow Royales

Follow our STEM Lab adventures on Twitter & Instagram [@STEMwithMili](#) Support our class on [DonorsChoose.org](#)

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

Please make every effort not to cut teacher pay

Travis & Amy Williams <itravisw@hawaii.rr.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:14 PM

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

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Amy Williams and I am a kindergarten teacher at Wheeler Elementary in Wahiawa. As a veteran teacher I lived through the last teacher strike and furlough Fridays and know the impact of low teacher salaries firsthand. We have a teacher shortage that continues to negatively impact our state by making it necessary to staff countless classrooms with substitutes or personnel who are not highly qualified. Cutting salaries will not encourage young people to become teachers and it may make it unsustainable for teachers currently in the field to remain. Teaching is my passion and I can definitively say the only reason I have been able to remain in this profession for over twenty years is that I am part of a dual-income household.

I realize the current COVID 19 crisis is presenting our state with unprecedented challenges but I would urge all decision-makers to carefully consider the far-reaching consequences of drastically cutting the salaries of teachers. Teachers need to be able to pay bills, purchase food, pay for medical care, and all of the other basic expenses that come with being a functioning member of society. I believe any cuts to salaries should be made only as a last resort when every other option has been exhausted rather than seeming to be the first option considered. I sincerely hope that every effort will be made to seek alternatives to reducing salaries.

Sincerely,

Amy Williams

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10



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

Teacher pay.

David Kaniaupio <vicimmaconcepts808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:14 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is David Kaniaupio. Please don't cut teachers pay because schools are going to need more teachers to operate safely during the pandemic. Cutting pay will force teachers to be concerned,

Thank you,

David Kaniaupio



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

Please don't cut teachers pay

Mister K <mr.k.kailuhs@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:16 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is David Kaniaupio. Please don't cut teachers pay because schools are going to need more teachers to operate safely during the pandemic. Cutting pay will force teachers to be concerned,

Thank you,

David Kaniaupio



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

Please don't cut teachers pay

NHIS E-Sports <nhisesports@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:17 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is David Kaniaupio. Please don't cut teachers pay because schools are going to need more teachers to operate safely during the pandemic. Cutting pay will force teachers to be concerned,

Thank you,

David Kaniaupio



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

salary cut

Borje, Rolando <rolando.borje@kalakauamiddle.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:19 PM

Good morning,

I do not know how I would say it if I made a right decision in coming here in Hawaii to teach science 8, I am a licensed teacher (dual subjects) chemistry and mathematics. Still confuse what the right things to do, stay here or go back again in California to teach. If salary cut will takes place it is more difficult for Hawaii to attract highly qualified educators and it is unfair for our students to give them sub or non licensed teachers. I hope to find a solution to avoid this to happen.

Thanks,

--

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

PLEASE DO NOT CUT FROM OUR HARD WORKING TEACHERS

K Kaniaupio <kaniaupiok@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:21 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Kristin Kaniaupio. Please don't cut teachers pay because schools are going to need more teachers to operate safely during the pandemic. Cutting pay will force teachers to concerned,

Thank you,

Kristin Kaniaupio



Testimony May 7

Spencer Gill <spencergill918@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:21 PM

BOE Testimony for May 7, 2020

General Business Meeting: A. [Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act \("CARES Act"\) K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process](#)

Parent

Oppose

Aloha Chair Payne, Vice Chair De Lima and members of the Hawaii State Board of Education.

Like you, I seek to eliminate achievement and preparation gaps in public education by improving the system as a whole, and avoiding the surface, quick wins.

As you look ahead in utilizing the federal CARES act funding and considering budget restrictions, I bring your attention to the exorbitant current expenditures that if addressed and worked on as a system, the outcome for the system and public trust in the DOE by improving accountability and productivity in the DOE. When faced with budget restrictions, the DOE will naturally look at sources of savings. I bring your attention to the number of employees in the DOE that are considered "specialist" in their respective content and subject matter that are responsible for scheduling of contractors that are hired to train, plan, analyze, or design action plans. Instead, scheduling contractors has become the primary role of a specialist making in excess of \$100,000 annually. As an example, based on the budget materials reviewed months ago, in the office of Civil Rights Compliance Office, there are 15+ equity specialists that are specialist according to their position description, yet the DOE has a \$750,000 contract for training by Atixa for Title IX training and has asked for another appropriation of \$750,000. Each specialist draws a \$100,000 as an educational officer.

A few examples of where internal specialist can replace exorbitant contractors and begin to build capacity:

- \$2.6 Million contract with MTX of Southwest to do weekly monitoring of provider services for incarcerated students. How many incarcerated students are there in Hawaii schools?
- \$926,000 contract with Diana Browning Wright for Multi-Tiered System of Supports for which you have an internal team of education specialists making \$100,000 as educational officers.
- \$311,160 contract with Richards Lindsay & Martin to conduct training for Section 504 for which you have an internal team of specialists to carry this function out.
- \$2.1 Million to University of Wisconsin to provide English Language Assessments while you have an internal team of education specialist to carry out this function.
- \$1.5 Million to Essential Teaching and Learning for Professional Development to implement NGSS.

- \$5Million contract with an educational firm, Stetson and Associates to providing professional development and support for inclusion, a movement that has been in place since the 1970s. You have an office of education specialists making in excess of \$100,000/person annually that can provide this internally.

Please insist on accountability within the Department of Education, it's employees to begin a professional culture of excellence that will someday reach the schools.

I want to extend my deepest mahalo to each of you for putting in the hard work to make sense of just what the capabilities of our system may accomplish to increase the focus on students.

Mahalo Nui,



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

Testimony - Teacher Salary Reduction

Ryan Mandado <ryanmandado@dreamhouseewabeach.org>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:22
PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Chairwoman Payne and Members of the Board,

My name is Ryan Mandado and I'm the Chief Academic Officer of DreamHouse 'Ewa Beach Public Charter School. Today, I'm writing to the board to not reduce the salaries of our amazing educators across the state.

COVID-19 has affected many of our communities. Our teachers quickly changed their teaching styles to meet the needs of our children across all islands. The world shifted and said, "Move to distance learning!" Educators quickly shifted and did an amazing job thinking of innovative and creative ways to ensure all students had continued access to an excellent education.

As a School Leader, I celebrate the hard work my teachers are doing. I cannot run a school without my teachers. Teachers run schools. This pandemic provides us an opportunity to look at how we need to invest more in our public education system.

Reducing teacher salaries is not the answer to building school environments our students need and deserve. Please hold a strong stance in ensuring our teachers are supported. Our system cannot thrive without our teachers.

With gratitude,
Ryan Mandado
Chief Academic Officer
DreamHouse 'Ewa Beach Public Charter School
ryanmandado@dreamhouseewabeach.org
808-931-0442



Do not reduce teachers salaries!

Gavin Jardin <gavin.jardin@campbell.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:23 PM

Aloha!

My name is Gavin Jardin and I am a 3rd year Physical Education teacher at James Campbell High School. What you are proposing is dangerous. With one of the highest cost of living in the nation, if the proposed pay cuts go through you will lose more than just teachers, you will lose the people's trust.

I love teaching. I love being from Hawaii and being able to connect with my students. That is something that will change if I need to move to another state because the amount we get paid just isn't cutting it. I love my colleagues and James Campbell High School (So much love for the PE department and my co-advisors for the class of 2022 Go Lions!). I am stuck between a rock and a hard place. If the pay cut goes through, I am looking at a little more than \$600.00 of income that I will be losing each month. I pay \$1,000 in rent, \$350 in students, another \$350 for my car payment on top of other daily necessities (Groceries, Gas, etc.) a month in order to make it out here and maintain a healthy lifestyle; you do the math.

If this pay cut goes through, I will need to say goodbye to my home I created at James Campbell High School and move back in with my parents; my parents live on the island of Kaua'i. This would mean leaving friendships that I have made with my colleagues who I now consider family. This would mean breaking a promise with my student council kids who I have made a commitment to be one of their co-advisors until they graduate high school. I am finally realizing how much teachers really get paid and it's not a lot but we are making due. If the pay cut goes through and as much as it pains me to say this, I cannot promise you I will be back in the profession that I love so dearly.

The money is there for you to use; rainy day fund. Mr. Rosenlee has stated that those funds are available for you to use but you choose not to. David Ige, one of the largest unions supported you during your run for governor, it's time for you to support us. I will not beg, but I urge you to make the right choice for the teachers and the keiki of Hawaii.

Respectfully,
Gavin Jardin
JCHS Team Sports/Physical Education



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

Testimony general business meeting

Anita Soldwisch <soldanita968@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:24 PM

May 7, 2020 BOE Testimony

General Business Meeting: A. [Presentation on potential impact of COVID-19 on state funds for education; potential priorities for federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act \("CARES Act"\) K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-2021 school year; and initial planning process](#)

Parent

Oppose budget, requesting vouchers for private school tuition

Dear Board of Education members,

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concern about the lack of learning that is happening throughout Hawaii Public Schools. Since Spring Break, Superintendent Kishimoto talked about enrichment. Enrichment implies there is basic instruction that is being enriched. Since the beginning of the outbreak, Superintendent has not cared about learning leaving schools to make individual decisions about learning.

Loosening the standards of graduation requirements was a mistake and a very telling message on the priorities of the Board of Education, the lack of accountability of the Department of Education, and most of all, how little the BOE values children in Hawaii.

One of the CARES spending proposal includes compensatory education. I would like you to consider vouchers for every child to obtain a private education at a school of choice. Every student lost an education this school year. Every student is in need of recoupment given the unacceptable plans of enrichment and continuity of learning that said nothing.

The HSTA ran the show and the DOE was ill-equipped to put students at the center of all of this. Teachers are not teaching. My child has yet to have a "knock on the door" as Superintendent Kishimoto stated in the media repeatedly. Teaching is not happening.

Sincerely,



Testimony

Michał Nowicki <michal.nowicki@gmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:32 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov, boe_hawaii@notes.k12.hi.us

Aloha, Board of Education members.

I am a former Mathematics, French, and Computer Science teacher. I taught for 10 years, splitting my time between Waipahu High School and the University Laboratory School.

In 2009, my second year of teaching, I experienced "Furlough Fridays" and had my pay cut at the same time I was paying my way through graduate school, working to obtain my Master's in Education. It took almost a decade for teachers to work back up to the salary they were paid before that pay cut.

Over my last 7 years of teaching, I witnessed at least 8 mathematics teachers quit my department. They left to pursue employment in private schools in Hawaii or on the mainland. It's no secret that teacher pay in Hawaii is the worst in the United States when adjusted for cost of living. Teacher salary growth has also been historically the slowest in the nation.

When in 2018 every single mathematics teacher at the University Laboratory School quit and accepted better offers elsewhere, I was so exhausted having to interview new teachers every year and I decided to leave as well to pursue different, better paid, and more stable employment.

Just recently, I was informed that my old school was looking to hire mathematics teachers again (most of the teachers hired have since left). I was contemplating going back to teaching but the Governor's proposal to cut teacher pay by 20% is beyond insulting. It took almost ten years for teachers to make up the 10% cuts we experienced in 2009. How anyone in their right mind would keep teaching in Hawaii when their salary is about to be rolled back 10+ years? How long will it take for teachers to get back the salaries they have now? Do you really want to sentence Hawaii's teachers to another 10, 15, or even 20 years of worst salaries in the nation?

Please steer clear of this crisis and strongly oppose ANY pay cuts to teachers' salaries if it is indeed your prerogative to ensure that Hawaii does not have a failing school system.

Sincerely,
Michał Nowicki
Former Mathematics Teacher and Department Chair
Waipahu High School and University Laboratory School
Former HSTA Honolulu Chapter Vice President



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

Teacher Pay Cuts

Heather Paulino <paulinomohs@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:35 PM

Dear BOE and Hawaii State,

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries! To do so would devastate our already critical teacher shortage. Think of our keiki! They deserve to have qualified, passionate teachers in the classroom. Hawaii teachers are already the lowest paid teachers in the nation when considering cost of living. We can barely make it in Hawaii on a teacher salary, and would be forced out of the profession if our pay were cut.

I understand that our economy is in crisis, but there have got to be other options. Teachers are not eligible for certain types of aid and unemployment. We can't survive. So many of us will have to leave the profession under this proposal.

More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.

Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Teachers work so hard. We have so much schooling and work so many extra hours. Summers are spent in professional development that we pay for on our own. We stock our classrooms on our own dime. We do it all for our students, but please don't ask this of us. We have already spread ourselves too thin.

This proposal is so disheartening. We were just starting to get some recognition, and there were talks of finally getting some recompense for our dedication and hard work. It is such a blow to our morale to even think that docking teacher pay is on the table.

Please help us and our students.

Thank you.

Heather Paulino
Moanalua High School
Spanish



Potential 20% pay cut to teacher salaries

Sarah Shewmaker <sarahshew79@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:37 PM

My name is Sarah Shewmaker, and I teach fifth grade at Makawao Elementary on Maui.

This is my eleventh year teaching on Maui. Right after I stated teaching second grade in Lahaina, teachers were furloughed by then governor Linda Lingle. We continued with the financial struggle through Abercrombie's tenure soon after. Only in the last few years has my paycheck been somewhat viable, and has led my family into a more comfortable space as far as finances go. We still live paycheck to paycheck, but we don't worry as much as we did before.

When I first started teaching, I was bartending as well. This was the only way I could pay my rent. I did this for a few more years until my son was born and it was no longer a possibility to drive from upcountry to Lahaina for work. It was also at this point that our salaries started to see a small raise, so I wasn't as nervous about leaving my other job.

The potential for a pay cut at this point would send my family spiraling backward. I'm not sure paying for housing and our monthly bills would be within reach, particularly since my husband works in the tourist industry, and there's no telling when things will pick up for him.

Teachers have carried the state budget on our backs for several years, and it is time for that to stop. To already be paid some of the lowest salaries in the nation is one thing, but to lower then even further seems unthinkable and without foresight.

How many kids will walk into classrooms without teachers next school year because many teachers had to leave the profession, or the state, in order to survive? It would be nice for the state and the Board to recognize that teachers are a necessity, and the message we are sending to teachers and their students matters. Please don't make teachers the scape goats once again; it's bad for education, bad for the students, and will set our economy back even further.

Thank you,

Sarah
Sent from my iPhone



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

Support teachers!!

Jesica Tennison <jessltenn@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:42 PM

Jessica Huggins
James B. Castle High School

More than ever, teachers are working harder in teaching virtual enrichment. Special education teachers are working double to support our students who can not navigate technology and provide them also their alternative leavening. A 20% pay cut while we are working harder is unreal. As my husband and I are both teachers, this would cause a financial devastation. Support our teachers!

Sent from my iPhone



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

Please don't take any money away from teachers or you could just send it in on on

Sherrie Manning <pinkmiracle33@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:42 PM

Sent from my iPhone



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

Pay cuts

Kathleen Royer <kathleen.royer@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:42 PM

Aloha, Cutting teacher pay would be devastating and further our complications of retaining teachers. My husband and I are BOTH teachers in Lahaina, Maui. We have been teaching at our respective schools for 16 years. We barely survived the first furlough we went through years ago- that was before we had two beautiful children. You need to find a different solution- cutting teacher pay is detrimental to our keiki and family.

Thank you,
Kathleen Royer- King Kamehameha III Elementary

Steve Royer- Lahaina Intermediate

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

No pay cuts

Ian Doi <ian.doi@campbell.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:50 PM

My name is Ian Doi from Campbell High School, and I teach Health and Advanced Guidance. I have 10-12 graders. Cutting teacher pay will only make it harder for us to continue living in Hawaii, where the cost of living is already so high. That would mean either that teachers will leave, or that they may have to find second or third jobs (which many already have to do). This would mean that less attention and care is being put into teaching our students, giving them a suboptimal education. We're already facing a teacher shortage, with many classes holding 35 students to one teacher. If we do receive pay cuts, this number will increase, which means less individual attention to each student. Statewide, our test scores are already below the average, and this will only serve to widen that gap.

Thank you
Ian Doi
Health and Advanced Guidance Teacher
School: (808)305-3832
TextNow Number: (808)800-5340



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

Fwd: Oppose Teacher Salary Reduction

Gini Kapali <gramyg@gmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 7:56 PM

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

-----Forwarded message -----

From: GrammyG <gramyg@gmail.com>

To: boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc:

Bcc:

Date: Wed, 6 May 2020 19:43:27 -1000

Subject: Oppose the reduction of teacher's salaries

There are many reasons why not to reduce teacher's salaries that are probably before you now.

My opposition comes from being a grandmother of 7 grandchildren. They are all so fortunate to have dedicated & committed teachers.

Please support our "support family" members because teachers are very much a part of our family & help us to grow the next leaders for our local community.

Please dig deeper to balance the budget but not at the expense of our teachers.

Thank you.

Gini KAPALI.

Aloha from Gini Kapali's iPhone



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

Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Kahanu Nguyen <knguyen@waiakeawaena.k12.hi.us>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:03
PM

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

My name is Kahanu Nguyen and I teach 1st grade at Waiākeawaena Elementary School.

Please do not entertain the idea of cutting teacher salaries, I truly can't understand the benefits, there really isn't any at all. Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage and will personally harm my family and the students I serve as well. More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession. It would also make moving a necessary consideration if we can't afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary, even at the risk of our own health! Please join me instead, in fighting to ensure that the coronavirus crisis does not result in lasting damage to Hawaii's public education and our keiki. I passionately ask for the board to partner with the educators of our future and decide upon alternative options that will benefit us all. Thank you for your honest consideration to alternative options and truly putting our keiki first!

Kahanu Nguyen



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

Consider alternatives to teacher salary cuts

Petar Kovacic <pkovacic@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:06 PM

Dear HI Board of Education,
My name is Petar Kovacic. I teach CTE at King Kekaulike High School in upcountry Maui. I strongly discourage the idea of pay cuts for the teaching profession. Reducing our pay would dishearten me. Please consider alternatives. If we absolutely must, I would support furlough Fridays again.

Aloha,

Petar Kovacic

(808) 727-3615

pkovacic@kkhs.k12.hi.us

petar_kovacic@notes.k12.hi.us

King Kekaulike High School Teacher-

Automotive Technologies 1 & 2, Automotive Repair and Refinishing,

Building and Construction 1 & 2, Industrial and Engineering Technologies Core



Reduced salaries

Michelle Brown <mbrown@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:10 PM

I have been an educator in Hawaii for 20 years. I presently teach high school science. I make \$69,850 a year before taxes. I pay \$12,000 a year in health insurance. After taxes and health insurance, most teachers barely get by. Recently at Baldwin High school I had 5 classes, each with 38 students and an un-certified special education support person. Yet I still taught labs and did everything I could to provide my students with the best education I could as sweat dripped down my body from the lack of air conditioning. My classroom was termite and roach infested. The drawers would not open. I am sure many teachers had it worse. My good friend had a bucket in her room for the leaking roof. We will not talk about the mold. At many schools, students are sent to sit in the cafeteria with security to watch them for lack of a teacher. The stories go on and on. Many teachers work through very difficult situations, while taking CARE of our youth. We are expected to be professional and we are. This proposed pay cut tells us we are not considered professional and we are not valued. This proposed pay cut tells the children of Hawaii that they are not valued. There has to be another way to manage the budget. Investing in education is the best investment you can make for the future of Hawaii. We have already lost so many good teachers due to our low salaries and high cost of living. The shortage of teachers will only get worse and our kids will suffer if the salaries are reduced. Having students in over crowded rooms, many with unqualified teachers and stressed teachers is a recipe for disaster. You will be creating a bigger problem in the long run. Please find another way.

Michelle Brown
King Kekaulike High School



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

Testimony

Peggy Doino <peggy.doino@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:16 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

As a person who has been teaching Special Education for 7 years in the state of Hawai'i, I can honestly say that if teacher salaries are reduced, I would leave the profession. My husband and I are both teachers and have been struggling to afford a simple life here in Hawai'i since we started. We recently had a second daughter and a pay cut would make it unaffordable to maintain our life here.

We moved to Hawai'i from NY to gain experience and be immersed in the culture and our experience has been absolutely incredible. It would be a shame if both of our salaries were reduced and we were forced to move back to NY where salaries for teachers are extremely competitive but the lifestyle is less appealing.

I know that I am not alone in feeling this way and many teachers would be struggling. It is such a shame that once again, the Keiki aren't being put first. Reducing salaries makes it much less appealing for licensed teachers to stay in the profession and therefore students would be stuck with long term subs and unlicensed teachers. Is this truly how we prioritize education?

Please reconsidering reducing our salaries.

Sent from my iPhone



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

Don't cut teachers budgets

Leanga Tafea Tafea <leatafea5@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:23 PM

To whom it may concern ,

I am writing this email in regards of considering cutting budget for teachers in Hawaii. I am very concern with this issue because this will affect my kids and everyone else in Hawaii. It will affect the teachers and their families especially our keikis and their future. We all want better future and the best leaders in Hawaii in the the next 30 years ahead but if we give up now by cutting teachers budget, our keikis will end up somewhere we don't want them to be. If the teachers agrees to quit then our kids will have to suffer because we give up on them. I gently ask please please don't cut teachers budget because they're doing a great job teaching my two babies.

Sincerely
Tafea family



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

Teacher pay cuts

Jenna Holladay <jennahope71@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:23 PM

Please please please

Under no circumstances should the teachers pay be reduced! In fact they all should get a raise for what they do! How could cutting their pay even be considered? It makes absolutely no sense at all. What kind of system would cut off their own hand? Our future is our children. If they don't get a proper education with satisfied, qualified, caring teachers then who will run things when we are all too old to? This is a ridiculous idea and shameful to even consider.

No no no no no!

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony

Jamie Shioji <jamie.shioji@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:29 PM

Aloha Board of Education,

My name is Jamie Shioji and I am a licensed Special Education Mentor Teacher. I have been in the profession and worked for the Hawaii Department of Education for thirteen years. I am writing in regards to the proposed directive leave without pay for the school year 2020-2021. This proposed 19.62% salary reduction would impact me personally as I currently pay a mortgage and will have a son beginning college in the fall. As it is, in addition to my full time DOE position, I have a part time job and often teach Extended School Year (ESY) to make ends meet.

The impact of this proposal to fellow teachers/colleagues will be that many veteran teachers with years of honed teaching skills will retire. New and beginning teachers who come into the profession with the excitement and energy to impact students will leave the profession as they are unable to afford living on the reduced teacher salary.

The impact this proposal has on students is that there will be more vacancies to fill with an already concerning teacher shortage. This will leave classrooms with long term substitutes and non-qualified teachers. The reality for these vacant positions are oftentimes various substitutes day in and day out with no continuity for the students. Our most vulnerable students who need the most consistency with relationships, structure and instruction will go without. Up until this point, I have been very optimistic with the DOE's positive strides with improving rigor and meeting the needs of our diverse learners. I urge you to use your creativity and collaborative efforts to think of other options to meet budgetary constraints. I truly believe that although times are tough, we need to continue to invest in our students and by doing so, we invest in our future. Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,

Jamie Shioji

KMR Induction & Mentoring Special Education Mentor
Honolulu District Office

[4967 Kilauea Avenue](#)

[Honolulu, HI 96816](#)

For KMR Induction & Mentoring specific inquiries please email: g-kmr-i-and-m@k12.hi.us

(via Group on the g suite: "KMR-I and M")

Website: <https://sites.google.com/k12.hi.us/kmr-induction-mentoring/home>

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

cutting teachers' pay

Suzanne Goodrich <suzanne.goodrich@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:29 PM

Dear Board of Education,

I am a 43 year old special educator from Radford High School with 16 years of teaching experience who is writing to ask you not to implement teacher pay cuts or furloughs to address deficits in the state's budget. Doing so might cause me and many other educators to have to relocate to the mainland to teach.

I was a military dependent whose father was stationed at Pearl Harbor from 1984-1988, so I spent some of my elementary years attending Mililani Uka and cherished experiencing the rich cultural diversity of **Hawaii's public schools. I received my BA in English literature from the University of Virginia** and my Masters in Special Education from George Mason Univ. before teaching at Radford from 2006 - 2012. Sadly, I remember all too well the pain of the DOE's Furlough Fridays. Those recession prompted paycuts contributed to my husband and I having to return to Virginia after starting a family and struggling to afford the cost of living with the added expense of child care. For 5 years, we missed Hawaii terribly and saved money so that we could try again to live successfully in the islands. In 2018, we felt triumphant in our return to Oahu and we have enjoyed enabling our daughter to experience the beautiful place of her birth.

Returning to teach special education at Radford has been such a blessing because many of the same teachers and administrators that I had the pleasure of working with before continue to make a difference in the lives of keiki in the Salt Lake and Aliamanu area as well as the military transplants who comprise Radford's student body. My familiarity with Radford's school culture, bell schedule, and IEP expectations allowed my return to teaching there feel relatively seamless. My husband, a passionate surfer, fortunately has an architectural design job with a company based on the east coast which has allowed him to work remotely from home. His work schedule offers him the flexibility of taking our Mililani Waena menehune to and from school each day.

We have yet to experience the joy of home-ownership and wonder if we will ever be able to afford the cost of real estate on Oahu and help finance our daughter's college education in the future. I fear that reducing teachers' pay might cause many professionals like me to have to look for work elsewhere. Having to say goodbye to departing teachers and train new teachers would take it toll on the learning community and would ultimately be detrimental to the quality of education.

Mahalo for taking the time to read my testimony and take it into consideration with your decision making.

Suzanne Goodrich

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

DOE Paycuts

Lorena Wong <lorenawong@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:30 PM

Dear BOE,

I realize our State is in a world of financial hurt due to COVID19.

I'm a HS teacher at Moanalua. I know personally, 3 single parent teachers there who can't afford a pay cut as it represents; car insurance, car payment bill, food bill, etc.

Already, as teachers in HI, we are well behind the mainland standards for salary. It's embarrassing that HI ranks so low on National Standardized Tests & that we have a massive teacher shortage. To add insult to injury, now you want us to take a pay cut.

Please assess your priorities, leave us little people alone to do what we love, even though we're underpaid & use our own monies for school supplies. I beg you, PLEASE STOP FORCING US TO LEAVE OUR JOBS, that we love, FOR SOMETHING ELSE, adding to mass teacher shortage. You may see an exodus of teachers if I'm you reduce the pay.

Find other solutions to get more monies, but leave the lil people alone.

I beg of you.

Sincerely,

Lorena Wong
Sent from my iPhone



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

Pay cut

Taylor Davenport <tenacioustrd@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:31 PM

My name is Taylor Davenport and I am a second grade special education inclusion teacher at Kealakehe Elementary in Kona. I, like many other teachers, live virtually paycheck to paycheck with not even the slightest possibility of ever being able to own a home in the state that I've come to love, Hawaii. This place has felt like home to me since I got here and the need for qualified teachers here is absolutely not reflected in the devastating blows that our education system takes every time a cut has to be made. Our keiki are far behind because many of our classrooms are operated by long term subs. More and more teachers are leaving the island or choosing any other career path because this is no longer a career you can build a life on. I got into teaching because I love what I do for our keiki, for our families, and for our community. I don't ask for more but I refuse to accept less than I am worth. I will not take a pay cut, I do not deserve it and I do not know one teacher that does.

-Taylor Davenport



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

Possible teacher salary cuts

Bridget B <belizabethbraun@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:33 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am a third grade teacher at Konawaena Elementary School on the Big Island of Hawaii. Due to the high cost of living I am forced to live paycheck to paycheck. If these proposed salary cuts or furloughs are enacted than many of my fellow teachers and I will not be able to afford to live and work in Hawaii. This will result in students having long term subs instead of a licensed teacher. Salary cuts would result in the keiki not receiving a complete education and would have a negative impact on the future of our state.

Mahalo,
Bridget Braun



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

Potential Paycuts

Tess Lance <tesslance17@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:34 PM

Aloha,

My name is Tess Valdez. I'm a kindergarten teacher at Makawao Elementary, and I feel it's important to let you know how devastating a pay cut would be to my family. I have two children who are also students at Makawao as well as a newborn baby. A pay cut would mean that I would literally be working in order to pay childcare. My husband has been furloughed, and is also looking at a pay cut upon his return. We stand to lose 40% of our families income. At this rate, there is no way we will be able to pay our mortgage and monthly bills. It is likely that we would have to look at relocating somewhere where two full time jobs are enough. Please consider families like us in your deliberations.

Mahalo,

Tess

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)



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

Please reconsider cutting teacher pay

Aaron Yasuhara <aaron.yasuhara@campbell.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:39 PM

To whom it may concern,

Hi my name is Aaron Yasuhara and I am a social studies teacher at James Campbell High School. I am married to an elementary teacher. We both work extremely hard everyday to give our students a great education. We also spend a lot of money out of pocket to help our students get the best possible education.

If there is a pay cut it will really make it hard for both me and my wife to survive. We really wanted to have a child but we are not able to afford to have a baby because of our pay.

Please consider all options before looking to cut teacher's pay. Me and my wife love what we do but if we are not able to sufficiently support ourselves I fear we may have to look elsewhere. Thank you for taking into consideration what I am saying. Thank you once again for your time.

Sincerely,
Aaron Yasuhara



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

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Juliana Romero <julianamoose6@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:45 PM

Dear Board Members:

I am a special education teacher and autism consultant teacher in the Central District. Reducing teacher pay will affect me greatly. I am single and do not have any family who live in Hawaii. This pay cut will force me to move back to the mainland where the cost of living is reasonable and have family nearby for assistance. I do not want to move, and love teaching in Hawaii. My hire date is February 1, 2001, almost 20 years.

Furthermore, many teachers will retire early or resign their positions if they are not making enough money to survive. This adds to the dramatic teacher shortage in Hawaii in high needs areas such as special education. If many of the teachers leave, students suffer because they have subs who are not highly qualified.

Thank you for your understanding and consideration in this extremely important matter.

Sincerely,

Juliana

Juliana R. Romero
Autism Consultant Teacher
Central District
(808) 220-0542



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

My Message

Kelly Shaffer <kellyritashaffer@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:26 PM

Decreasing our pay would negatively effect students by forcing teachers who relocated here to teach back out of Hawaii. I moved to Big Island to teach. I love it, but money is already tight. Pay cuts would mean some qualified teachers such as myself, who have built rapport at a school, would have to return to mainland. I hope to stay a teacher in Big Island my whole life and maximize my service for Kealakehe. Budget cuts may force dedicated teachers to leave, worsening our teacher shortage.

Kealakehe Elementary School
2nd Grade



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

BOE Proposed Teacher Salary Cuts

FERDENAN DAMO <ferdenan@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 3:38 PM

Board of Education,

My name is Ferdenan Damo, I am a Social Studies teacher at Ilima Intermediate. My wife is an English teacher at James Campbell High School. I cannot emphasize how greatly I oppose the proposed salary cuts. Throughout the many years that I have been teaching, our profession has been conveniently used to balance the budget. From Cayetano to Abercrombie, we have been continually targeted, harshly mistreated. Should your proposed salary cuts pass, once again, my family will suffer. Please think about the misery you'll impose on us.

I've dedicated many years to the teaching profession, a profession that's been immorally mistreated for many years. Teachers are already demoralized, do the right thing and support teachers.

For the sake of the profession, do not allow these salary cuts.

Ferdenan Damo
Social Studies Teacher
Ilima Intermediate School



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

budget cut testimony

Wendy <wokamoto106@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:47 PM

Good afternoon,

I am a 20 plus year veteran Electives teacher at Stevenson Middle. In the past, I have not been compelled to submit testimony. However, at this time, due to state budget uncertainty, I would like to share that teachers and all state employees should feel valued. In a mere 23 years, I have experienced a strike, furloughs and now wage cuts. Indeed Hawaii citizens are feeling the pinch, some more than others. However, budget balancing should not be placed on state employees. Federal support and unemployment insurance has closed some financial gaps, but state employees cannot rely on these as viable options. Monies supporting the local economy will fall. Secondly, wage cuts will surely effect an exodus of qualified and effective teachers, leaving many classrooms with long term subs. At the school level, we already are aware of how this immediately places our students at a disadvantage. It is imperative that that the Board of Education rejects the proposed budget in support of teachers and all state employees.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Okamoto



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

Fwd: Draft COVID-Re-Balancing Framework

Alanna Johnston <ajohnston@pchigh.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:50 PM

Name: Alanna Johnston
School: Pearl City High School
Grade/Subject: Marine Science
Position: Oppose

Draft COVID-Re-Balancing Framework

I am writing this to state how a 19.62% salary reduction will affect my ability to keep this job. As an emergency hire, I am already barely paid enough to afford living in Hawai'i. I had to pick up a second job (which I recently lost) and have not found a replacement in the meantime. Taking this pay cut would then mean I have to pick up/find TWO extra jobs on top of a full-time teaching position. As I'm sure you know, doing this is INCREDIBLY difficult during these times and I would have no choice but to leave Hawai'i altogether. All of this is not for lack of work experience or education, I have a master's degree and this is my only option right now. I cannot stress enough that taking this cut would have serious consequences for myself....

Thank you

Alanna Johnston



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

Teacher Pay

Tina Myers <btmyers25@hotmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 1:51 PM

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

I strongly oppose the proposed pay cuts for educators. Teachers are absolutely critical in providing support to our vulnerable students, especially during this time of great need. Cutting pay for teachers will have tremendous negative consequences including an increase in the teacher shortage due to the loss of veteran teachers and the loss of teachers who will need to leave the profession in order to earn a livable wage. Students' education would be impacted as they would be forced to have a series of unqualified substitutes covering classes.

During this unprecedented time, most teachers are working harder than ever to meet the various needs of their students. A pay cut would be a huge slap in the face to the people who are tasked with caring for, teaching, guiding, and mentoring this rising generation.

If pay cuts happen now, teachers will have money taken away for work that has already been completed during the school year. It will be a long term struggle to return to current pay rates. Any increase in pay after a cut will be viewed as a raise, when in fact, it simply would be steps to restoring pay.

Tina Marie Myers
Special Education Teacher (FSC)
Manana Elementary School



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

Balancing the budget

Lori Hull <buddyfriend66@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 2:10 PM

Aloha Board of Education Members:

My name is Lori Hull and I am a Kindergarten teacher at Waiialua Elementary School. I realize that you are faced with some difficult decisions about our budget but I would like you to please not cut teachers salaries. Doing this would have some negative impacts such as...

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Please think about this. We need our teachers to continue in the profession here in Hawaii. Thank you for hearing me out.

Sincerely,
Lori Hull



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

DO NOT REDUCE TEACHER SALARIES!

Veronica Wright <wright.vahulani@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 9:00 PM

To whom it may concern:

I am a kumu papa 5 & 6 (5&6th grade Teacher) at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Hau'ula located at Hau'ula Elementary on O'ahu's North Shore.

I urge you do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my family but the students I serve as well. For instance:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

I urge you to choose to save education in Hawai'i, and continue to invest in our future by NOT reducing teacher salaries.

Me ka ha'aha'a,
Veronica Ahulani Wright



(no subject)

Jennifer Kramer <jenkramerteacher@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, May 5, 2020 at 1:55 PM

Dear Board of Education Personnel,

My name is Jennifer Kramer. I am a second grade teacher at Keone'ula Elementary. I am very concerned about teacher pay cuts and want to urge you to consider other options.

I believe pay cuts will harm teachers. Prior to this epidemic, an Oahu family of four bringing in \$93,300 or less was considered low income [according to the U.S. Housing and Urban Development](#) guidelines. While many people are suffering, [median home prices continue to increase and are at \\$810,000](#). [Median condominium prices continue to increase and are at \\$435,000](#). While the federal government is infusing money into the system on a national level, our state government is considering cutting some of the lowest paid professionals' salaries. Fully certified teachers in Hawaii start at 63% of HUD's low income qualification and a 20-year teacher with the equivalent of a doctoral degree is still low income according to HUD guidelines. While many teachers have relied on second jobs to supplement their salaries, many have lost those jobs and rely solely on teaching to get by. The problem is many of them can't get by and are leaving Hawaii, resulting in the current teacher shortage crisis.

I also believe pay cuts will harm children. Already, many are not being taught by qualified teachers. What will happen when teachers leave because they simply can't afford to stay here—or retire, because this makes more sense financially than continuing to teach? (Some teachers may choose to supplement retirement with part-time jobs like substituting and actually make more than they would teaching.)

Pay cuts will also be harmful for the long-term future of Hawaii. Already, teacher pay was cut during the 2008 recession—and has never recovered. Now, to cut that pay again sends a clear message to anyone who would consider becoming a teacher in Hawaii. Please consider that people already don't want to teach here. I have taught K-2 for many years, and I remember when the majority of my students wanted to become teachers. Now, second graders tell me that they would never become teachers because teachers do not make enough money. What message are we giving to our children about respect for their own education, and for spending money on four years of college to become future teachers? Education is the foundation of society, and all of Hawaii will benefit from a well-educated community.

Please consider other ways to save money:

1. Taxes. Going back to home prices—During this unprecedented time, very wealthy people live in, and will continue to move to Hawaii. While the Supreme Court struck down the proposed constitutional amendment to use property taxes to fund public education due to unclear language in 2018, certainly now is a time to question whether a constitutional

amendment to use property taxes on the highest end properties to fund state programs should be considered—and part of that money can certainly benefit public education.

2. The DOE can save a lot of money by putting non-classroom teachers into classroom positions.

3. I think we should reconsider the Smarter Balanced Assessment and other high-cost items. Questions to consider include: How much does the DOE spend per pupil on SBAC? Do they pay more than other states for the same tests? Can they consider foregoing those tests during the 2020-2021 school year?

4. The DOE can consider other programs that it has purchased. We are a large group with negotiating power. Can we limit programs to those that have been most effective and negotiate lower costs?

5. The DOE uses a tremendous amount of copy paper, construction paper, and other classroom materials. They are often purchased by teachers on an individual basis or by schools on a school-by-school basis. What if such items were purchased in bulk and vendors had to compete for our business?

Thank you for your time. I hope that you will consider the effects of this decision along with the many ways we can avoid cutting teachers' pay.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Kramer



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

Teacher Pay Cut

Yuki Lileikis <ylileikis@moanaluaHS.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:53 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Yuki Lileikis, and I'm a Japanese teacher at Moanalua High School. I'm writing to please ask you not to cut teacher pay. My husband and I are both public school teachers. In addition to teaching, my husband has always worked a second job to supplement our income to support our family.

For both of us to have our pay cut by 20% would be catastrophic for our household. My older daughter is graduating from high school this month and is going to be attending the University of Michigan. She has worked very hard for the past 13 years to do well academically. As you know, out of state tuition is very expensive. If our pay is cut, it will be very difficult for us to be able to send her to school.

Even though school may not be in session, all of us teachers are still working hard from home to provide our students with continued education. In addition to our teaching duties, I'm spending time out of my own schedules to attend webinars to learn how to effectively teach online.

We had our pay cut 10 years ago when we experienced Furlough Fridays. I feel that teachers have done our share of giving up our pay in the past and shouldn't have to do so again.

I appreciate you taking time to read my plea to you. I hope you do the right thing and not cut our pay.

Thank you!
Yuki Lileikis

This user is a staff member at
Moanalua High School
[2825 Ala Ilima Street](https://www.moanaluaHS.org)
[Honolulu, HI 96818](https://www.moanaluaHS.org)
www.moanaluaHS.org



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

No Teacher Paycuts. Here's why.

Chris Kepler <ckepler@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:53 PM

Please do not cut teacher pay with regards to the Covid-19 crisis. I have been teaching with Hawaii's DOE for over 20 years. And it is hard. Good teachers are a highly valuable commodity. Long-term substitutes in the classroom is no way to educate our children. Students are left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers when new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary. It KILLS morale at a school, and begins a heavy vortex downward.

--

Aloha,
Chris Kepler
KKHS Theatre Teacher
KKHS Drama Club Advisor
International Thespian Troupe #7106 Advisor
Phone: 808-727-3559
Email: ckepler@kkhs.k12.hi.us



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

Teachers salary reduction

Brigitte Bieheller <bbieheller@hotmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:55 PM

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

I understand that budget cuts will have to be made, but there is a teacher shortage already, and I fear that the salary reduction will cause many teachers to look for employment elsewhere. Please find a

Sent from my iPhone

State of Hawaii
Board of Education
General Business Meeting
May 7, 2020

Aloha Chairperson Payne, Vice Chair De Lima, and members of the board,
I was a student teacher at Farrington High School in Spring of 2006, with Chair Payne as Principal, and Bebe Davis as my mentor. This was my first opportunity of really teaching Physics, and it was with awesome students of various backgrounds who I am sure are now very successful. I really appreciate that opportunity and it prepared me to jump right in the next Fall at H.P. Baldwin High, where I have been teaching science ever since. Since then, I have experienced furloughs and forced contracts that definitely caused me stress in my life and family, and frustration with a system that too often neglects teachers. Any reduction in pay right now, whether through furloughs or other cuts, will cause many highly qualified, certified, experienced, and excellent teachers with a range of 1-30 years of service to question their commitment to the Hawai'i DOE. This in turn, will grow the teacher shortage, reducing the quality of education for Hawai'i students. Our students deserve highly qualified teachers in all classes. To retain teachers and attract the next generation the State has to stop balancing the budget on the backs of the teachers. What are we, the low hanging fruit? It is the children who are the fruits of our islands that will suffer the consequences. Please do not consider reducing teacher pay during this pandemic.

Mahalo nui loa,
Hannibal E. Starbuck
H.P. Baldwin High School
B.S. Physics
PBCSE Secondary Ed-Science
M.S. Geoscience
National Board Certified Teacher
hannibal_starbuck@baldwin.k12.hi.us
hstarbuck@gmail.com



Testimony Against Reduction in Teacher Pay

Kelley Toor <kelley.toor@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 8:59 PM

Dear Members of the State of Hawai'i Board of Education:

My name is Kelley Toor. I am a Special Education teacher to twelve students who receive services under Chapter 60 of the Individuals with Disabilities Act in grades three, four, and five at Kapalama Elementary School. School Year 2020-2021 will be my ninth year as a teacher in the State of Hawai'i Department of Education. I celebrated the pay incentive for teachers last fall, and am hoping that it will be reinstated one day. At this time, I am writing in opposition to the proposal to reduce the negotiated teacher pay from the current contract HSTA has with the state.

In my nine years, I have been bitten, kicked, hit, and punched. I have had students verbally lash out at my administrators, aides and myself. I have worked with students who act out because they need attention, or have not learned other ways to communicate their feelings. I am experienced in working with the behavioral and learning needs of a spectrum of children and disabilities. I also teach students who may need a little more encouragement, or specific strategies to help them with decoding, comprehension, writing, or computing two digit addition problems with regrouping. It's a wide range of students I work with, and I know that my expertise matters.

Since beginning my career, I have obtained my Master's degree, and constantly work on my teaching craft. Along the way, and I don't know if it's something I've always known or just something I've realized: The life of the classroom is created from a culture among parents, children, and classroom staff that loves learning, values others, is patient, and celebrates progress.

By reducing teacher pay, you will be punishing teachers who have years of experience, who love teaching, who took the fourth quarter of "enrichment activities" seriously and worked individually with children; who made parents feel good about themselves, supported them, and supported their children. What we do is difficult work, and has been made even more difficult during this pandemic.

I can't emphasize how hard it is physically on my forty-six year-old body to be seated in front of a computer, reading with children for hours each day. I have to sit through hours-long faculty meetings and briefings followed by endless messages from parents and one-to-one sessions with students. I have held three Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) meetings, four transition to middle school sessions, and numerous staffings over WebEx. I've had to coordinate with translators for my student's parent who doesn't speak English. I would have to chase down these parents and the rest of the IEP team anyway for a conference on top of my regular teaching day.

I had to learn two online platforms. It was complicated for me, who did both her post-baccalaureate and Master's degrees online. I have been informed over and over again about the documentation involved in this pandemic period and how we are to proceed with our individual,

unique students. Because I am an experienced teacher, I know how. Can you imagine how difficult it was for my 60 year old co-workers who know even less about distance learning? Teachers who are my senior- My former high school band director, all his colleagues, the ones I work with, the ones who mentored me- they are the experts in the field, and we cannot afford to lose their wisdom and experience to early retirement. We aren't ready to replace them. Why do I do it? This is my calling. Why do all teachers do it? Because we know that our students need this interaction- even if over a teleconference. They need to know their teachers care; that someone cares about their progress.

What will you do when you have teachers who have been disappointed, beaten, and disheartened because of the stress involved in distance learning? We won't lose our love of teaching, because we'll never lose that passion. But when we have to take second or third or fourth jobs, we won't have the energy to give our students the commitment they deserve. Nor will they have the energy to improve their craft, because they are too busy thinking about how they're going to pay for food, rent, or mortgages. I also learned that teachers will have to implement new Computer Science standards, and we'll be doing it with our pay cut on top of the new NGSS Standards? And then we have to hold IEP meetings as soon as we return to school to decide whether our students will receive compensatory education when I worked with mine online since April?

I have been working tirelessly and endlessly since March 22, the original return-to-school day. I prepared my students before Spring Break with ample books for reading and math worksheets in the event we could not return to school. I was prepared for ending the school year without seeing them. I am also the mother of a high school Junior at Moanalua High School. Her teachers are meeting with their classes week after week, sending out assignments, and checking their Google Classrooms. All teachers are putting in countless hours, thought, and energy into this fourth quarter. For our foresight, thought, hard work, preparedness, and commitment to our students to end up in a pay cut would be a slap in the face. I don't believe that I'm the only teacher who feels that way.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kelley Toor
Special Education Teacher
MEd, Special Education



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

pay cut

Summer Lewis <teachersummerlewis@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:05 PM

My name is Summer Lewis. I teach second grade at Makawao Elementary School. This will greatly effect my life because I have three kids that I help to support. This huge cut will force me to find a second job so that I can afford my basic essentials. This force a whole lifestyle change to the point where it might make more sense for me to move back to California or North Carolina where I hold current teaching credentials to seek employment as a teacher and the cost of living is much cheaper. I love Maui and would rather stay here, because it has been my home for 13 years, but at 54 years of age I don't think I have the stamina to hold two jobs to afford living here.

Please rethink this huge pay cut to us teachers.

Mahalo,

Summer Lewis



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

DO NOT CUT OUR SALARIES

Ryan S Murakami <ryan.s.murakami@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:06 PM

Hello, my name is Ryan Murakami. 1st year school counselor (K, 2nd and 5th) at Waipahu Elementary School. I just want to say that cutting our salaries would be a huge mistake. Just because I am a fresh graduate out of graduate school. Had to pay a lot of money to earn my Master's Degree. By cutting my salary, you are insulting me as a professional educator. If I cannot provide enough for myself or for my family, what makes you think I am going to be able to provide and help the kids at my school. If you guys go through with this, this will all fall on you and nobody would want to head into education. Do not insult the teachers that work hard to provide an education to your kids, your coworkers kids, your friend's kids, everybody depends on highly qualified teachers. But reducing salaries will definitely see the end of seniority teachers and new educators like myself. Might even consider individuals to move away to get paid for the value of their degree and position as an educating professional. Don't make this harder for us than it has to be.

This is a staff email account managed by Hawaii Department Of Education School District. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.



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

Testimony

Jennifer Wood <jwood@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:09 PM

To whom it may concern:

Please do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm myself and my family, but the students we serve as well.

If these cuts happen, the negative consequences include:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Sincerely,

--

Jennifer Wood
9th (A-G) / 10th Grade Counselor
King Kekaulike High School



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

pay cuts to teachers

Bonnie Lum <maulum@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:15 PM

Aloha,
Am a teacher of 17 years.
With this paycut, I will retire asap. No point continuing.
Sorry, but this is reality.
Regards,
Bonnie
Bonita Lum



Oppose a salary reduction, please

Sherri Hart <sherryl_hart@baldwin.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:17 PM

Hello,

My name is Sherri Hart. I work at H. P. Baldwin High School on Maui. I am writing to ask you to oppose any reduction in salary for HIDOE employees. This year marks my thirty-first year of teaching, and my second year in Hawaii. I make approximately \$55,000 per year working for HIDOE. I moved to Hawaii after I retired from Alaska. I have a retirement check, so I am able to make ends meet, barely. I love my job, the island and the people of Maui very much. However, if my salary is decreased I may have to leave the state, and thirty-one years of experience will go with me. My vacancy will be replaced with inexperienced staff or a non-certified substitute. This is not the time to lose veteran teachers.

Now more than ever the state of Hawaii needs qualified educators. In August, when we stand at the doors of our classrooms, educators will be expected to do more with much less. We will be tasked with making up almost five months of lost learning. During these tough economic times, educators must be able to recognize when the children are hungry or stressed due to their family's loss of income. When children remember the isolation and fear they have experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, it will be the teacher who will help the child. Teachers are trained to know how to address all of these concerns and more as well as support the students. School districts across the nation know the role of an educator is not going to be easy next year. Yet, teachers are planning right now for the herculean task of teaching children in this uncharted territory of post pandemic times.

Educators will be ready for whatever next year brings. We are simply asking to not have our salaries reduced. This decision will allow us the peace of mind to continue feeding our own children, housing our own families and be available for our own children when they "remember". For we have also lived through this pandemic. Peace of mind at home will allow us to dedicate ourselves more fully to supporting our students and their families. Please make the right choice for children and the educators who love them.

Thank you for your time.

Sherri Hart
SAT Math, Transition to High School, and Advanced Guidance Teacher
H. P. Baldwin High School, Maui



Testimony

Anne Summers <annesummers101@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:19 PM

Resending this email.

Name: Anne Harue Summers
School: Iao Middle School
Workshite: Baldwin Complex (Maui)
Subject: Social Studies
Grade Level: 6th Grade

Aloha BOE members:

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to provide input on this very consequential issue of teacher pay in Hawaii. I have a masters in Elementary Education and have been teaching for over 20 years in Hawaii's public schools. I am what the HSTA and DOE categorize as a "Compression Teacher." Throughout my teaching career I stubbornly tried to give "it my all" to provide my students with a quality education; be a good mother to my 2 daughters; and do my best to keep my health steady so I could continue to provide for my family.

If you hear many veteran compression teachers like myself cry when they give their testimony, it is because they feel so very devalued . I can't tell you how many countless times I've stayed up much too late working after hours and foregoing family events on weekends because I had to correct papers. If you ask the families of teachers, they will tell you the truth of how much unpaid overtime teachers like me put into our job. Furthermore, every year teachers use our personal funds to pay for supplies which our inadequate classroom money does not cover.

With current average teacher salaries at a low middle income level, a pay cut would push many into an unsustainable situation where many more will seek part time work to supplement their low salary. When adjusted for cost of living, Hawaii's average teacher pay is considered the lowest in the nation. Please help us.

Mahalo nui loa,

Anne Harue Summers
[Quoted text hidden]



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

Testimony against proposed teacher salary cut

Skye Costelloe <skye.a.costelloe@gmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:20 PM

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

Dear Board of Education,

I am not a teacher. I am writing to you because I am extremely concerned about the proposed 20% cut to teachers' salaries and how this would hurt teachers, our schools, and our keiki.

Beyond the economic devastation that this proposed cut would bring upon individual teachers and their families, cutting salaries will lead to more of our teachers having to turn to more lucrative career paths in order to survive. We already have a shortage of teachers. This will drive some of our most qualified and passionate educators out of Hawaii Public Schools.

For the teachers sake and for the sake of our keiki please do not approve this cut.

Thank you for you time.

Best,
Skye Costelloe

May 5, 2020

Board of Education
c/o HSTA
testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Re: Re-Balancing the Budget - Testimony

Dear Board of Educators:

As I contemplate the words to garner up how much this possible salary reduction affects me, I am emotionally taunted. I'm taunted at the fact that we, the teachers of Hawaii, would have to discuss why a 19.62% reduction in salary is not a good idea.

First and foremost, we're all adults. That being said, I think it would be beneficial and safe to say that for the most part, we're well seasoned in life's financial obligations. However, for the few who may need to be reminded, let's review some of those possible budgetary obligations.

We live in Hawaii. Next to living in Alaska, I don't know what other geographical location where the residence and government must maneuver expenses in such a way to stay in a constant state of balance. I am married with 5 children. My husband and I feed 7 people at least 3 meals a day. This means we have a food expense of about \$1,300 per month. We have 2 vehicles; which require to be registered annually that are about \$600 combined and don't forget the outrageous prices of gasoline and car insurance. We pay \$2,200 in rent for our place of residence. Our electricity fluctuates between actually reading the meter and most of the time it's merely a guesstimate by the electric company. This means every month I have an electrical financial fluctuation obligation of roughly \$150. This doesn't even include other expenses that deal with monthly hygiene costs for a family of 7, nor does it include the developing monthly financial obligations because the children are growing. Should I even mention medical, dental, and vision expenses for a family of 7 also? Since the maturation of technology over the years, cell phones have become the standard tool of communication; phone calls, emails, and other computing needs. We're talking an average of \$250 cell phone expense for 4 users. I could mention much more however, with simply the few things I've laid out, if you do the math, a 19.62% reduction in salary for my household, would be X2. My husband is also an educator here in Hawaii.

On the flip side, the state of Hawaii has its own budget that it must adhere to. Expenses all over the board and I can't even imagine all that it encompasses. What I will say is that aside from what's been reported throughout social media in the last few weeks regarding availability of funds from various sectors of budgeting, I would like to mention that one could benefit from researching into our own state operational costs to see where cuts can be made, hence, where funds can be reallocated and not from the already scarce pockets of educators.

When I look at my finances, they're exuberantly smaller financing numbers than what the state maneuvers. In addition, when I perform mere citizen financing, my financial resources or places where I reach to balance my budget come from sacrificing in areas such as choosing between snacks for my kids, or no snacks. I might have to send my kids to school in uniforms that are old, tattered, stained, and outgrown because I'm living pay check to pay check and cannot at the moment get new uniform t-shirts x4. My kids, due to our already sacrificing pay; have had to endure wearing tight fitting shoes to school because

we have to wait until the check that arrives on the 20th, because the rent isn't due until the 5th and we'll have a little leverage to buy new shoes. In the meantime, their feet will ache because they don't fit well and there is the very real threat and likelihood that they will be made fun of because their shoes are old and falling apart.

Again, I am already living paycheck to paycheck and I cannot simply turn to other departments and make other cuts to fall back on. I cannot uncover more funds because I simply overestimated and so now I have the ability to reallocate from one area of finances to another. I am barely achieving this year in take-home pay what I made 5 years ago in another state. I was already cut short in my salary by choosing to teach in Hawaii. What will you do to retain me if I barely (due to after school tutoring) arrived at a pay-grade I previously held?

In being mindful of fiscal obligations, let's review some areas that may be helpful to review when brainstorming the reallocation of state funds to re-balance the budget. The state has current access to approximately; 1 Billion Hawaii state surplus from 2019, 400 Million Rainy Day Fund, \$43 Million projected for DOE, and roughly \$800 Million that was reportedly issued to the state of Hawaii under Covid19. These numbers are rough estimates that had been drifting around the media in the recent weeks.

Furthermore, I would like to add that in addition to this, the Department of Budget and Finance could possibly benefit from reallocating funds from areas such as: Surplus in the areas of job vacancies due to a delay in hiring; reduction in overtime; resignations; including but not limited to active recruitment costs that did not incur due to unmentionable reasons. Beneath, the section of Campaign Spending, there has been an over estimation of funds provided; further down the line we have Fiscal Management. Within that category there were some operational expenditures that were not used or that rolled over from the actual expenditure that might also be an option. Looking at Supporting Services – Revenue Collections there seems to be a budget increase of \$1.8 Million to support 6 positions that haven't been hired as of yet; that is a salary of \$300, 000 for each of those positions when thinking about teachers; that's about 27 teaching positions vs. the 6 positions the state has allotted for the 1.8 Million. There is 3.6 Million that is currently being allotted for for the Tax System Modernization Project (TSMP) that is not being used. Could we postpone the TSMP for a future date to rebalance the budget? Lastly, I'd like to make mention of the Cares Act HR 748 that was passed into law on March 27, 2020 makes mention of grants and leave of absences; do some of the state workers qualify for these areas? This might help the state rebalance existing sectors of state government.

Moreover, my point is this; the state has many subdivisions to review from when contemplating rebalancing the state budget. When I rebalance my paycheck to paycheck budget it's a choice between having just a little bit of leverage for new clothing for my developing children, salad or no salad at the dinner table, gas to travel around the island to enjoy our weekends, or to merely collect enough money to be able to buy school supplies for 4 children.

A 20% reduction in salary for my household means we will be adding to the transient population in Hawaii, we would become homeless if we stayed, it would be more likely that we would be forced to move out of the state; growing further attention to the already alarming teacher shortages that exist. Hawaii already has a roughly 1,000-teacher shortage. Many classrooms are barely hanging on to highly qualified /licensed teachers while many others have permanent substitutes that don't qualify. They don't qualify to

manage the challenging behaviors of a multifaceted classroom much less the curriculum. Our students suffer when there is a teacher shortage and lack of qualified teachers. Again, in my household, we are two highly qualified teachers, if we have a salary reduction; Hawaii will have a greater teacher shortage problem. Hawaii will suffer greatly due to teachers having a reduction in salary of any measure. There are roughly 45,000 teachers who would no longer be able to contribute to fostering the states economic growth; they would no longer be able to participate like before.

In closing, I'm being emotionally provoked by the state and I'm more than displeased about it. It's like the car insurance commercial where they teeter a dollar at the end of a fishing hook; quickly shifting the dollar out of reach and stating, "oh you almost had it there, you almost had it!" Taking up to 20% reduction in salary, is equivalent to saying; "teachers are not valued and must be kept in that emotional state; of less than essential." Teachers cannot simply turn to other departments and make other cuts to fall back on. I cannot uncover more funds because I simply overestimated and so now I have the ability to reallocate from one area of finances to another, I have a family with reasonable living needs that require reasonable living wages.

It really concerns me that I would have to fight to keep my \$60,000 yearly salary, which after payroll deductions (taxes, union dues, social security tax, unemployment tax, medical, dental, and vision) is actually \$36,000; essentially coming forward before the Board of Education begging for you to strongly reconsider other options for re-balancing the state budget. I am not defending an annual salary of \$300,000 such as some positions on the state level. I am a teacher, with what appears to be scraps at the bottom of the state pay when I look at the budget. The rest of the teachers of Hawaii and I are asking you to empathize. Find it in your heart to identify with and experience the salaries of teachers. The struggle is very real and the Board of Education understands this; after all, if you're in need of re-balancing the budget, imagine what our needs are at a take home pay of \$36,000 in the state of Hawaii.

Simply put, this is your chance to show empathy; how essential do you feel we are? In this season, you have a real opportunity to display *Pono* and *Aloha* and show the pillars of the Hawaiian culture. Now, we wait and see if you heard our essential voices.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my distresses!

Respectfully,

Mrs. Delia Ramirez de Ponce
Kahului Elementary School
Grade 3



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

Please do not reduce teacher salaries!

Cindy Asato-Kochi <casatokochi@kkhs.k12.hi.us>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:23
PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Board of Education Members,
I am a special education teacher with 27 years of teaching experience in the state of Hawaii. As the Special Education Dept Chair, I have dealt with vacancies every single year in our department. Within our department of 19 teachers, I would consider approximately 9 to be "veterans" with enough experience to mentor new Special Education teachers. We often start the school year with vacancies which are filled 1-2 days before school starts with non-certified Special Education teachers; most often, these are people who have no working experience whatsoever with Special Education students. We certainly appreciated the Special Education differential offered in January to attract more to our specialized field, but am certain that this will not continue after June which is understandable. However, a pay reduction is not acceptable.

What might the effect of a pay reduction be? I can make guesses but can really only speak for myself. I was planning to work for at least another 7-8 years prior to this crisis. A pay reduction would certainly change this plan if there is no financial incentive to at least maintain

my current pay. Some people might argue that it would be better to retire those who are earning the most on the pay scale. But can our education system, especially in regards to Special Education, afford to lose those who are most experienced? I have also worked as a mentor teacher, accreditation coordinator, curriculum coordinator, and as a General Education Social Studies teacher. I feel I have much to contribute to my school and the teachers there, but a pay reduction is saying none of that matters.

Please listen to what our HSTA leaders are saying as there are other options other than reducing our pay. Reducing our pay to help the economic crisis will cause even more harm to our students by exacerbating the teacher shortage.

Thank you for your time,

--

Cindy Asato-Kochi
Special Education Department Chair
King Kekaulike High School
[121 Kula Highway](#)
[Pukalani, HI 96768](#)



Teacher Salary Cuts

roselani aiwohi <roselaniaiwohi@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:30 PM

Name: Roselani Aiwohi
School: H.P. Baldwin High School
Subject: Photography & Senior Project Coordinator
Grade Level: 10-12

Aloha,

I would like to leave with you my testimony regarding possible teacher pay cuts. Teacher pay reduction would affect my family in a few ways. As many working class families in Hawaii, we live paycheck to paycheck. At times, we must hold of on bills and wait until our next paycheck in order to pay them. A pay reduction might cause us to fall behind on some of our basic necessity bills. Living in Hawaii has its costs and although it is worth the money to live on these beautiful islands, we do have to sacrifice to make this a reality. A 20% pay cut would reduce my paycheck by \$355 and for a family of 6, that could mean an electric bill, a gas and water bill, a phone bill and so on. Since I started teaching 7 years ago, I have worked hard on accumulating Professional Development credits in order to increase my class level. My main motivation in doing that was the pay increase. Living in Hawaii, we want to be as comfortable as we can and not have to stress and worry about possibly not being able to pay bills and afford the basic needs especially when you have a family. Please consider any other options you have before reducing teacher pay. Like many others experiencing hardships, a pay cut would only cause more strain to the living situation of many.

Sincerely, Roselani Aiwohi

--

Mahalo, Rosie Aiwohi



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

My Testimony

David Carino <dcarino@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:32 PM

My name is David Carino and I am a math teacher at King Kekaulike High School and here is my testimony on why teachers' salaries should NOT be reduced.

A pay reduction in teachers' salaries is a bad idea because:

- good "hawaiian" and experienced teachers will be lost because they will be enticed to either take an early retirement or be in a negative countenance with the Hawaii BOE and that will affect their life as a whole.
- there will be less qualified teachers in the schools if teachers leave because of the pay salary reduction and look elsewhere for better pay; that will impact student academic success in a negative way for sure.

Aloha&Malama

--

David Carino MEd
King Kekaulike H.S. - Math MOW 2
dcarino@kkhs.k12.hi.us
Wk. #: 808-727-3564
1 Corinthians 10:31 "... do all to the glory of God." KJV



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

Teachers salary cut

Brigitte Bieheller <bbieheller@hotmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:33 PM

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

Honorable Mrs. Catherine Payne.

I am concerned with the proposed teachers salary cut. Hawaii has already a teacher shortage, and I am afraid that many teachers will be forced to look for employment elsewhere because many simply will not be able to afford the high Hawaii cost of living with a reduced income.

Sincerely, Brigitte Bieheller

Sent from my iPhone



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

Pay cuts

Maile Atay <maileaatay@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:36 PM

Aloha,

I have been a public school teacher for the past 23 years. Most recently, I am a school counselor at Hawaii Technology- Maui Campus.

I have worked for the County and State for over 25 years. I have also been a disgruntled teacher when I went on strike twice (once as HGEA and once as HSTA) and experienced furloughs. The repercussions of these state decisions that impact teacher salaries go beyond the teachers' homes. A teacher, such as myself, that struggles financially already as a caregiver to my children and husband, often will have a hard time being the best they can be while worrying about finances. Many teachers leave the profession when cuts are made. Surely, COVID will have our newer mainland hires leaving the state back to a state that respects and pays teachers well. We are already, when adjusted by cost-of-living, some of the lowest paid teachers in the nation.

Personally, with my husband taking a hit on his income due to COVID, I may have to look elsewhere for a job that compensates me for my Master's Level expertise and Highly Qualified, Highly Effective Teacher status.

Please reconsider cutting teacher pay. Our keiki deserve to be taught by highly qualified teachers for every subject. Pay cuts = loss of teachers.

Sincerely,
Maile Atay, School Counselor

Board of Education
c/o H.S.T.A.
testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Re: Rebalancing the Budget Testimony

My name is Francisco Javier Ponce-Castellanos and I have enjoyed being an educator for the past 18 years. Currently, I am a 5th grade General Education teacher at Kahului Elementary School. I am the proud father of 5 beautiful children and am married to the love of my life that is also a teacher.

It would go without saying that we are living in unprecedented times, where the halting of our lives have lead many to speculate what tomorrow will bring. The halting of an economy is without a doubt, a circumstance that brings about the need, to reassess the current resources and the reallocation of funds to sustain financial commitments. I myself have had to reassess my life and budget, since the much-needed supplemental after-school and weekend jobs, necessary to balance my budget, have been halted. Might I also mention that it was shocking and new to me to see how much supplemental income Hawaii teachers need just to stay afloat?

Having said all of the above, I am encouraged to reflect on what I, as a father of 5, have to cut within my budget while teaching in Hawaii and the answer is simple. I prioritize. In other words, I may have to sacrifice the purchase of my Frappuccino or even a date night with my wife, for the sake of purchasing an outrageously priced gallon of milk, gas, or pay my electricity bill. Again, I prioritize what is non-essential for the most essential needs within my home.

Aforementioned in the example above, I can only assume that you, as existing governor and leader of our state, will have to do the same. So, I ask myself, am I the Frappuccino or the gallon of milk. Putting it simply, am I considered an extra or an essential part of the state within the heart and minds of this current administration? Am I expendable? Do I matter? Is paying me a dignified salary considered important? I would like to assume the former, rather than the latter.

As I look at how the current president has sought to bring financial relief to families; small business owners; hospitals and even other countries in desperate need of life-saving equipment and supplies during this pandemic, I say to myself, "Great job." Again, rarely having been in support of this president and clearly disliking of his personality and many of his political and social views, I can at least say that I respect the prioritizing that his administration has done during this crisis.

I write this letter hoping that you, as our existing governor you will do the same. I am not here to assume I know all of the expenditures, programs, budgets or day-to-day expenses. Nor do I write this letter under the premise or assumption that my position or job is any more important that that of my fellow government officials;

first responders; or other essential government employees. Instead, I respectfully encourage you and your current administration to exhaust all possible avenues, before considering the cuts on teachers, first responders, or other essential government employees.

After all, we are family. We are "*ohana*." This is a word I came to know here in Hawaii and along with the love; acceptance; and compassion of the Hawaiian people. I have taught in many places on the mainland and Alaska, and have fallen in love with the community I serve in Hawaii. My wife, children and I have made Hawaii our home and would not want to be obligated to leave if our pay is reduced.

In closing I simply send my best regards and prayers to all stakeholders whom will have to consider many factors and bring about the final decision. I encourage you to act with wisdom and compassion on behalf of all of Hawaii and may God bless America.

Respectfully,

Mr. Francisco J. Ponce-Castellanos



Save Teachers and please vote NO to pay cuts

Erin Graig <eringraig@hotmail.com>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:47 PM

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

Aloha,

This is my tenth year teaching in Hawaii on the Big Island. I came here as a special education teacher and now teach first grade. That's right, I am one of the teachers that would have returned to special education if the pay increase next year was to go into effect. I originally left special education because one of my hardest years was also the year Ambercombie gave teachers the last best effort contract where as a single mom I was given two weeks to plan for a pay cut that was half of my rent. That year more than once I was in my classroom until 10pm with my child sleeping on the floor while I finished writing IEP's and testing reports. I kept track and the last quarter alone I easily worked 40 hours extra for less pay.

We have moved on and now teachers are beginning to feel appreciated, my daughter has gone off to college and for the first time since I have moved to Hawaii I am earning a living wage. I still can't afford the dental work I need or a new pair of glasses, but I am no longer living paycheck to paycheck and counting pennies, I am saving for emergencies and can go out to dinner or a movie each month.

Now, there is a proposal to cut our pay close to 20%. Really? I can not fathom living with 20% less. I can not stay here and teach while making 20% less because I can't afford to. I will be forced to leave, I won't allow myself to live off credit cards again and that would be my only choice.

Hawaii is in my heart. My sister and brother taught here in the 90's and left soon after because they couldn't afford to stay. I visited and stayed. Later, I became a teacher myself. It is my home. Now I will return to the family property on the East coast to avoid more debt. It breaks my heart, but a cut in pay is not acceptable at this time in my career.

Furthermore, the students do not deserve this. They already do not have their needs met due to new and inexperienced teachers. Just this year I had a student who came from another school. He was brilliant but had severe behavior problems. Soon, I learned his teacher last year left in December and he had a long term sub. He was never taught to read and the behaviors were a result of poor education. I taught him to read and the behaviors subsided. This is only one example, there are many. If this student had a sub a second year he would not have learned to read and it would have continued to have lifelong consequences for his academic career and future. We teachers see this everyday and no one listens, We are not asking for

much, simply do not take away our current pay. It is a hard job and without teachers the future of Hawaii will be adversely affected.

Listen to the teachers and support them. Cut the non classroom teachers if you must, the coaches, testing coordinator, data positions, but don't lose Hawaii's greatest assets, its teachers. I personally know two teachers who are leaving because of the proposed pay cut, both have worked over five years on this island. It is sad to see them go, but I completely understand. They are single parents and need to take care of their families first.

Pay cuts will certainly cost much more than it will save. The lasting effects will be seen in the next generation. Our students deserve more. Please vote NO to pay cuts and keep our teachers where they belong, in our classrooms with our Keiki.

Sincerely,

Erin Graig
First Grade Teacher
Kahakai Elementary School
Big Island



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

Testimony

Jessica Young <jyoung@kahakai.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 9:54 PM

To the Hawaii BOE,

We know there is a huge deficit. We know there are people out there that don't have any income coming in. We know that our Keiki are not getting an education they had 3 months ago. But, I also know this. Many of my colleagues and I have been thrown into a situation that has never taken place. Know one knew this is what would happen. Know one knew how a virus from the other side of the globe would hurt us in so many ways.

Yet, we continued to teach. It took us a moment to process the shock, the fear and the uncertainty. However, over the past few weeks. We have pushed ourselves, developed new ways to reach our students, made sure they were learning, but more importantly that they were ok. As School Counselor at an elementary school, I've had the privilege of being a part of this new chapter. We are donating much needed items and finding resources for students, working tirelessly through professional developments, attending meetings upon meetings, and then logging on to see our students.

To see a student smile at the fact that their teacher is STILL there, makes it all worth it.

I myself has had to balance both my own children and finding new ways to support the students, families and staff at my school. It hasn't been easy, but my Why is not because of a paycheck, but What is best for our Keiki.

However, I would be lying if I said I could work for free. We all love our jobs, but what more can we give or do to prove ourselves. With that said I'm pleading with you to hear us out. We do not need a pay cut. If you help us find a way to keep our paychecks intact, we can assure you that our Keiki will be taken care of. But who am I kidding , I as well as the rest of us will show up, love, and teach our Keiki. I'm just asking that you keep that in mind when making your decision. What is our worth?

Thank you for your time,

Jessica J. Young
Kahakai Elementary
Hawai'i Island
School Counselor

--

Thank you,
Jess Young



Position: NO to teacher salary reductions

Danielle Padilla <padillad@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:27 PM

Position: NO to teacher salary reductions

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

I strongly encourage you to reject the state Office of Budget and Finance's Re-Balancing Framework suggestion to reduce teacher salaries by 19.62%.

Our state is consistently ranked in the bottom 5 in the nation for teacher pay with cost of living adjustments, and that is BEFORE an almost 20% cut in pay. I have been teaching in the Hawaii DOE for 7 years and have been able to maintain a modest but comfortable lifestyle and spend quality time with my children. I fear that if you go through with the 20% cut, I will be forced to get a second job. Along with the rewards of teaching that are inherent in the job, an added benefit is having more time with my family than people have with a 9-5 job. If I have to get a second job to make up for the loss in pay, the cost-benefit balance of teaching will be tipped negatively.

Along with the personal challenges a pay cut will present, it is essential that we consider the effect on our entire community. We are already faced with a teacher shortage and abysmal teacher retention rate. Even when we can hire enough teachers, they are not all highly qualified. Our kids deserve more than this. They deserve teachers who can afford to live here long enough to develop and establish themselves as teachers rather than move to another state or another career after a few years. If we want to find ways to strengthen and diversify our local economy, we must invest in the education of our children. If we want our students to value their own education and campuses, we must first show that we value them by investing in them.

Practically every time someone runs for office, she/he says that education is a priority, that teachers are essential and honorable and valuable. It's time to put your money where your mouth is.

Sincerely,
Dani Padilla



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

Pay cut

holly paulman <paulmanco@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:27 PM

I am writing in regards to the potential reduction in teacher salaries. I have been teaching for 22 years, have a masters degree and am halfway through the SPED post baccalaureate certification program at UH-Manoa.

I have dedicated my life to education and am honored to be an educator.

However, my current salary is not enough to support my two daughters and myself. A reduction in pay will have a huge negative impact on my ability to provide for my family.

As an emergency hire, I must consider all options moving forward. Continuing to serve my community as a teacher is absolutely my desire, however I may have to leave the profession if salaries are cut. Please know that I currently purchase items for my classroom, work many more hours than 40 a week and strive to always provide the very best education to my students.

Please consider finding other ways to manage the budget ! Teachers are the backbone of public schools and we need to be able take care of our families financially.

With respect,
Holly Paulman
SpEd PreK
Makawao El.
Sent from my iPhone



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

Idea

Shon Schaffran <shon.schaffran@mauihigh.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:37 PM

Aloha:)

I have an idea for the DOE to save money next year. All schools go completely online textbook with 1-1 laptops. Schools are full go M-Th. On Fridays, the schools are closed, but teachers are at home (on Fridays), and there are webex meetings with dept., IEP's, with students, etc.

So, full pay for all staff.

Schools/Classrooms are open M-Th for instruction.

Fridays students can work online, teachers are still working from home doing webex meetings and open for student drop in while all schools are closed on Friday's.

Thoughts?



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

May 7, 2020

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

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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. A. Potential priorities for CARES Act K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-21 school year

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) shares your concern that students with disabilities and their families are among the most negatively impacted by the forced closure of schools to maintain public health during Hawaii's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We strongly urge the Board and the Department to prioritize CARES Act funding to meet the needs of this vulnerable population.

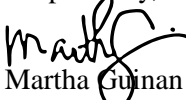
By definition, students found eligible for special education require specially designed instruction and related services in order to benefit from their education and not fall further behind in their peers without disabilities in academic achievement. SEAC has heard from a number of sources that our special education families are struggling to maintain their child's skills at home given their lack of training in providing specialized education services to meet the complex needs of their children, and the limitations of schools to provide instructional opportunities and therapies outlined in each student's IEP given the need for social distancing and no face-to-face interventions.

To mitigate these students' potential loss of skills and time needed to recoup those skills, SEAC strongly supports the timely provision of the following areas identified for priority funding with CARES Act monies:

- devices and connectivity for high needs students and high needs schools,
- training for special education students and their families on how to support on-line learning,
- compensatory services offered over the summer, and
- staffing differentials to help retain qualified and experienced special education teachers.

SEAC offers its support in continuing to identify unmet needs and assist the Department in designing and implementing appropriate as well as creative solutions to meet the individualized needs of our students and families.

Respectfully,


Martha Guinan
Chair


Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair



Cutting Essential State Workers Pay in Hawaii is NOT an Option!

Sampson, Amber <asampson@kiheicharter.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:05 PM

Aloha,

My name is Amber Sampson and I am a Wellness Coordinator at Kihei Charter School. I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and work as the Social-Emotional Counselor at the school. I am writing to you because it has come to my attention that the state of Hawaii is considering reducing the pay of state essential workers, including school personnel. This is UNACCEPTABLE.

During this global catastrophe, school staff have been working tirelessly to ensure our students continue to be provided with educational opportunities, while also providing emotional support to comfort them during this traumatic time in history. Hawaii school personnel are already underpaid. Because Hawaii's cost of living is so high, I am legally considered LOW INCOME and I am a school employee. Now you want to cut our pay even further to make it almost impossible to afford being a Hawaii school employee?!

Cutting pay of school personnel will lead to significant negative repercussions for the Hawaii school system and our keiki. Many school staff will be forced to look for alternative employment elsewhere due to the insufficient pay by the state. I know from personal experience that I am overqualified for my position at the school and can receive twice my pay if I wanted to work in the private sector as a mental health therapist. I do not want to leave my current job, as I love the work I do, but I may be forced to leave if my pay is cut because I cannot afford to pay my rent, school loans and other necessities based on my pay from the school. I know I am not alone. There are many teachers and staff who would need to change careers altogether to continue to afford living here in Hawaii. This would be devastating for our keiki, as the qualified professionals currently afforded the privilege of teaching them to learn and grow would be forced to leave. This would result in our students being forced to learn from unqualified substitute teachers and educational assistants. Is that really what you want for the future of our state, a generation of children taught by people who have no qualifications to do so? There is already a teacher shortage in Hawaii and now you want to force out the last remaining qualified teachers to early retirement or alternative employment? Is this really the message you want to send that while the worldover is expressing gratitude to teachers and school staff, you think they deserve to have their pay cut? Many people currently on unemployment are making more money than school personnel by doing nothing all day, I know because many of my family members currently make more money than me and I am working more hours now than ever.

Hawaii school personnel continue to push the envelope to educate our future leaders during this unprecedented time. They should not also have to argue why they deserve respect and acknowledgement by keeping their current pay. When this state of emergency is over each and every one of the Hawaii State Essential workers deserve significant pay increases!!!

Sincerely,

Amber Sampson

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Dp ehU#Vdp svrq/#DFVZ #7654

Z hoojhw#Frrugbdwru

Nkh#Fkduhu#Vkrro

asampson@kiheicharter.org

+;3; ;# :307<38



Damage of Teacher Pay Cuts

Koji Hayashi <khayashi906@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:12 PM

Dear Board of Education,

My name is Todd Koji Hayashi and I am currently a 5th grade math teacher at Nanakuli Elementary. I have been at my school for 6 years because I love teaching and I love my students. They make it worth the daily commute from Waipahu because I know that they appreciate all that I do for them.

One of the saddest things I have had to witness is the constant turnover in the schools on the Leeward coast. Teachers leave for various reasons, but the one I hear the most is because of the low pay combined with our high cost of living. Teaching is an extremely demanding profession and yet we are often barely making ends meet.

My wife and I are both teachers and a 20% pay cut for the each of us would be absolutely devastating. There are many families in which both parents are teachers and they would be hurt financially just like us. I fear that pay cuts like this may force more good teachers to change professions or retire early out of necessity.

If this does happen, the students are the ones who suffer the most. They will see even higher teacher turnover, especially on the Leeward side. At a time during a global pandemic, teachers are one of the few sources of stability for many students. We are able to communicate with them daily and we understand what they are going through. They look forward to seeing us and are grateful we can bring their classmates all together.

To force more teachers out now would be completely irresponsible to the future of our state. Students are driven by the bond they form with their teachers and if those teachers are gone, then students will likely become more apathetic towards education. We will likely see a rise in absenteeism, retention, dropouts, and eventually crime.

Please find other alternatives to avoid cutting teachers pay. We would like to be paid similarly to our counterparts across the country, but we do it anyway because we love what we do. We do it because the children need a good education to become positive contributing members of society. To pay us even less would truly hurt the upcoming generations and deprive them of quality teachers to shape their futures. If the students suffer now, we will all pay the price later.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Todd Koji Hayashi



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

Fight Teacher Pay Cuts

Cheyenne Watanabe <cheyenne.watanabe@k12.hi.us>

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:27
PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Cheyenne Watanabe and I am a second grade teacher at Waipahu Elem. School. I have been serving in the public schools in Hawaii since 2007.

Please do not balance the State's budget on the backs of our keiki and teachers. Please look at the other options that are out there for balancing the budget.

Our keiki are our future, and if there are any more cuts, our keiki will be the ones to suffer.

Thank you for your time and kind consideration,

Cheyenne Watanabe

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

Pay Cut

Alyssa Silva <alyssa801@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:29 PM

My name is Alyssa Balderas Silva. I have faithfully served my community as a teacher since 1994. I have spent my career giving of myself in every way. I was so excited when I heard the news that senior educators would be getting a boost in pay to "right the wrongs done to us in the past". Now that there is a pandemic and our economy is suffering, I fear that the fairness we have been wanting will no longer be. This is disappointing. I know that I may need to face that and hope that I will have that boost sometime in the future. I am very disheartened to hear that on top of that disappointment, I now may face a pay cut. I have a master's degree plus so many more credits that I have taken on my own to raise my pay. We are already the lowest paid when the cost of living is taken into account. This will greatly affect me and my family. We live paycheck to paycheck. It will affect all teachers, their families, and the community that we serve. Education deserves better.

Sincerely,
Alyssa Balderas Silva

--

Alyssa Silva



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

Reject the state Office of Budget and Finance's Re-Balancing Framework to reduce Teacher Salaries by 19.62%

Elizabeth Ann Pa Nakea <panakeae@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:34 PM

Elizabeth Pa Nakea
Castle High School
Senior English Language Arts and Special Education Department

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

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

Position: I strongly encourage you to reject the state Office of Budget and Finance's Re-Balancing Framework suggestion to reduce teacher salaries by 19.62%. Please stop destructive policies that hurt public schools and suppress salaries.

All communities improve when educators make a professional wage. This is especially true in Hawai'i where our schools are one of the largest employers. Educators in Hawai'i raise their families here, shop in the local stores, and are an integral part of the culture and well-being of their communities. How educators see themselves and their profession becomes a big part of the success and vibrancy of the life in Hawai'i. No one gets into teaching for the money; however, that is not an excuse to pay teachers poorly. It is long past time that we respect our teachers enough to pay them more, and this attempt to reduce their salaries is certainly a step in the **WRONG** direction.

As HSTA President Rosenlee has pointed out, "the state has other options," such as "the state's cash surplus, which at the end of last fiscal year combined with the "rainy day" budget reserve fund total more than \$1 billion, and the CARES Act approved by Congress and President Trump on March 27, which included \$863 million to bolster government finances." Although, Ige did not think the CARES Act funds could be used, federal legislators like Brian Schatz pointed out that it was meant for this type of situation.

Teachers aren't paid nearly enough, and they feel less appreciated, more stressed, and less supported than they have in the past. If the Governor, the Legislature, and the decision-makers of the State of Hawai'i are serious about helping its students, it would make sure its teachers are taken care of. Higher pay

attracts the best, most qualified teachers. Providing teachers with a decent middle-class living commensurate with other professionals with similar education is not simply a matter of fairness. Effective teachers are the most important school-based determinant of student educational performance. To ensure a high-quality teaching workforce, schools must retain experienced teachers and recruit high-quality students into the profession. Pay is an important component of retention and recruitment.

What we're seeing now is a recruitment and retention issue in the teaching profession, and by increasing pay we move one step closer to ensuring our students have quality teachers who don't leave the profession. With salaries for Hawaii's public school educators already low, the cutting of an additional 20 percent will inevitably worsen Hawaii's teacher shortage crisis, denying our keiki the quality educators they deserve. It has been estimated that the near 20% reduction of teacher pay would result in the loss of \$600 to \$1,800 monthly. This will only exacerbate our weakening economy, hurt government employees, and potentially prolong this crisis. We stand united and will not accept the governor's plan without exploring every last alternative to keep these harmful cuts from happening.

Teachers have been the cornerstone of the education system, yet they rarely get their due. Teachers do not expect to be rich; however, they expect to be able to make ends meet and pay their bills. Teachers are highly trained and qualified and do expect to be paid at least a livable wage — and that's absolutely not the case for Hawaii's educators. See, U.S. Senator Kamala Harris arguments pointing out how the teacher pay raise will pay for itself, and that raising teacher pay will make money for the government. It's not just striking and protesting teachers who insist that they are underpaid. Across the political spectrum, researchers agree that teachers earn lower salaries than workers with similar educational backgrounds. The Economic Policy Institute calls the discrepancy a "[teacher pay penalty](#)," and pegs it at over 18%, noting that even with more generous public employee benefits, the total compensation gap is still 11% — a record high. Eric Hanushek, of the Hoover Institution, and two colleagues estimate the [teacher salary gap to be 22%](#).

In Hawaii, deteriorating teacher pay is a critical public policy matter. Teachers and parents have protested cutbacks in education spending and a squeeze on teacher pay continue to persist. The teacher shortage in Hawaii results from a number of factors limiting the supply of teachers, from layoffs to frozen salaries, declining working conditions, and increased class sizes.

It takes a lot of education to become a teacher, and education, in the U.S., has never been a more expensive investment. Teachers are typically required to complete a bachelor's degree and a teacher preparation program, which sometimes requires a master's degree. And generally, before anybody is allowed to get in front of a classroom, they have to get a state-approved teaching certification, which usually requires spending time as an unpaid student teacher. At minimum, teachers have to complete four years of postsecondary education; in many areas, a master's degree is either an official or informal requirement. Most teachers are looking at

five or six years of preparation for their profession, in an era when the cost of college is rising faster than wages.

Even if teachers may be more motivated by altruism than some other workers, teaching must compete with other occupations for talented college and university graduates. Teachers are more likely to quit when they work in districts with lower wages and when their salaries are low relative to alternative wage opportunities. Teacher pay compared with the pay of other career opportunities for potential and current teachers—has been eroding for over a half a century.

Teachers are already taking a pass on teaching in Hawai'i schools, and it's easy to see why. How many people would spend four years in college to take a job that won't pay their bills? Many educators who began teaching careers in the state are leaving those classrooms with no plans to return. The average starting annual salary in Hawai'i is one of the lowest in the entire United States. Please do not hurt public schools and suppress salaries; for example, by 1) reducing the already near poverty level salaries of our teachers (and front line and essential public workers), 2) preventing teachers from receiving cost-of-living increases; 3) dangling one-time, virtually unachievable bonuses that have neither retained nor recruited educators; and 4) diverting much-needed funding to charter schools FIND OTHER WAY TO PAY! Fewer young people go into education. If we don't do something as a nation to promote this profession, increase pay, and fund our schools we run the risk of intellectual, political, and economic collapse.

If we want to attract, retain, and motivate the best and the brightest, we need to raise the starting salaries of teachers to be competitive with other professions. Otherwise we're not going to raise the standard of teaching and invite a broader spectrum into the field - graduates who might otherwise have thought to become lawyers, doctors, or accountants. To address teacher shortages, it is necessary to focus on both recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers. Many policies are needed to accomplish this goal, and providing appropriate compensation is a necessary, major tool in addressing shortages:

Most policy discussions center on whether the benefit to society is worth the cost in taxes, as well as who benefits and who pays. But sometimes a government investment has such a high return that it pays for itself. Raising salaries for teacher is one such proposal. We hear often that a strong teacher is the single biggest within-school factor influencing learning and student achievement, and both research and common sense affirm this. It is important to keep in mind, however, that teachers operate within a complex ecosystem of fellow teachers, school leadership, curriculum, standards, and a range of resources, including parent and community engagement, all of which have major impacts on teacher effectiveness. So while it's critically important to design policies to strengthen the teacher corps, that effort must be complemented by larger work to improve school ecosystems as a whole.

If the policy goal is to improve the quality of the entire teaching workforce, then raising the level of teacher compensation, including wages, is critical to recruiting and retaining higher-quality teachers. Policies that solely focus on changing the composition of current compensation (e.g., merit or pay-for-performance schemes) without actually increasing compensation levels are unlikely to be effective. Simply put, improving overall teacher quality, preventing turnover, and strengthening teacher retention requires eliminating the teacher pay penalty. In states across the country, the public recognizes that a quality education begins with quality teachers who earn professional pay.

For most of U.S. history, the nation has been able to operate schools at low cost by exploiting the trapped labor force of educated women who had few other opportunities. Now schools must compete with other mentally and financially rewarding occupations as they recruit teachers. Surely it is immoral for us to shortchange our schools because we cannot bring ourselves to pay enough to attract good teachers. These spending cuts are not the result of weak state economies, but are rather, enactments by State legislators to finance tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations. This crisis in teacher pay has resulted in a teacher pay penalty—the percent by which public school teachers are paid less than comparable workers.

The underpayment of teachers is likely to have important implications for the future of the American economy. The economy's success during the 20th century was due to many factors, of which the broad sweep of American education was an important one. The United States led the world in spreading education to the masses. The American economy grew consistently during the 20th century because we constantly upgraded the quantity and quality of our human capital. The United States has been successful both politically and economically because people have been able to transcend their origins and reach heights undreamed of in earlier times and other places. Education has been one of the primary paths through which extraordinary individuals have found an outlet for their gifts. We should try our best to preserve this commendable quality of American life.

Me Ka Mana'o Nui, Elizabeth Pa Nakea, Castle High School
(808)308-2654 panakeae@knights.k12.hi.us



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

Teacher Pay Cuts

igemn@hawaii.edu <igemn@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:55 PM

My name is Michelle Ige. I am an 8th grade English teacher at Ilima Intermediate School in Ewa Beach.

Please recognize that cutting teacher pay is not the solution to balance the budget. Consider how doing so will impact schools and students. When we start the new school year in the fall, all schools, teachers, and students will already be at a disadvantage. Not only have we lost valuable face-to-face instruction with our kids, but we will have to implement new guidelines and protocols brought about by COVID-19. We will have to account for any gaps in learning resulting from school closures while staying on track for the school year and ensuring the health and well being of all students. There will be more than enough stress on teachers without having to worry about our paychecks. Please allow teachers peace of mind so that we can put all of our efforts into supporting those who need us the most -our students- as they transition back to the classroom and we try to reestablish some sense of normalcy for them.

Sincerely,
Michelle Ige



educator salaries

Joni Funamura-sasil <jfun829@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 12:06 AM

Aloha Hawaii State Board of Education,

In my 27 years of teaching, I have seen a lot of events that affected education. When I decided to become a teacher, I specifically wanted to teach on Kaua'i, my home. I intentionally set my purpose to create good neighbors. Having made that commitment, I have accepted that my career choice wasn't one of monetary fortune, but rather a greater value than money. Therefore, when I was subjected to the pay lag which delayed my paycheck to the 5th and the 20th of each month, I complied. Then, when we were furloughed to save the state some money, I was again non-combative. I have answered in all the ways that the state needed and still maintained a distinguished level of professionalism in the classroom--way more than the state deserves in terms of pay. Now, the state is in another financial crisis and honestly I am prepared to contribute to its rebuilding; however, to cut teacher pay is the last consideration the state should make. If Hawaii teachers, who are already the lowest paid in the nation and are already taking on more enrollment due to the current teacher shortage, are forced to sacrifice again, the state's spiral into greater deficit will be accelerated exponentially. The state will get what it pays for: minimum-wage employees giving minimum wage service to our keiki.

Members of the Board, you will hurt Hawaii if you don't take a stand for teachers. Ultimately, if teachers have to take another financial punch in the face, the quality of students who exit our schools will end up being poor neighbors to each of you too. You know that an investment in knowledge pays the best interest. Benjamin Franklin said that. Cutting teacher pay is the opposite of making an investment.

As I said above, I know that the crisis faced by the state (and the nation, and the world) will require all of the citizens to contribute in some way to restore some semblance of order. I am willing to contribute; however, I have to strongly beg for the board to examine all other areas of waste within the Department of Education. There are many individuals who are making ridiculously inflated salaries for lowly audited work performance.

Please do what's right for the state as a whole. Education should always be the last to be compromised.

Mahalo for your time,
Joni Funamura-Sasil

Joni Funamura-Sasil



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

Teacher appreciation no pay cuts!

Kristina Marshall <kristinaluvsun@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 12:36 AM

To whom it may concern, please hear my plea for all teachers of the Hawaiian islands.. please do not cut their pay by even one dollar. If anything teachers should be paid more by a lot. The children are our future and need a good education which comes from good teachers who are paid well. We all live in a very expensive place and many teachers leave the island frequently because it is unaffordable to live here on a teacher salary. Sincerely, Kristina Marshall .
Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony for teachers funding

Christian Marshall <christian.marshall71@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 12:56 AM

Aloha,

I would like to ask that funding for teachers wages be increased. Any idea asking for a reduction in wages for teachers would be a failure to plan for our futures. The education of our children is of the highest priority. The teaching wage is already well below what is should be valued at. Teaching is one of if not the most important job in our world. Any person or group that would lessen what is currently a barely livable wage does not have our children's growth as their strongest goal. Please tax those more fortunate to make increases, tax visitors at a higher rate, tax mainland companies at a higher rate. If the wealthy individuals and companies don't want to come to our state because of these taxes then maybe they're not the ones we want to do business with. Hawaii is and will always be the most desired spot to visit in our nation. This land is of the upmost value and it's children are the product of its uniqueness. Please increase teaching and educational funding.

Signed,
Christian Marshall
Maui resident

Sent from my iPhone



Please do not reduce teacher salaries

Shei Murata <shei.murata@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 1:07 AM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sheilynn Kato and I am the Family and Consumer Science teacher (grades 6, 7 & 8) at Wheeler Middle School. I have been a teacher for 16 years here, in the state of Hawaii. I am here to beg you to not reduce teacher salaries for the following reasons:

1. We have been hit before with different variations of pay cuts and furloughs. In recent contracts, it was negotiated to include "pay raises" through across the board increases and step increases. In reality, these are not really pay raises for many teachers since we went without pay raises for many years, then got hit with the pay cuts/furloughs so what this was, was us getting back to where we were years and years ago. To do this again to us will just put us back even further in salaries.
2. I fear that teachers will leave (retire or resign) in MASSES - if not now, in a few years leaving the state with even less qualified teachers in the classrooms!!
3. It will be hard to make teaching an attractive career choice if they'd get paid just about minimum wage when you break down the amount of hours put in by teachers on a weekly basis! (When I first entering the profession and calculated out an hourly pay, I was severely discouraged because I would have made more money working an hourly minimum wage job!!)
4. Students deserve better than a stressed out teacher who needs to run out the door to a second job just to make ends meet.
5. Teachers will be working their butts off (because that's what we do) only to be digging ourselves into MAJOR DEBT. Nearly 20% reduction in pay does not look like a regular clean cut reduction for teachers. Since some our pay is withheld during the school year to cover summer paychecks, we would be hit with more than a 20% cut in monthly income. (Trust me, when Gov. Ige first announced the possibility, I redid my entire budget and found that I would not even be able to cover my monthly rent let alone utilities and other basic necessities like food!!).

I know this would sound better if it were more "student centered" but I have always felt that we give so much of ourselves, constantly putting on a brave face and friendly smile to not worry the students. How much longer can I carry on this facade? I don't know. The dam is about to break and the students will feel it, schools will feel it, parents will feel it, DOE/BOE will feel it and the State of Hawaii will feel it.

I understand our State is hurting but I beg you, please do not reduce teachers salaries.

Sincerely,
Sheilynn Kato

Sent from my iPhone



Kokua kekahi i kekahi

Jill Makii <jmakii23@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 1:19 AM

Help each other....especially in times of need. A hefty cut in pay by nearly 20% does not kokua one of the largest and most valuable departments in the State of Hawaii. Think again....unhappy teachers = unhappy students and a decrease in the quality of teachers; unhappy students = decrease in academic proficiency statewide. Why ruin a good thing?

I cannot think of a profession that is more dedicated than our teachers who are working tirelessly to meet their students' needs via distance learning. I cannot believe that the idea of cutting our teacher salaries was even considered. Imagine the impact and snowball effect of this pay reduction. Over 30,000 families will be affected by this decision. Why teachers and their families?

Teachers have made many advancements, achievements, and accomplishments to the teaching profession here in Hawai'i. achievements in The teaching profession here in Hawai'i. This salary reduction will put teachers right back to where we started. We teachers have earned our salaries outright and have come this far in recent years. We deserve nothing less than our agreed upon pay under the current contract. Don't invalidate educators, education, and the teaching profession by cutting the pay that we are entitled to. Cutting our pay is a demotion and is degrading. Reducing our pay reduces the integrity of teachers and the teaching profession in Hawai'i.

We had to fight for our pay increase and we'll fight to keep our pay. Yes, these are unforeseen and unfortunate times that we face. Yes, there are many people currently unemployed. Yes, teachers are working from home. Yes, students have access to learning because of teachers. NO, we don't deserve to take a pay cut. NO, teachers should not take the brunt of this situation. N-O!

Mahalo Nui for your time and consideration.

Jill - K-5 science teacher at Kahului School

Sent from my iPhone



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

No paycuts/furloughs

Randi Cabral <dnbcabral@hotmail.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 4:01 AM

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

My name is Randi Cabral and I am a 3rd grade teacher at Holomua Elementary School. I am pleading with you to fight for teachers when it comes to the consideration of pay cuts./furloughs. I have twin boys who are seniors this year. They are ready to go off to college but with pay cuts or furloughs being considered, we will not be able to afford it. This action could affect the future of my own children. I would also have to consider an early retirement, not because I want to retire, but financially, it would probably make more sense considering my "high three" years would not be upcoming. I know MANY teachers who will retire if this happens. Thank you for your continued support of Hawaii's educators.



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

Testimony Regarding Motion To Reduce Teacher Pay

Angelina Collazo <collazoam@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 4:02 AM

To whom It May Concern,

We have always known that teachers are invaluable members of our communities, caring for our children when we are working, shepherding them to growing into the adults we need. Teachers do far more than simply share content- they teach emotional regulation, they guide students through the moments in their lives they struggle to navigate with their families, they act as social worker, educator, special services coordinators, guidance counselors, and so much more. In a time when we rely on them more than ever, it is unconscionable that the state would even consider docking their pay. We already have, over the years, shown our lack of care for our teachers- the people that help hold our communities together.

If the state chooses to dock teacher's pay, not only will we be sending a grave message to teachers, but we will be showing our children to not respect the work that they do. Our state is already so far beyond the rest of the country in educational outcomes, holding our children back, and supporting the systems of oppression that continue to harm all of us.

Do the right thing, maintain the pay of our teachers- in fact, work to pay them the living wages they so deserve.

Angelina Collazo-Young
305-588-7395



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

*****FIGHT TEACHER PAY CUTS*****

Lauren Black <lb808finch@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 4:18 AM

Testimony:

My name is Lauren. I am a teacher at Ilima in Ewa Beach and I teach 7th and 8th grade Science. I am going onto my fourth year of teaching in Hawaii and it is very hard to keep sustaining to live there on a teaching salary. But I love my job. I love the kids. I love the islands. I love my school, the community, and my boss is the best boss I have ever had... However I want to grow too. Outside of school I want to flourish so that I can ultimately be happy and be a better, more grounded teacher, mentor, and co-worker for my school and for the kids. What I mean is by that is that I am now about to be embark on the journey of being a mom for the first time. I cannot afford a pay cut. I cannot afford to live in my own home with my daughter on a teaching salary that is already disturbingly low and then have it cut even more. I am from mainland. I do not have family on the island. I cannot seek out to live with family which is what I see a lot of families doing on Oahu to help with living costs. I will be a single mom. And even though I am highly qualified, with a Masters degree in secondary education, I do not get paid fairly. All of us teachers do not. A pay cut would force me to leave the island and all the hard work I have put into my school and my relationships there which I cherish. Please reconsider.



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

Teachers pay cut

Logan Eaton <toni7041@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 4:30 AM

I am in strong opposition with even the conversation about our teachers pay cut of over 19%. Of all government essential workers, the teachers were the only group that had to come up with a successful plan to keep our kids continuing education in unprecedented times. No other state agency was tasked or even prepared for a situation like this. Not even the Governor or his office.

I have 2 daughters. 1 is in the 1st grade at Pu'u Kukui elementary and I have a 6th grader that goes to Kamehameha Maui campus and both of their schooling has continued, uninterrupted, through this pandemic. This is a slap in the face for our teachers to even suggest a pay cut. Shame on this government!

Sincerely,
An essential State of Hawaii worker
Toni Eaton

Sent from my iPhone



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

In opposition of proposed budget cuts for teachers.

Dawn Shiota <dshiota@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 5:59 AM

Aloha Board of Education Leaders,

My name is Dawn Shiota and I have been a Department of Education Educator for over 23 years. I am currently a teacher at King Kekaulike High School's Alternative Learning Opportunities Program. I am writing this email to let you know that if teacher's salaries are cut it will greatly impact our education system .

Each year I contemplate if I should continue living and working in Hawaii as I am a single parent and live paycheck to paycheck in order to make ends meet. Hawaii has been my home for 47 years and I really would like to continue working and supporting the keiki of Hawaii but if cuts are made I may have to make the hard decision to leave this place that I call home.

A few months ago the public was made aware of the concern that senior teachers like me have been left way behind in our salaries and there had been legislation to pay us more because we have been not compensated accordingly in times that the State had financial issues. Please don't do this to us again.

Reducing teachers salaries will definitely drive away Highly Qualified Experienced teachers into early retirement and not attract licensed teachers to work in Hawaii.

Students will then be left with unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

Please look at other alternatives to cutting the salaries of teachers in Hawaii. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Dawn Shiota

Dawn Shiota, MA.Ed., B.Ed.
King Kekaulike High School
Alternative Learning Center Program Staff
[121 Kula Hwy](#)
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Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Teachers' Pay Cut

Sharon Yanagihara <WORKITOUTHAWAII@msn.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 6:24 AM

To: "Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" <Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Please do not pay the teachers even less than what they deserve. They've been promised a raise, but now are faced with a possible pay cut. No, don't cut their pay!

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BOE testimony for May 7

Bobby Richards <bhkrichards@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 6:36 AM

To the Hawai'i Board of Education:

I do not agree with the proposed pay cuts to teacher salaries. The already high cost of living and the current teacher shortage already makes it difficult to adequately educate our children. Cutting educator pay, and the pay of medical personnel currently on the front lines will work towards more financial stressors to a strapped economy.

With that said, I foresee this as one potential solution. I just do not know what these pay cuts will solve other than being an ineffective short-term panacea that will have to be reapplied from some other area in the event this virus reemerges or is compounded upon by another disaster. If you are to make use of the funds garnered from this 20% pay cut, where will the money go?

Hawai'i has invested in tourism and the service industries as primary forms of income. We give our aloha so others may come and partake of paradise. Fortunately, education is also a service industry. One that we have invested in that prioritizes our families and invests in our future.

But the question is often where does this future lead. We encourage our students to work hard and do their best. Yet many of them will look around and see their only opportunity as working at something akin to McDonald's or Hilton. This will be further exacerbated by devaluing our education system in a time where tourism is failing. Those who want a future that is not subservient are often prompted to go to the mainland. The irony being that we are here to fulfill the dreams of tourists, but not those of our kin.

And yet we are not lacking in the potential to be self-sustaining. Rather than focus on losses in the tourism industry we can look towards other avenues that empower our communities. We can grow a variety of produce to help our residents and are seeing this happen with this current crisis. These same lands that provide us with sustenance also allows to explore the sciences as well. It is also these same lands that have been prominently featured in the entertainment industry. Why do we have to wait for someone in another part of the world to tell us what we can grow, study, or create? We have the creativity and capacity to enter any of these industries and should not have to wait for an outside entity to do so. Our isolated islands are not just a vacation getaway. With proper investment we can lead.

But it starts with our elected officials. By focusing and prioritizing our investments on the happiness and pleasures of visitors we will fail to grow. How will you use the pay cuts from groups focused on the health and growth of our islands to better the future of Hawai'i?

-

Bobby Richards

Waimea Elementary School

5th Grade



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

Board of Education proposed cuts

Beth Fox <alohafoxes@hotmail.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 6:38 AM

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

Aloha! I am writing as a community pediatrician on Maui, and I want to plead that teachers' salaries not be reduced. Our teachers are wonderfully dedicated but already woefully underpaid. Further reductions I fear will force even more to move back to the mainland at a time when there is already enough chaos and danger without the serious additional risks of relocating to new communities.

Sincerely,

Andrew Fox MD

[1300 Haliimaile Road](#)

Makawao HI 96768



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

Please do not reduce teacher pay

Chrystie Cobb <chrystie4salsa@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 6:45 AM

I urge our state leaders to not reduce teacher pay. Reducing teacher pay is not the answer during this time. Teachers work countless hours. During this time, more has been expected from teachers than ever before. We have worked beyond our school day hours without any compensation. We have sacrificed time away from our own families. With my current pay, I am still living paycheck to paycheck. If teacher pay is cut, my family and I will definitely struggle to pay our bills. Please reconsider.

Thank you,
Chrystie Isaacs
Moanalua Elementary School
Grade 5



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

Teacher pay cuts

David Brown <david.brown@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 6:46 AM

Dear State Leaders,

If you cut teacher pay you will lose a lot of great teachers in Hawaii.

If you lose a bunch of great teachers your children will suffer.

If your children suffer then your families suffer.

If your families suffer, your state suffers.

If your state suffers, you suffer.

Thank you,
David Brown
King Kamehameha III Elementary School

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

Teacher pay cuts

Paul Luuwai <pluuwai@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 6:47 AM

We are already short 1000 teachers in our state. By cutting our pay we will lose more teachers. Why is it always education that gets cut. Shame on the state of Hawaii



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

Help for teachers

Greg Sagers <sagz7734@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 6:48 AM

Please have grace when making decisions about cuts to teachers pay we're not getting rich and we're barely making it with our high cost living in hawaii .. I have colleagues who teach here and will they are barely affording there rent and teaching and if there are cuts to pay are thinking of moving because the cost living is cheaper in other states so they can raise families easier. Many teachers including myself work a second side job just to make it and so I can help my kids with costs of activities , with a pay cut I don't think I can afford any activities and equipment . Please consider other options so we don't lose more teachers and I don't get so stressed out about money for my family. I love teaching our students and am called to do so even in these difficult times . It's been so touching to se our students via video say how mush they miss me I can't wait to see them again. Mahalo and thank you for listening , Greg sagers elementary teacher.

--

Mahalos, Greg Sagers



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

aloha

Cassie Coonradt <Cassie.Coonradt@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:15 AM

Aloha everyone,
I'm a teacher here on Maui and I love my students, this community, and our island. I'm begging you, please don't cut our pay. We struggle financially as it is. We work hard for the money we receive. Teachers are paid 50th in the country when being compared to cost of living. If you take twenty percent more of our pay it's going to be even more difficult to pay all of our bills and feed our families. Please reconsider your plan to do this to all of us.

Thank you for listening.

Ms. Cassie Coonradt
Second grade teacher
King Kamehameha III School

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

Teacher Salaries

Thomas Tereschuk <thomas.tereschuk@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:18 AM

Please do not reduce teacher pay! I'm sure there are many families like my own who are barely making it each month. A reduction in pay would be devastating--to the point where we could not make it. Also, there are many families (like mine) that have both the mother and the father employed as teachers. Obviously, a reduction in pay for teachers would have overwhelming negative consequences affecting not only teachers and their families, but also all students and the economy of Hawaii as a whole. Please...Do not reduce teacher pay!

Tom Tereschuk
Teacher
Radford High School

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

NO to Salary Reduction

Nellwyne Young <nellwyne.young@campbell.k12.hi.us>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:25 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

It is very disheartening that a consideration to reduce the salary of EDUCATORS is frankly a slap in the face. There is no question that we are the lowest paid when you take into account the cost of living in Hawai'i. As a counselor who has been working for 20+ years it's hard that I still have to live paycheck to paycheck - and I have a MASTER'S DEGREE! More than ever with our current world wide situation with COVID-19 people are not just realizing the VALUE of first responders, but also of EDUCATORS. Within a few weeks we have had to figure out how to service our students and provide them the structure that they have been so used to. Before this pandemic HSTA was in talks to address our pay. To be honest, I was quite excited to finally get a financial bump. Now, talks of a reduction in pay is a morale killer . . . yet we still do what we have to do because of OUR kids. Now more than ever trying to engage and reach them has brought to us additional barriers. Yet, in true educator fashion . . . we make the best of a situation.

All EDUCATORS in the State of Hawaii deserve better than that. Do not reduce our pay.

Nellwyne Young
James Campbell High School
Counselor - Grades 9-12

I know these are trying and uncertain times. I am still here for you. Please let me know if you'd like to set up a virtual meeting.

From the College/Career Center: [Receive a JCHS Transcript Request Form](#)

*Also, we would like to know all about your post high school plans, so please use this link to upload a picture or PDF of ALL of your college acceptance letters, scholarship awards, and financial aid letters from the colleges you applied for!: [Class of 2020 Huskies: Acceptances & Awards](#) **Info submitted by 4/27/20 will be included in the virtual graduation ***

Nellwyne Young
Counselor - Academy of Public & Human Services (Alpha A-S)
808-305-3614 (do not call while we are on work from home status)

May 6, 2020

Hawai'i Board of Education
Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

re: Community Forum 5/7/2020 -- Who's the biggest bully at the school? It's the DOE.

Aloha,

Who's the biggest bully at the school? Turns out, it's the DOE. True, the Department of Education and its minions aren't stuffing ELL parents in a locker that requires a responsible adult with a bolt cutter for extrication. They're not shoving ELL parents up against a wall and taking their lunch money, or punching them senseless just because they can. They're not spreading malicious gossip, forming cliques and perpetrating cruel acts of social exclusion and relational aggression on a vulnerable kid. But it's not much different. Don't believe it? Please, keep an open mind, and hear me out. Let's start with the Merriam-Webster first online definition of what bullying is.

Bullying (n): abuse and mistreatment of someone vulnerable by someone stronger, more powerful, etc.

When it comes to a child's education in the Hawai'i, the DOE has *all* the power. ELL parents have none unless they can get an attorney to represent them. This still means they have no power. Only the attorney does. The most vulnerable parents are those who do not speak English very well (if at all), do not understand the Hawai'i public education system, and have limited education often from someplace outside U.S. borders. Even if these parents have an educated volunteer to help them, the DOE is having none of that.

The DOE has the power to exclude parents from participating in their children's education (which it does), effectively stuffing them in a locker, and throwing away the key. It has the power to prevent volunteers from helping parents (social ostracism). It has the power to totally destroy a child's educational future (which it does), knocking them senseless and causing brain damage. It has the power to take our "lunch money" tax dollars to fund their salaries and maintain schools, and then turn around and protect "their" turf by keeping parents and community volunteers out of the schools, a form of relational aggression. As I said. Bullying.

For the past three years I have volunteered thousands of hours of my life helping a struggling ELL/SpEd student and his mother. School year 2019-2020 was the worst nightmare yet. It was the child's first year at Robert Louis Stevenson Middle School (Grade 6). Early in the first quarter, the mother and I noticed that he was regressing academically, and he wasn't bringing home anything from school. Nothing. No papers. No homework. No book. Nada. What happened next is inexcusable, as measured by moderate standards of professional educators, but apparently completely acceptable to the DOE. Until the BOE finally does something effective to deal with the lack of accountability throughout the DOE, I want you to realize that the Board is complicit in all of this.

In August, the mother and I began requesting the opportunity to meet with teachers in their classrooms. Over the months we begged the school to collaborate with the parent and the home tutor (me). All we ever got was a one-hour meeting in mid-September with a whole bunch of teachers and administrators, a one-hour IEP revision meeting in November where they refused to take the parent's and home tutor's valid concerns into consideration, and a 40-minute meeting with the Math teacher that had no follow-up. All school year, we were only allowed to communicate via email with the teachers, which I tried to do, but then the Principal said I sent too many emails, and cut me out of communications even though the mother requested many times that I be included as her interpreter and assistant. Then, Principal Balatico started sending long missives in English to the mother,

excluding me. She also instructed all the teachers to ignore any email I sent. All of this is true, but no one seems to believe me which is astonishing because I have all the evidence to prove otherwise. Doesn't matter if no one reads it. I've already provided the BOE with links to a place on the internet where you could read everything I wrote to anyone in the school in Semester 1 of this last school year. Still, I have absolutely *no* reason to believe that anyone in the BOE or the DOE has bothered to look at any of the evidence. Either that, or no one in power gives a hoot about how parents and volunteers are routinely shut out of our schools.

All throughout the school year, the Principal refused to have the novice (Math) and emergency hire SpEd (Language Arts) teachers use the school-selected, structured curricula. Instead, these unseasoned professionals invented their own. Now, with "local control" teachers don't have to teach the school-selected curriculum. They can make it up as they go along. What's the result? The student's final i-Ready Diagnostic scores at the end of Grade 5 (May 2019) scores compared to the end of Grade 6 (March 2020), show that his Reading is 7 points lower and Math is 42 points lower. An entire year of the brilliant RLSMS methodology of shutting out the family and giving him a shoddy education, and the poor kid is doing worse than he was last year! I've been trying to tell the DOE that this is the wrong direction. His scores are supposed to go up after a year of instruction. Uh, is anyone else going to tell them?

Now, please don't tell me to file a complaint. Been there; done that. With the DOE, it's an exercise in futility. First, complaint went to the Complex Area Superintendent Linell Dilwith. I asked for the district plan for Family and Community Engagement. Never got one. CAS told us to solve our problems with the Principal by talking it out with the Principal. Well, dummy, I wouldn't be going to the CAS if that had worked. Then, the CAS does nothing but shunt us off to outside mediation and the Monitoring and Compliance Branch of the Superintendent's Office where they proceed to try and force a DOE appointed translator on the mother even though she keeps saying she wants me to help her. A translator wouldn't be much help anyway, because the parent needs help understanding the education system – not something a translator does. M&CB sends us a bunch of links about our rights and that's it. Jeez, that's an easy job. Don't know what they're monitoring over there and compliance is pretty thin, but hey, never can figure out what these DOE admins are getting paid to do.

Mediation was a joke. It took four months to get a meeting scheduled, and it was a complete waste of time. No results. No agreement on anything, and we can't even tell you what happened. It's confidentiality that protects the DOE, not the parent, which is why we didn't want to do it anyway. Turns out we were right. A waste of time with nothing to show for it.

I filed a complaint with the Deputy Superintendent Unebasami about the Principal shutting the mother's interpreter and the kid's tutor out of the education process, and the complete lack of family and community engagement. She tells me to file an IDEA complaint. I tell her the IDEA doesn't cover issues regarding ELL parents and their assistants. No response. I tell the Superintendent Kishimoto we've gotten no response to the issues in our complaint. No response.

So, I try to help the mother by filing an impartial due process hearing request. Guess what? That's the same as going to court, I find out, and the court won't let me speak for the parent because the courts won't let me "represent" the parent. Guess what? In hearings before the Labor Board, a Petitioner can have non-attorneys assist them in a hearing because *those* HARs have a provision for this. The BOE HARs have nothing. If the BOE had done something about this when I suggested a policy revision back in February, the mother would have her due process hearing with my assistance.

Conclusion: ELL public school parents are screwed by the system. I want to know that the BOE is going to do about accountability, fostering *true, authentic family engagement*, and giving ELL parents the right to have an assistant help them.

Thank you,



Vanessa Ott



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

Pay Cut

Roberta Perrone <perroner40@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:26 AM

Good morning. This email is to fight for the schools and keiki here in Hawaii. This pay cut will affect them the most. My name is Roberta Perrone-Walling. I work at Waipahu Elementary. My husband is Joshua Walling. He also is a teacher at a school in Ewa area. Together we have close to 15 years of teaching experience. My daughters and I have been living here since 2017. My husband since 2015. We have just enough to pay our bills. That is with my husband and I working part time jobs at the school. My husband runs an after school club and I work at the sibling center at Waipahu Elementary. My oldest daughter is due to graduate from Kapolei High School in 2021, but won't if the 20% pay cut goes through. We will sadly have to leave Hawaii and go back to the states. Please consider the pay cut. This pay cut will not only affect teachers like my husband and I, but our daughters, families, students, and schools. Thank you for your time. Roberta Perrone-Walling



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

Do not cut teachers salaries

Ann Saucier <ann.saucier@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:30 AM

Aloha:

My name is Ann Saucier and I am a middle school teacher at Kalama Intermediate School. I am math certified 7-12 grades. I have been teaching on Maui for 16 years. Prior to that I worked as a software executive on the mainland making substantially more money. When I moved to the islands I wanted to give back to the community that I knew would give so richly to me and I chose to go back into teaching. I love working in the middle school and working hard to make a difference in children's lives. Especially those that are in great need of support, guidance and love. I am a single mother of two children myself who receives no financial support from the father . I already struggle from pay check to pay check and taking a further cut would force me to look at other career options. Please consider the impact of your decision on all the students in our school system. You will lose hardworking dedicated teachers, not because they do not want to teach but because they cannot afford to teach. Also please keep in mind that when the economy is booming, the teachers are not getting significant pay increases or bonuses as they do in the private sector . We are our keiki s rock, we are the steady course that keeps them moving forward and catches them when they fall. Please don't disrespect us and our profession by cutting our pay and showing us how little you value our role in the community .

Mahalo,
Ann

--

Ann Saucier
Curriculum Coordinator
Kalama Intermediate School
575-8735 (x230)

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

Keep teachers pay the same

Elisabeta Soltani <elisabetasoltani@yahoo.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:37 AM

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

Aloha,

On behalf of my family we please request that you do not cut teachers pay checks.

I have three children and they are all in public schools.

Teachers work very hard to educate our young.

Please consider pay cuts in the upper part of the government, starting with the Governor and the life long benefits he will receive, long after he is out of office.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisabeta Soltani



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

Pay cuts = food bank for me, for teachers

John Van Plantinga <john.vanplantinga@mauihigh.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:37 AM

Please do not reduce our already low pay as hawaii educators use one paycheck for rent and the other for expenses. We are on a survival salary now and a 20% pay cut would further hurt teachers who are going above and beyond for our students everyday.

I am teaching ZOOM classes now, adapting to new technology, evaluating how best to reach all of my students and I must consider a pay cut as well? How will I pay my bills and feed myself and my family. I have a son in college, I work two jobs, DOE and another, and I am spending my savings to stay in this job as a special education teacher at Maui High School working with students in the Workplace Readiness program.

Cut salaries for those who earn over 100Ka year, there are many state employees earning fat paychecks. But to cut the salary of a 55K a year employee, a special ed teacher is to cut our throat. Please do not cut teacher salaries as we are already working so close to poverty.

Thank you
John Van Plantinga

--

Mahalo!

John Van Plantinga

Maui High School

Work Place Readiness O-101

john.vanplantinga@mauihigh.org

(808)727-4156

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

Teacher Pay Cuts

Beate Arendale <barendale@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:41 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

I have been an AP English teacher at King Kekaulike High School for over 20 years and a Hawaii resident for 30 years. Both of my children went to public schools in Hawaii preparing them both for college educations. Even though I worked in private schools for 4 years at the beginning of my teaching career because there were few public school vacancies, I believe in public school education.

Please do not consider cutting teacher pay because it will force qualified teachers to leave the state and teachers such as myself to retire early. My students earn some of the highest AP scores in the state on their exams. Do you want to deny them this opportunity? I have already been through the 2001 teacher strike and the 2009 Furlough Fridays which cut our pay by 17%, therefore I kindly ask you to pay teachers a living wage.

Sincerely,

Beate Arendale



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

Please do not cut teacher salaries

Brian Citro <brian.citro@campbell.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:53 AM

To whom it may concern,

Please, as a teacher, I am asking that you do not cut teacher salaries. We have been fighting for years to get fair pay, and as we inch closer to a better salary, a pay cut would devastate many lives. There has to be alternative ways to deal with this crisis, please do not let the burden fall on the teachers. I know many colleagues, including myself that are barely surviving and living paycheck to paycheck. Many talk about leaving the state to teach on the mainland, where the salaries are better, and the dollar goes much further. We already have substitute teachers teaching full time. Many are unqualified and doing the best they can, but it is the students that actually suffer in the end. Our keiki are not getting the education that they deserve because we do not have qualified teachers in the classroom. Please find another solution to deal with this economic downturn, do not make teachers and our keiki pay the price!

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Brian Citro
James Campbell H.S.
Biology grades 9-12
0-205
(808) 305-3634



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

Teacher pay

laila aldred <lailaaldred@yahoo.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:58 AM

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

Aloha,

It has come to my attention that budget cuts may jeopardize teacher pay in Hawaii. Teacher pay can not be cut. Hawaii is already the lowest pay in the entire USA. We have a dramatic teacher shortage as it is. If pay was cut in any way, it would only exacerbate this issue. We need to pay our teachers fairly and keep the teachers that are here. I came from California as a licensed teacher 15 years ago, and I took a pay cut then. I almost left to return to the mainland based solely on the low pay I was receiving. I made the difficult decision to stay because I love these islands and the children of the islands. However, I have seen so many teachers leave each year because of low pay. Please, as a mother of two public school children, and an educator: Do not cut teacher pay. We will lose teachers and have an impossible time recruiting new ones. The children and our families will suffer.

Thank you
Laila Popata
King Kekaulike High School
Maui
Librarian.



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

(no subject)

Leigh-Ann Casuga <leighanncasuga@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:59 AM

Aloha,

My name is Leigh-Ann Casuga and I am a counselor at Ilima Intermediate. During this unprecedented times and dealing with the pressure to stabilize our economy, pay cuts should not be considered an option. Yes, as educators we would definitely suffer as we already struggle with low pay. Furthermore, the most impact will be felt by our students. We already have long term substitute filling our classes, sometimes for the whole year. This decision to cut pay will create more vacancies and less stability in the classroom. Please consider other options rather than cutting teachers pay.

Thank you,
Leigh-Ann Casuga

Sent from my iPhone



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

Rejection Pay Cut Testimony

Leolani Corpuz <leolani.corpuz@mauihigh.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 7:59 AM

Aloha,

As a member of a dual State worker household, we will not be able to afford a 20% pay cut.

Our family has children who attend public school and will hurt from this pay cut most of all. They risk having noncertified teachers or long-term subs due to teacher shortage from teachers being forced out of teaching because the pay would be insufficient. My children also are put at risk of not having a home and forced to sacrifice more than they already do. Both of our incomes would suffer the pay cut and would jeopardize our rental status. We have no where to go and would be put out of our house and made homeless.

Our home is dealing with this crisis like every other household in our community. Many other teachers and multi-teacher families will suffer the same financial impact which adds to the anxiety and stress of this pandemic and it's aftermath. We are highly-qualified teachers who love our jobs, love our students and WANT TO TEACH.

We want other options to be looked at because this pay cut would hurt the children of Hawaii more than anything. They are hurting so much already, a pay cut would be like dragging this pandemic hurt longer than needed.

Please don't cut our salaries.

Mahalo,
Leolani Corpuz
Maui High School
Mathematics
Grades 9 and 10



Testimony of Impact of Teacher Salary Cuts

terry takeuchi <mochicrunchmama@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:00 AM

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

I have been a 7th and 8th grade math teacher at Ilima Intermediate School for 23 years. Over these years, I have seen so many teachers come and go from the teaching profession to pursue job opportunities that offer better pay. Many of them were great teachers and had the passion for working with our middle school level keiki but because of the high cost of living in Hawaii, they chose to leave teaching and pursue another professions. Now with the cutting of teacher salaries to balance the budget on the table, I am very concerned that this problem will only get worse. I am also concerned that a decision to cut teacher salaries will also force our seasoned teachers to take an earlier retirement. These are the valuable teachers that can help schools move forward because of their experiences over the years or who are great mentors for the newer teachers to support them so these newer teachers want to stay in this state and this profession. It's scary to think of the impact this will have on our Hawaii keiki's education.

Are you aware of the teacher shortage in Hawaii and the impact it has had on the education of our keiki? We've had many substitutes filling vacant positions at our school. One example of this, I've seen a math position remain vacant for over half the school year and substitutes come and go because they don't have the passion for working with our middle school keiki. Some of those subs were not strong in teaching the math content. The students would get worksheets with limited instruction included on the top of the page to complete. This is not the rigorous curriculum that prepares them for the SBAC testing that our schools are held responsible for showing growth and improvement. How are we able to do this when we are having difficulties filling these positions because we are having difficulty finding qualified teachers to fill the positions? This is only one of the many examples of what I have seen. Again, I seriously urge you to NOT cut the teacher salaries in order to balance the budget.

Are you aware of the shortages of substitute teachers in Hawaii? Did you know that they are lowering the requirements for becoming substitute teachers? They are now allowing people who have no teaching background and who have a minimal requirement of a high school diploma to be in the classrooms? Is this the quality of education you want for our keiki? A budget cut in teacher salaries will negatively impact the education of our keiki in Hawaii when the teachers leave this profession because they can't afford to live in Hawaii, need to find a higher paying job, or take an early retirement.

Teachers are spending a lot of their own money to purchase things to support the learning and environment in their classroom. With a pay cut, I seriously doubt teachers will be able to be as generous as they have been with spending money out of their own pockets to get the things that are needed in the classrooms because they won't be able to afford to do that. In fact, I just found out that in their efforts to prepare for the school's budget cut next school year, our school currently is planning on providing each teacher with only one case of paper to cover the paper a teacher will use for the copier machine. That is insane! One box of paper for the whole school year? The amount of money allocated for teachers to cover supplies and materials will also be drastically cut back next school year. Now with the changes this COVID-19 will bring in how to sanitize our classrooms and make it safer for our keiki, where do you think the schools will find the funds to cover the expenses for disinfectant or sanitation supplies for each classroom? If the school won't pay for it, usually the teachers will. However, with if the teacher salaries are cut to balance the budget, teachers will not be able to do that and once again, the education and even the health of our Hawaii keiki will be at risk.

Please, I urge you to not cut the teacher salaries to balance the budget.

We need your support. Mahalo.

Terry Gouveia
Ilima Intermediate School
7th & 8th Grade Mathematics
7th -8th grade mathematics Teacher



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

Oppose Teacher Pay Cuts

Kalamaku Freitas <kameron.freitas@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:02 AM

Aloha nui kākou,

My name is Kameron Kalamakūno'eau Freitas. I am currently a Hawaiian medium/immersion educator at Samuel Enoka Kalama Intermediate in Makawao, Maui where I teach 6th, 7th and 8th grade Hawaiian language arts.

I strongly urge you to reject the possible pay cut for teachers, because the truth is, even without the pay cut, teachers do not make enough and are not paid what we work for. A pay cut in our salary would result in many teachers leaving the profession, which then would impact the quality of education our students will receive. Kumu kula or school teachers are the ones who shape and mold the minds of our children, our future leaders. Frankly, with a pay cut, teachers may actually begin to only work during paid work hours, and that will have a drastic negative and drastic impact on the value and quality of education.

Please show the world that teachers are valuable.

Na'u nō me ka 'oia'i'o,
Kalamakū Freitas

--

Na'u nō,
na Kalamakū

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

No budget cuts for teachers

Marisa Utrillo <marisautrillo@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:02 AM

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing as a concerned parent of children who would be negatively impacted by a budget cut or reduction in wages to Hawaii's teachers and supportive staff members.

Living in one of the most expensive states & we are already facing a teacher shortage here in Hawaii, we need to be able have the proper educators making wages to stay here in the islands. Forcing a cut in pay would force qualified teachers to move to other areas of our nation or force them to work a second job.

Please do not force our teachers who so so much and sacrifice so much for our children.

Please consider no budget cuts.

Mahalo for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,
Marisa Utrillo

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)



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

Pay Reduction Not OK

Jonathan Christian Bowe <jcb016@hotmail.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:05 AM

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

I feel as an educator that a pay reduction would be a detriment to public education in the state of Hawaii. It would also have a lasting negative impact on the community.

Jonathan Bowe
King Kekaulike HS
Special Education Teacher
Serving students in grades 9-Age Out

Sent from my iPhone



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

Support of Public School Educators

Adrienne Hale <adriannahale@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:11 AM

To the Hawai'i Board of Education,
My name is Adrienne Hale. I am a fourth grade teacher at Holualoa Elementary School. I am a 25 year veteran teacher here in the State of Hawai'i who has given much to my profession, my keiki, and my community. Please support education in Hawai'i by not reducing teacher salaries. As it stands, Hawai'i is already experiencing a critical teacher shortage. Reducing teacher salaries will not only hurt my family and the families of our teachers state-wide, it will also set us back in our efforts to attract and retain teachers. Let us be unified in supporting education and supporting our keiki in Hawai'i by supporting our teachers.

Mahalo nui loa,
Adrienne Hale



Proposed pay cuts

Alexandra Los <alos@innovationspcs.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:17 AM

As a 3rd year teacher, I panicked when I heard about the proposal to cut Hawaii teacher pay by 20%. I have lived in Hawaii for about 5 years. I have been committed to giving back to the keiki and the community and growing roots here. The now probably reality of this hasty decision deeply saddens me. The reality is that I will not be able to continue to grow my roots or cheer on my keiki when they succeed or be a shoulder for them to cry on when they do not. I will not be able to afford rent, groceries and utilities. The reality is, I will need to move back to the mainland, to live with my 70 year old mother.

If this proposal becomes reality, I will hold a masters degree and bring home approximately \$29,000. I cannot survive on that salary. I am not alone in this, by far. I am one of many, many teachers who will be forced out of the profession simply because we cannot afford to sustain ourselves and our families. We will lose housing, we will not be putting money back into the economy. Our keiki will be at an extreme disadvantage. The teacher turnover rate in Hawaii is already incredibly high. We already have over 1,000 vacant positions. These drastic actions will wipe out a huge portion of our teaching force. Good teachers aren't just created, they are molded after years of experience. Our keiki deserve good, long-term, unwavering teachers.

The ramifications of this rash decision will weigh on our state for years. This is not the solution. Ige's proposal to take from the people who are personally responding to the community during this crisis in order to balance the budget is disgraceful. There are other options. There is currently a 2 trillion dollar federal stimulus bill and they are working on another. The state has 400 million in a rainy day fund to deal with emergencies. This, governor, is an emergency. This is the time to use that money. I implore you to explore these other options to the full extent.

Alexandra Los
1st / 2nd Grade Teacher
Innovations Public Charter School



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

Teacher pay

Jonathan Silva <jona10silva@me.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:25 AM

To whom it may concern,

I just wanted to share my thoughts on teacher pay:

Teachers are already the lowest in the nation (when COL is included in calculations). I told a coworker who was at the time the VP of our union, "why don't we shoot for being 49th place? We're not greedy or asking to be the best paid, we are asking to be 2nd from last. How much would that take per teacher?" He replied. "\$10,000."

I use this story to illustrate how behind we are from the rest of the country.

A PAY CUT would not only put us further behind, but it would squelch the momentum we're been gaining at retaining qualified teachers.

I know Hawaii spends a lot on recruitment and phrases like 'Imagine yourself teaching in paradise.' But this phrase doesn't apply because if you move here you will have to work 2-3 jobs to just make it and you won't be able to enjoy paradise.

Just a little bit about myself, I'm an 8th generation Hawaiian. I was a lifeguard for the county of maui and I decided against all my family's wishes to get into counseling. My desire stemmed from wanting to serve my community. Over the years, I've seen my coworkers get substantial raise after raise. I paid for my master's degree all on my own and not only did I spend all that time in school, but now I dramatically make less than my lifeguard family.

Thank you for listening and feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Silva



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

BOE: Do not reduce teachers' salaries!

Ashley Brooks <mrs.ashleybrooks@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:28 AM

Aloha BOE,

I'm writing to plead with you to find another way to balance the budget. Cutting teacher salaries will have long term effect on our children and our community. We can't afford to lose any more highly qualified teachers in an already hard to staff state. I've been teaching 3 and 4th graders for the past 10 years in Kona Hawaii. I love my job and my students. I can't imagine giving my students all my focus and effort but still not being able to afford my bills. A severe pay cut would force me to find another job or a 2nd job, which would take away from my students and my family. Please find another way to balance the budget.

Thank you for hearing our voices and standing up for the keiki of our state.

Ashley Brooks
3rd/4th Teacher
Innovations Public Charter School



Please avoid pay cuts!

Harmony Seivert <hseivert@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:31 AM

To the members of the Hawaii Board of Education:

Thank you for all your support during this unprecedented time. The safety of our students and teachers is paramount. I urge you to not support any actions to reduce teacher salaries. We already have a dire situation in this state, with over 1,000 vacancies left unfilled by qualified teachers. A cut in teacher pay would be a devastating blow to those who have been working so hard to meet the needs of students while our school buildings are shuttered.

Gov. David Ige has publicly stated that he is looking into alternatives, such as borrowing from the Federal Reserve and waiting for more state stimulus funding from Congress. Unfortunately, neither of these preferred alternatives are guaranteed. Please urge him to continue to look at other alternatives.

I am a special education teacher in a hard-to-fill-school. I was relieved to get differentials this year because my family has struggled to make ends meet and we were finally going to have enough to get out of debt. The cost of living can be almost unbearable for a family of 5, especially on a teacher's salary. I already rent 3 rooms in my house to afford my mortgage payment, but due to COVID-19, we don't have this contribution to our income right now. We may be forced to leave the state and live with family if my salary is reduced. I am not the only one in this situation.

More of Hawaii's students would go without licensed teachers if pay cuts force teachers to move out-of-state or drive senior teachers into early retirement. Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers, which is exactly the problem we have been working to solve this year with our efforts to recruit and retain more teachers.

Please urge Governor Ige to look at all other possible solutions before considering cutting teacher pay. The negative repercussions of that choice would be far-reaching, even leading to potential lawsuits for students with special needs. Please advocate for our teachers and students in public education!

Sincerely,
Harmony Seivert
Grade 5 Special Education Teacher
Waimea Elementary School



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

Budget Scenarios

Kyle Herendeen <kherendeen@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:31 AM

Good Morning,

I have been teaching on Maui for 14 years, met my wife and have started a family. I consider Hawaii my home. But my wife and I live paycheck to paycheck. If that paycheck is cut I would not be able to afford the cost of living on Maui and would move to the mainland to earn a higher salary with lower cost of living.

Lowering teacher salary is not the way to recoup monies.

--

Kyle Herendeen

11th Grade Special Education
King Kekaulike HS



Do not reduce teachers salaries

Jo-Ann Yap <jyap89@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:32 AM

My name is Jo Ann Yap. I have been a teacher for the State of Hawaii Department of Education for 36 years. I teach at Iao School on Maui. My subject areas are Career Education/ Food & Nutrition. I teach approximately 350-8th graders. I also teach after school program called UPLINKS. I also teach summer enrichment. I also am the Summer School director. As you can see, I still have to work part time even after working for that many years.

Reducing teacher pay will harm not only me and my family but also the students we serve. We senior teachers (and I speak on behalf of many colleagues) will consider retiring. This will leave teacher shortages in Hawaii at a greater number than 600. On a given day at my school, there are so many substitute teachers or not enough to cover unhired teaching lines.

I have walked the strike picket lines twice in my career. Receiving no pay for 14 days twice. I have been affected by the Linda Lingle furloughs for almost 2 years. And we voted her in. How quickly do government officials forget how we helped them during their campaigns! We were told the state could not afford pay increases. Our salary pay scale has been compressed. Even when we eventually got raises, it was a 1.8% raise. We are now in negotiating period.

Covid19 is not the teachers fault. We teachers are offend times used as the "sacrificiall lamb" so other unions can watch and see. We did not create this mess so why do we need to balance the state budget by our salaries? Every person who resides in Hawaii should contribute to balancing the state budget...even the tourists.

HERE ARE SOME POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:

Increase general excise tax

Restrict travel within the state and especially out of state.

Cut pay from every level of government (Transportation, Taxation, Judiciary)

Cut pay from the County level employees

Freeze hiring (offices can use their current manpower and work harder)

Cut discretionary budget funds (millions of dollars here)

Schools do not need to pay for keynote speakers from around the country to do workshops in their districts. Monies can be saved here.

Every level of government should pay for this mess. Private sectors too.

Utilize federal monies.

Thank you for you time and support for schools, teachers and students.
I am a teacher and I am a front line employee too.

Sincerely,
Jo Ann Yap



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

Protect Education in Hawaii

Sadie Mossman <smossman@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:32 AM

Dear Board of Education,

My name is Sadie Mossman I am a National Board Certified Secondary Science teacher in Biology. I teach at King Kekaulike High School on Maui. My Husband is also a math and science teacher at KKHS. This is our 18th year teaching in Hawaii and we give our hearts and souls to our work, students, and the community! As a two-teacher household, we have made many sacrifices over the past 18 years to survive on our salaries. We barely survived furloughs and it has been tough with no/little pay increases to keep up with the cost of living. (Every time we get a raise our health insurance costs also go up, and eat up that pay increase!)

I understand that Hawaii is facing extreme economic uncertainty! However, I ask you to please do everything you can to support the children of Hawaii by making sure we can pay our qualified educators and keep them in the classrooms! My husband and I are not sure we will be able to even cover our bills if we receive a 20% pay cut as discussed on the news! Please take the time to find creative ways to solve this problem and avoid teacher salary cuts at all costs!

Sincerely,
Sadie Mossman

May 6, 2020

Hawaii State Board of Education:

My name is Raylene Peters. I am a teacher at Kailua High School in the Windward District on Oahu. I am submitting testimony against supporting the state's economic revival on the back of its workers, especially it's teachers.

I have been an educator with the Department of Education for over twenty-two years. As with many other educators, I went into the profession because I wanted to give back and make a difference in my community. I knew that at times it would be a thankless job that didn't pay much. However, I also knew that this is where I belonged.

Throughout those twenty-two years I have spent thousands of dollars of my own money to equip my class and students with the necessary supplies to create the needed learning environment for my students to succeed. This was through the thick and thin years of the State's budget crisis when I was struggling to make ends meet for my family. During those years, many teachers questioned whether or not to remain in the Department of Education or move on. I stuck it out because I knew our students needed teachers who cared about them and their futures. This was in spite of the pay cuts and lack of raises that we endured. In fact, to make ends meet, I took out loans, worked other jobs, and succeeded in becoming Nationally Board certified.

Now that I am nearing retirement age, I have become very aware of the fact that I cannot retire in spite of my years of service because of those lean years where we teachers accepted what the state dealt us for the sake of the students. However, it becomes very disheartening and morale crushing when the state starts talking about the

need for state workers to sacrifice for the sake of the state's economic down turn due to COVID-19. We are all suffering, however, to think that it is okay for a few to make a decision that has a ripple effect on the majority is preposterous!

As a profession, teachers have always had a negative reputation. Society, without empathy, assume that being a teacher is easy and overpaid. They see teachers as having numerous days off, especially summers, and working fewer hours than most yet get paid. They do not know the hours nor the amount of our own money we utilize to give their children the best education possible. My students are my children when they are with me whether it was pre or post pandemic. I am here not only for their educational endeavors, but also their social and emotional needs. I put them above myself knowing that some may not have the support needed at home. My own children recognize and accept this because they know how fortunate they are even though we struggle to stay afloat in a sea of uncertainty.

Yes, Hawaii's economy has been hit a harsh blow, however, this may be the very thing we need to start having a serious discussion and reflect upon the possibilities for the state's long term future for education. We are here for the long run, unlike the tourist's this state seems to cherish so much because of the money they bring into the economy, because this is our home and we care about what is happening. Cutting the salary of our teachers is not the answer unless you are willing to accept the consequences which may be worse than your solution.

Raylene Peters
Windward District
Kailua, Oahu



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

Please do NOT lower Teacher's pay!

Jennifer Deatrick <jennifer.deatrick@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:39 AM

Aloha!

My name is Jennifer Deatrick and I teach 5th grade at King Kamehameha Elementary School in Lahaina, Hawaii. I am writing this letter to request that you **do NOT cut our pay**. First of all, our wages are already extremely low for the work and effort that we put in and the education we are required to have for our jobs. Second, I am working harder and longer, learning teaching and technology techniques and skills that I was never trained to have in order to ensure that my students' education continues. We give our extended time, energy, effort, and emotion for our kids. Every single teacher at my school goes above and beyond their requirements... because we care and we are willing to do what is needed for our kids. We have used our personal cell phones and made ourselves accessible sometimes 24-hours a day, we have driven laptops to homes because the parent(s) were not able to pick it up. We make phone calls to parents to ensure that emotional needs are being met... we already do not get paid enough.

Our pay is SO low, that people who are collecting Unemployment checks matched with the CARES funds are getting paid 40% more than we are right now!! And if you cut our pay, we ARE UNABLE to collect anything because of it! We simply get paid LESS! Are you kidding me! What a fantastic message that what we do is UNIMPORTANT! That we are not necessary!

For me personally, we have already taken a hit. My husband lost two jobs, but lost one of them. Because he still has the other job, we are unable to collect anything additional for assistance. And the same will be IF YOU CUT TEACHER'S PAY! Please do not cut our pay!!

Please look somewhere else to cut money; we simply cannot afford the cuts. I have one teacher, with simply the threat of cuts, who has already arranged to move to Washington when this school year is over. WHY? Because she is a SINGLE MOM OF THREE and if she cuts her wages cut, SHE WON'T SURVIVE! Stop insulting us and making us feel like we are less than deserving of the ridiculous money we get, especially with the cost of living so high in this state. I hope and pray that you make a different choice!

Mahalo,
Jennifer Deatrick

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

Fwd: pay cuts

Jennifer Mahuka <jennifer.mahuka@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:40 AM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jennifer Mahuka** <jennifer.mahuka@k12.hi.us>
Date: Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:33 AM
Subject: pay cuts
To: <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

My name is Jennifer Mahuka. I am in my 24th year of teaching special education at Kalama Intermediate School. I have endured much throughout my career, including furlough Fridays, the strike, and on . It has taken years to finally reach where I should have been on the pay scale. I did not ever expect to become financially rich in this job. I love what I do and I feel lucky to work with my students and make a difference in their lives. However, if this pay cut happens, I will be forced to take early retirement because I just cannot go backwards again. It is not fair to expect teachers to be the first ones to bear this loss. I realize these are extraordinary times and everyone is going to be asked to sacrifice. However, this cannot be the first and only avenue to explore. Our school is missing qualified teachers every single day. Students are not getting what they deserve because of these shortages. Certified teachers on both ends of their careers will be forced to leave the field if this is the way you choose to make cuts, on the backs of teachers. I beg you to explore more options. Hawaii teachers and students deserve better.

mahalo
Jennifer Mahuka

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

We were supposed to be getting raises/ Cannot afford pay cuts.

Rob HarperOConnor <rharperoconnor@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:46 AM

Superintendent Kishimoto and Hawaii Board of Education,

Teachers were set for raises while the economy and private industry were booming, but we were underpaid and struggling. Teachers cannot afford a pay cut after being underpaid already.

Thank you for your concern.

R. Harper-O'Connor
King Kekaulike High School, Art Teacher



Concerns about salary cuts

Gordon Wong <gwonghi@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:50 AM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Gordon Wong and I'm a grade 1 teacher at Kaimiloa Elementary School in the Campbell Complex. I've been an educator in the HiDOE system for over 31 years in capacities such as a classroom teacher, school level resource specialist and temporary vice principal. My wife is also a HiDOE educator for over 32 years.

I understand our economy is hard hit by the Covid crisis and the board has extremely difficult decisions to make regarding the budget. I humbly ask that teacher salaries not be reduced to help balance the budget. With a dual salary coming from the DOE, my family will be tremendously impacted by this decision. We don't live lavishly by any means, but we do have a mortgage, auto loan, college tuition and standard household expenses. A salary cut will definitely set my family into a financial crisis!

Many in the public still don't realize the challenges and rigor of an educator's roles and responsibilities. I've been told more than once during this crisis that teachers shouldn't be paid because we're on an extended vacation and not doing our jobs. Little do they know that implementing distance learning for my students and supporting fellow teachers have been the most challenging work I've done in years! I don't brag or make myself known because it's a commitment I made when entering this profession. I truly feel that a salary cut will reinforce this negative thinking that's out there about the hard-working educators in Hawaii.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Gordon Wong



BOE testimony teacher pay cuts

Eleyne Fia <hacacefia@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:52 AM

Dear Board of Education Members:

Teachers go into the profession because it is, a profession of giving. While some people may say then, that we should be the ones to carry the budget deficits, just the opposite is true. Teachers do not place an importance of extravagant living. While we work beyond our contracted hours, voluntarily, it is also teachers who give and share what little they may have.

Be it money, time, food, or an ear to listen and a shoulder to cry on, a teacher gives.

Personally, a cut to my income would have an immediate effect of sharing. Teachers like myself, will now be a part of the long lines of waiting for free food and vegetable give outs. Instead of helping or cutting down on my own food so that someone else may hopefully have a space in that long line, I will be there, waiting long hours while instead, I would rather be planning for my students and building on my programs at my school. Difficult choices will have to be made, for my time, medical bills and house bills needing to be paid, food for my own family – this is my family's own survival.

I am in that category of the teacher pay scale where my pay is well below my years of service. But I love what I do, I cannot see myself doing any other career. People say I should leave my career and find something that values the worth of my skills. While that is possible, I am a school counselor and in many of my students' alums and parents' words, "I don't know where my future would be if it weren't for you Mrs. Fia" speaks to my worth. I build futures. I know my worth. But I also am grateful that I have had the freedom to make the choice to be an educator.

I cannot do the work that's needed if I have to sacrifice the time to find another way to support my family. My husband is a teacher, so our family equates to about a **40% income reduction** for us. This could be almost a \$30,000 income reduction. We have two children of our in college. While we would never force our children to leave college, we don't know how we will pay for their education. Our oldest is **pursuing education** and will himself be eventually entering the field to teach middle school science. It will be discouraging for him and many other future young educators to enter the field of teaching, after graduating college. Why should they? They have the knowledge, awareness and skills to obtain a much more lucrative field. But future teachers knowingly sacrifice their own possible financial paths for the sake of Keiki.

A cut to a teacher's income means so much more sacrifice than money. It's personal too. You all already know the damaging effects it could bring on our state. Please do not cut the teacher's pay. The ripple effects are devastating and will be felt for years to come.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story (Submitting for May 7, 2020).

Sincerely,
Eleyne Fia
School Counselor (Career/College)
NBCT 2013
James Campbell High School



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

Testimony Against Cutting Teacher Salaries

Patricia Pascual <ppascual@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:52 AM

Aloha,

With all due respect, cutting teacher salaries in any way will negatively affect my ability to afford living expenses. I am still paying my student loans and have other debts due to the struggle to make ends meet. We are already underpaid and therefore, any cut would show the lack of honor for our profession. We build the future through our children. Please place that on a high pedestal and show the value for quality education by NOT cutting teacher pay. The direct results would be Senior teachers would seek earlier retirement, more long-term subs and unqualified teachers would result, and less people in general will enter the teaching profession. In short, the standards and quality of learning would be negatively impacted. There is and has always been a struggle to be justly supported as a teacher. PLEASE DON'T show such lack of consideration for our livelihood as teachers. I believe many in our communities would agree with this request.

Sincerely,
Patricia Pascual
Social Studies Teacher
10th Grade Honors/World History
King Kekaulike Highschool/MAUI



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

Testimony letter

donna meyer <donnameyeris@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 8:57 AM

Members of the Board of Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Donna Meyer, the parent of a student at King Kamehameha III School in Lāhainā, Maui. My child has attended this school since he was enrolled as a Pre-K student in their special needs education program. Without the help of the dedicated teachers, faculty and staff collectively he would not be the independent, academically well rounded achiever he is today in 5th grade. He will continue his education all throughout high school here on Maui and go on to be a vital part of the community. The teachers he has now and past have been the highest quality of educators and deserve to maintain their progress. So please we ask you to oppose any budget cuts to our valued educators and continue to invest in our children and the future of Hawaii.

Sincerely,
Donna Meyer



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

Reducing/Cutting already poor Hawaii Teacher salaries- poor move for Hawaii's future generation

Lori Johnson <ljohnson@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:00 AM

As a veteran teacher, Mother of four with a self-employed husband, a pay cut would be difficult on our family. Also, with an already critical teacher shortage having teachers who are not licensed and unqualified teachers to teach our children of Hawaii is detrimental to their learning. I've witnessed this and I grieve for our children of Hawaii, which include my own.

Teaching Health Education in Middle school and now in High School I can tell you that some of our students are already struggling emotionally, academically and with the additional stress of the Covid19 epidemic where their parents are out of work and being cooped up at home for months they need to return to school next year with teaches who want to be there and are ready to help them cope and help them be the best student they possibly can.

If you cut/reduce the 13,000 Teachers/Admin salaries I believe you will only add to the burden to this generation and the families of Hawaii.

Please choose to keep Teachers salaries where they are for the sake of our children and families of Hawaii.

--

Mahalo,

Lori Johnson
KKHS Health Education Teacher



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

Proposed teacher pay cuts

Andrew Wolski <awolski@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:00 AM

My name is Andrew Wolski and i have been a science teacher at King Kekaulike High school for over 15 years. I am very concerned about the proposed pay cuts that are being discussed by governor Ige. I have truly enjoyed being a teacher in the state of Hawaii over the years but I am afraid that if our salaries are significantly reduced I will be forced to leave Hawaii which would have been the last thing I would have even considered 2 months ago. My significant other has lost her job most likely indefinitely, so for the foreseeable future we might be a one income family. I realize the state will be facing hard financial times ahead, but to jeopardize losing lots of well seasoned teachers will have a tremendously negative impact on our students. Our students deserve to have the best education and as many well qualified teachers that are invested in their students and the communities they live in. A few months ago the state was working on trying to increase the salary of teachers due to the fall out of our last recession we went through and I feel that to erase all the financial gains we have received since 2008 will be demoralizing for many teachers like myself. I would like to please ask you not to make any drastic decisions till we absolutely need to, at which time I think the teachers will be willing to make sacrifices along with everyone else in the state.

Thank you
Andrew Wolski



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

Hawaii state worker pay cuts

Mr. Mizunaka <gmizunaka@redhill.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:02 AM

Aloha. My name is Gabe and both my wife and I are public state teachers. She works in Waipahu, I work in Aiea. We both enjoy our jobs and are currently looking for a place where we could possibly begin a family in the future.

I know that our current COVID19 situation leaves the BOE and the state with limited options to keep our budget intact. And I appreciate everything that our political and educational leaders are doing to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone in this state.

That being said, cutting the pay of state workers up to 20% is not an option that is in our best interest. Money is already tight for me and my wife, so I can imagine what those with children or kupuna to care for are going through. Cutting our pay will also discourage people from spending money, further damaging our fragile economy.

You must also consider the teacher shortage of our state. Cutting teacher pay in particular may cause many older teachers to simply retire, which will put a lot of schools between a rock and a hard place. Anyone who has truly taught at a school knows how important it is to have a complete and fully qualified staff.

I beg of you to please look for alternative ways to manage this crisis. We are looking to you to make this decision with all of us in mind.

Mahalo,
Gabriel Mizunaka



Potential Salary Cuts

brgkona . <brgkona@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:03 AM

Aloha,

My name is Brooke Gabriel and I am a Kindergarten teacher at Holualoa Elementary School on the Big Island. I am writing on behalf of myself and my colleagues to respectfully protest the proposed 19.62% cut to teacher salaries due to COVID-19 budget cuts. This salary decrease would greatly effect my family of four, as well as many teacher-families in Hawaii with our cost of living as it is. Additionally, I believe that it would encourage some teachers to consider early retirement, which will increase our already large teacher shortage. I have worked at Holualoa School for 6 years and have seen lots of turnover. Sadly sometimes we have "lost" wonderful teachers because the cost of living here in Hawaii far exceeds their salary and they end up moving.

The teacher shortage in our state is already staggering, and if these cuts go through we will surely lose more teachers, which will gravely alter many student's educations. Currently at our school we have 3 long-term substitute teachers without a degree in education in the classroom. While they are certainly doing their best, they are not fully trained. This is unfair to those children.

Please show teachers the respect that we deserve. We serve and love our keiki and value our jobs.

Mahalo,

Brooke Gabriel



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

Please don't cut teacher salaries!

Edith P Middleton <edithpmiddleton@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:05 AM

Edith Middleton
King Kekaulike high school, Maui
English 9 & ALC Math & English

Please do not cut teacher salaries! When I moved here four years ago I took a 50% paycut from my Connecticut paycheck. Now I can barely afford my bills and with this proposed paycut I will be making a third of what I would be paid in CT, where I came from. As a teacher for ten years with two masters degrees I still don't even break \$60k and with one daughter in college, another two years away I will not be able to afford living on Maui.

There is already such a terrible shortage of teachers at our school, students unable to be controlled by subs cause great disturbances and educated teachers truly make a huge difference! We are already miles behind the majority of the country in curriculum and tech access, losing good teachers because we can't pay them is a tragedy we should not be piling onto this already unstable education system.

Our kids deserve good educators with training not just fill in subs who have no teaching background or tired & retired subs who want the paycheck but would rather read & yell at the kids who are bored from not being taught! 😞

In kindness and Aloha,
Edith Middleton

Sent from my iPhone



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

Please no pay reduction...

Jennifer Asuncion <jasuncion@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:07 AM

Aloha!

I am never usually one to say anything, but it just doesn't seem right to cut the pay of people who are working tirelessly to reinvent what education looks like in a matter of days. Educators are spending hours in meetings discussing all aspects of what "Distance Learning" should be, all while being criticized and left to feel like everything they are doing is for nothing. Then you add in almost a 20% pay cut - who would want to continue? This doesn't just apply to teachers - nurses and health care workers too? Please consider cutting the pay from the top earners, not the bottom...

--

Thank you!

Jennifer Asuncion
Special Education Teacher

King Kekaulike High School
[121 Kula Highway](#)
[Pukalani, HI 96768](#)



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

Teachers pay should not be cut!!

Linda Sobaje <linda.sobaje@mauihigh.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:10 AM

I know of young teachers at MHS who will not be able to continue teaching at MHS if their pay is cut.

It is already a problem to call in sick because there aren't enough substitutes available.

I personally have been working in a 95 degree classroom with sometimes over 36 students in a class. I have to walk two buildings over to use the 1 bathroom available to teachers, and then wait in line. I don't have enough books for all my students. I am using outdated technology.

But still, I show up every day and do my best for every student. All the teachers in our math department pivoted our teaching in one week from classroom to distance learning, so seniors could graduate, and support could be offered to all our students. Our MHS math team will be working over the summer to make adjustments to make our fall classes more effective for all students.

Don't take our pay away!!

--

Thanks!

Olgd#Vredn

P dwk #Vndfkhu

P dx #K ljk #V fkrro

linda.sobaje@mauihigh.org



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

Testimony for General Meeting May 7th, 2020

Allison Borell <allison.borell@outlook.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:11 AM

To: "Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" <Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Name: Allison Borell

Meeting: General Meeting May 7th, 2020

I am writing to oppose the agenda item of a 19.62% pay cut for teachers. Teachers should not bear such a large burden of the economic situation. In 2009 they had to bear an 8% pay cut and furloughs in which their pay has not recovered resulting in teacher shortages throughout the state. The proposed 19.62% is unprecedented and will cause undo hardship to an already taxed workforce. This also threatens teacher retention as many may not be able to survive on such a loss in pay, resulting in poor educator quality for our children. I ask that a cut no more than what has been done previously, 8%, be applied and once the economy recovers that a plan be put in place to resolve teachers pay to better than before this all happened.

Aloha, Allison Borell

Hello ladies and gentlemen of the Board. My name is Mary Garrett. I am a teacher at Honoka'a Elementary School on the Big Island. I moved to Hawaii in 2016 and began teaching. I have been a teacher for over 20 years. Teaching is my passion. Nobody can ever say they went into teaching for the money. Teachers do not get paid like the professionals we are. I was so thankful to this board for voting in favor of the differentials this past January. It finally seemed that the Governor, the Superintendent, and the Board of Education, realized that in order to create excellent schools, outstanding teachers were needed. Outstanding teachers need to be paid like professionals. When I started receiving the differential, I was finally realized that maybe I would not need to work a second job. I would be able to just teach. I could spend my time creating fantastic learning opportunities for my students.

Then COVID-19 came. Every where people were getting sick. Some were dying. Businesses closed and schools buildings closed. Education didn't stop. Teachers set up distant learning opportunities for their students. I spend nearly 70 hours a week online setting up activities for my students. Not only that but I am educating parents. Teaching them about programs and giving them access to distant learning. The parents, students, and I learned to manage lessons on Google Classroom. We meet in Google Meets and go on virtual field trips. Why am I doing this all? I do this to make sure my students are ready to start school again. I meet with them online and make phone calls to every family every week. I do this because I am a TEACHER.

Governor Ige talked about how Hawaii's economy is failing. Although aid is available from the federal government, cuts would need to be made. The plan seems to be that teachers' salaries will again be targeted to make the cuts that are needed. 20% will be taken from teachers. We will be taking "Leave Without Pay" to ease the economic struggles that Hawaii is facing.

My current salary leaves me in financial difficulties. I can't afford to live here without having two roommates. Is that how professionals should live? Now you are discussing cutting our pay by nearly 20%. How can I afford to pay rent, student loans, car payment, and food? Looking at my projected new salary I will not be able to afford to continue living here.

This week I made the decision to leave Hawaii and move back to North Carolina. I have accepted a teaching position in Fayetteville, NC. I will be making nearly \$4,000 more in my salary and my living expenses will decline. In Paauilo, HI where I live, my roommates and I live in a 3 bedroom 1 bath 800 square feet camp home. We split the \$1500 a month rental. My roommates and I also carpool to save on the price of gas. When I move back to North Carolina, I have already secured a 3 bedroom / 2 bath 1200 square foot home. My rental price is \$650. Gas prices in Fayetteville are about \$1.58 a gallon. I will have a much better life than living here.

I want you to understand that your cuts in teachers salaries are going to hurt Hawaii more than it will help. Teachers will leave like I am. Some will retire because they will not want the drop in salary to effect their 'High 3 years'. Others will go back to the mainland where poorly paid teachers can at least afford to live without feeling like college students sharing a house. The

teacher shortage of more than 1000 teachers will grow. This will impact students because they will be in classrooms with unqualified teachers, or they will be in classrooms that are over crowded. The teacher who do stay will not be able to individual work with students that are considered a tier 3. Their class size will be to large to really focus on every students' needs. These teachers will also be competing for a other jobs to suppliment their income.

It saddens me that I am leaving Hawaii. I love it here. I need to be able to live.



DOE Pay Cuts

Marya Zbiciak <mzbiciak@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:18 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my family but the students I serve as well.

Why cutting teacher salaries is a bad idea:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. I have been teaching since 2001 and I will be one of these teachers forced into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.
- I have endured Furlough Fridays, and because I love my students and want only quality education for them, I stayed. I will not do it again.
- I am an ASSET and I am not EXPENDABLE.
- I can no longer serve people that call themselves leaders. Good leadership is NOT reducing our pay, it is not performing for your success, but our students, it is not just trying to hold us accountable, but growing confidence and passion for self-accountability, it not measuring success by titles or ranks, but by the impact of the people we influence, and it isn't about focusing on the now and putting out daily fires, but focuses on what it right.
- This is not right.

How do you expect us to create future leaders, fire fighters, police officers, nurses, doctors, lawyers, politicians, essential front line workers, and more? We should be driven by incentives, not pay cuts. We should be driven by a vision, mission, and purpose, not fear and reaction.

With this being said. I love my profession, but I can no longer sit and just take the abuse, I must stand up with my fellow colleagues and let our voices be heard.

Mahalo for your time,

Marya Zbiciak
mzbiciak@kkhs.k12.hi.us
King Kekaulike High School
[121 Kula Hwy](#)

Pukalani, HI 96768



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

Pay cut

Alison Johnson <ajohnson@innovationspcs.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:21 AM

Aloha,

My name is Alison Johnson and I am a teacher here in the Hawaii DOE. I moved here from NYC DOE for a better quality of life but suffered a severe pay cut from \$62k to \$51k in my salary. I waitress at a restaurant on the weekend to make up the difference because of the high cost of living and my expenses including massive student loans. If there is a nearly 20% pay cut, I would not be able to continue in my current position serving children at a Title 1 school but would need to move out of the state to secure higher wages. Please consider that teachers already have incredibly low wages for the service that we provide to the future leaders of our country and global citizens. We work around the clock for the kids we serve and most of us already have more than one job or side hustle in order to do a job we love, and one that we put blood sweat and tears into.

Mahalo nui for your consideration,

Alison Johnson

--

Alison Johnson
5/6 Grade Teacher
Innovations Public Charter School

"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." Dr. Seuss



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

testimony from a Special Education teacher

Ann Marie Walker <awalker@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:22 AM

Aloha,

My name is Ann Marie Walker and I'm a teacher at King Kekaulike HS on the island of Maui. Superintendent Kishimoto is meeting with the Board of Education today and I would like to send some support.

I was told the BOE meeting on May 7 will include a presentation by the superintendent on possible budget scenarios, including pay cuts and ways to avoid them.

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Reducing teacher pay will not only harm me and my family but the students I serve on my caseload (variance list). Here are 2 harmful effects that stand out: We are facing a huge teacher shortage as it is and more students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement. In addition, students would be left with long-term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession, unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.

We have been expected to teach students from home and we are!!! If we have been expected to teach students from home, pay cuts shouldn't be a conversation!!! Period! The federal government is not withholding educational funds and the schools are saving \$ on overhead expenses. Why not cut the pay of state admin and clerical staff by a % since they're not working with students?

This just doesn't make sense and this is Teacher Appreciation Week. Just another kick in the teeth. This is my 22nd year teaching Special Education in the community I've lived in for 37 years. It's been extremely difficult surviving on one of the lowest pay teacher salaries in the nation. I started out earning 27,000. while raising 2 children as a single parent. I finally paid off my student loan THIS year. I hope you can sleep at night knowing that you DO NOT CARE ABOUT THE KEIKI because you sure don't care about the people that truly care about our students. I need to get back to work helping my students' parents that have children at home with ASD, ID, ED, and SLD.

We as teachers will keep fighting to ensure that the coronavirus crisis does not result in lasting damage to Hawaii's public education and our keiki.

Sincerely,

Ann Marie Walker

--

Ann Marie Walker
WPR SPED Teacher
King Kekaulike HS
[121 Kula Hwy.](#)
[Pukalani, HI 96768](#)
(808)727-3625



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

Teacher Pay Cut

Lisa Bolton <lbolton@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:22 AM

Good morning! I am a Special Education teacher at King Kekaulike High School. I am in my 18th year teaching and have credentials in Special Education, Educational Administration and a Masters in Educational Administration. I moved here from Southern California and I am in my 2nd year teaching in Hawaii. I took a pycut of 1/2 my salary to move and teach in Hawaii. I took a second job serving at a local restaurant to supplement my teacher's income so that I can stay and teach in Hawaii. During this last year I have paid for and taken 3 Professional Development courses to get a pay raise next year, and hopefully not have to continue to work 2 jobs. If there is a pycut, at all, I will not be able to afford to live and teach in Hawaii. It breaks my heart, but I will have to move in order to live. Simply live.

I am great at my job, love my job and love living on Maui. But a pycut will force me to take my expertise and knowledge to another state. Please do not allow this to happen to me, our keiki and many other teachers that I know. Pay us what we were promised when we began teaching in Hawaii.

I am available to have a conversation in regards to this, or any other subject, if you would like. My cell number is 808-868-1170.

Mahalo for taking the time to read my heart's thoughts. Enjoy this beautiful day and stay safe and healthy!

Sincerely,

Lisa Bolton
Instructor, Study Skills/Test Prep
King Kekaulike High School
HOME OF THE NAALI'!!
121 Kula Highway
Makawao, HI 96768
808-727-3500



no teacher paycuts/rick.rulloda/king kekaulike high school/spedteacher

Ricky Rulloda <rrulloda@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:23 AM

07 May 2020--Thursday

Aloha Sir/Madam:

This past January, my 15-year-old Prius car had an estimated cost of 2k to 3k repairs for brakes. I had already spent over 1k dollars the year before on repairs, from old-battery replacement to newer (not brand-new) batteries to gas panel replacement (the original one was falling off).

So when Sped teachers were awarded another 10k raise, my wife and I decided to get another car--a new one primarily because we were tired of taking the Prius in for shop repair. The new car drives like a dream. Since January, it's nice to get to school without any worry about some random unexpected repair.

Because of the raise, I have been able to put another \$100 to \$300 per month for emergency funds and bought classroom supplies for my students.

With a pay cut, I will be forced to stop funding my emergency fund savings (which is a little over \$1,000--yes, almost every month I was living paycheck to paycheck), buy classroom supplies for my students, donate monies to our school band and performing arts center, and contribute to fundraisers when my colleagues and students come knocking on my classroom door. After all, I still need to pay off that new car and I still need to go to work, right?

Please consider keeping our salaries as they are. Otherwise, the economic consequences would be costly to my family, all my colleagues, and our State of Hawai'i, our home.

Sincerely,

Rick Rulloda
Sped Teacher (Community Based Instruction--CBI)
King Kekaulike High School



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

Value Our Teachers

Carol DeForest <deforestcarol@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:30 AM

Aloha All,

The value of our Hawai'i teachers has never before been more important. Pay cuts diminishes the importance of our teachers and will reduce the quality of our children's education. Teachers can not afford to live in Hawaii even with the current pay scale. Subs will fill the classrooms and students will not be educated thereby impacting our states long term economic future. Maintain Teachers Current Pay. Do Not Cut Teachers Salaries!!!

Mahalo,

Carol DeForest



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

Against the bill to reduce teacher salaries

Catherine Hawkins <catherinemingahawkins@hotmail.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:31 AM

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify. I am a teacher at Innovations PCS. I am a kindergarten teacher. A reduction of salary by 19.62% will be devastating for me as a teacher. I would most likely have to either leave the profession, or find a second job in order to support my family. Although I am willing to do what it takes to support my family and to provide for my students, teacher is already more than a full time job with the planning that has to go into creating meaning and lasting experiences for our Keiki.

I realize that cutting salaries to get through this time may be necessary on some levels, but cutting it by 20% will be devastating for the teaching profession and for the individual teachers. Many teachers are already living on the edge - pay check to pay check - due to the high cost of living. I urge the committee to think out of the box and try to find other ways to make our budgets work.

There has got to be extra funding in the DOE budgets that could be diverted for the next few years to make up for the shortfall. Funds that would not affect the actual people who are providing the direct service to our keki!

Thanks for listening!

Sincerely,

Catherine Hawkins

Kindergarten Teacher

Innovations PCS

[75-5815 Queen Kaahumanu Highway](#)

Kailua Kona, HI 96745



URGENT teacher testimony

Monica Weida <weidainhawaii@yahoo.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:34 AM

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

Aloha Board Members,

As you know, our school year together was abruptly cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March 25, I have been teaching my third grade students via Google Meets, phone calls, emails, paper packets, etc. I have spent the last 6 weeks trying my best to engage a group of 20+ third graders. Each day continues to be a new challenge, but I continue to take time to plan unique, interactive enrichment activities for my diverse group of learners.

As an educator in Hawaii for 20 years, I urge you to support additional funding and budgetary options to address the coronavirus crisis and how it has effected educational funding, especially students and educators. More money is needed for the Education Stabilization Fund to help fill state budget gaps so students don't suffer and educators aren't laid off. It was extremely discouraging to learn that Governor Ige has made a devastating decision to possibly implement a 20-percent salary cut for most public employees, including teachers, and 10-percent salary cuts for first responders.

All of these Public and State employees are continuing to work during this pandemic. From teaching our students from home to daily virtual collaboration meetings with colleagues, parents and students via phone calls, emails and Google Meets, educators are working hard to provide enriching learning experience for students and families stuck at home daily. First responders are putting their lives on the line daily to heal, protect, and serve our community, while potentially putting themselves and their family in danger of contracting this deadly virus.

Steps already taken to address the coronavirus crisis need to be expanded, including payments to workers, paid sick leave, unemployment insurance, cancelling federal student loan debt, and increasing federal support for Medicaid. Unfortunately, these all seem to have come at a major cost, the salary cuts, furloughs and layoffs.

Furthermore, due to the school closures I would assume the Hawaii Department of education and schools are saving a tremendous amount of money with the utilities and consumable supply budget, as well as funds to unemployed casual hires and substitute teachers. It only seems logical that there would be a way to utilize unused funds from current budgets in order to make up for losses rather than take 20-percent of teacher salaries.

It is discouraging to think that after all of our hard work we are going to have money taken from us. Many teachers will have to get a second or third job, many will move back to the mainland, and many will leave the profession completely. We want to provide the

education our keiki deserve without having to work multiple jobs or apply for welfare to support our own families.

Educators should not have to beg for the salary we were promised. Educators should not have to beg for the salary we are working hard for daily. Educators should not have to quit teaching in order to seek jobs that will provide us with the salary we need to pay our skyrocketing housing costs.

I live and teach in Hawaii because I believe in our island. I moved here from Pennsylvania 20 years ago and have loved each day of my 20 years of teaching at Waipahu Elementary School. I believe in enhancing and improving our education system. I believe in our ALOHA FOR OUR KAMA'AINA. If you believe in the growth and development of our economy in Hawaii, then you will help support funding for educators, nurses, firefighters, police officers and so many more public and state workers like us.

I urge you to support taking all of these steps—they truly are essential. A tremendous MAHALO for your time and ALOHA, and consideration of the support for our keiki, the future leaders of Hawaii. We are all in this together.

Sincerely,
Monica Weida

3rd grade ELL inclusion teacher
Waipahu Elementary School

20 years of faithful service



Testimony on possible pay cuts for school staff

Matthew Cerny <mcerny@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:35 AM

Aloha,

I urge you not to cut teacher salaries. These cuts **will hurt student outcomes, will lead to a mass exodus of qualified teachers, and will ultimately have a negative effect on the statewide economy.**

Prior to COVID, most families of educators in Hawaii were already struggling. Now, for thousands of middle class households across the state, teachers are the only economic lifeline that families have, as a recent analysis has shown Hawaii to have the highest unemployment rate in the nation, at 35%. In my household, my spouse was laid from 4 jobs in one day back in March and does not expect her work in the Hospitality industry to return anytime soon. If we receive another 20% reduction in our income, we will have to look to move in with relatives on the mainland. It would be the last straw. Furthermore, a recent study by our very UHERO proved that cuts to municipal employees ultimately causes more harm to the state economy than good, since such cuts reduce the amount of money in our local economy that is being spent on goods and services. In a way, you would actually be responsible for exacerbating our economic troubles if you cut teacher salaries.

I have worked as a Language Arts teacher at King Kekaulike HS for 12 years and have served as Dept Head at various times during my tenure. I have seen firsthand how devastating Hawaii's teacher-pay deficit has affected teacher recruitment. Because of high turn-over and low recruitment, for many years, we have had to rally department members to email their graduate schools of education, scouring the nation, to fill our yearly teaching vacancies. We have not always been able to find qualified teachers and have had to resort to emergency hires. In 2019, Wallethub had already ranked Hawaii last in teacher pay adjusted for cost-of-living. We will not be able to sustain any more reductions and hope to provide a legitimate education to our keiki.

If teachers salaries are further cut you **will see a mass exodus** of teachers from Hawaii. This will **greatly affect student outcomes**. Analysis after analysis has shown that teachers have the greatest impact of life outcomes for students outside of family situations. Reducing teacher pay and causing an exodus of qualified teachers would cut off these students from their needed education. Please do not cut off these students from their needed educator to balance the budget. Exhaust all possibilities. Look at creative solutions. Cut the bureaucracy first. Let those at the top be the first to take cuts. Not teachers.

Mahalo,

--

Matthew Cerny
English Department Head
10th Grade English Language Arts Teacher
AVID Teacher

Phone: 808.727.3592
Alt. e-mail: matthew_cerny@notes.k12.hi.us

King Kekaulike High School
[121 Kula Hwy.](#)
[Pukalani, HI 96768](#)



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

(no subject)

Scott Schellhammer <sschellhammer@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:36 AM

Scott Schellhammer
KKHS
Chemistry and AP env sci.
11th and 12th graders

Aloha, I can barely pay my mortgage, and for all intensive purposes I live paycheck to paycheck. Any reduction in salary would be devastating. Scott Schellhammer



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

No Teacher Pay Cut

Rene Dela Cruz <rdelacruz@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:37 AM

Aloha, I am writing to plead with you to not reduce teachers' salaries! Both my husband and I are DOE teachers and we can not afford to live in Hawaii with a cut in pay. This would not only adversely affect teachers, but students as well. We already have a hard time finding and retaining qualified teachers. With a pay cut, you will have more teachers leaving, fewer teachers willing to come or stay and more wanting to retire. This would leave our students with more unqualified substitute teachers to teach their classes. Please put our keiki first by not cutting teachers' pay.

--

Mahalo,

Rene' Dela Cruz
Transitions Teacher
Kekaulike High School



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

Teacher Testimony

Caroline Encomienda <caroline.encomienda@k12.hi.us>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:38 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear BOE,

I am writing this email to inform you that I strongly disagree with Governor Ige's plan to cut teachers and state employees salaries by 20% in order to balance the budget.

As a teacher, I know in my heart that this move to cut teacher salaries would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. The effects of the teacher pay cuts will be as follows:

- More students would go without licensed teachers because pay cuts would drive senior teachers into early retirement.
- Students would be left with long term subs and unqualified teachers if new and existing educators leave the profession because we are unable to afford Hawaii's high cost of living on a reduced salary.
- Teacher salaries in Hawaii are already one of the lowest in the nation and with a 20% pay cut, educators will not survive.

I hope you will consider my testimony on your final decision to ensure that the coronavirus crisis does not result in lasting damage to Hawaii's public education and our keiki.

Respectfully,

Caroline Encomienda
Waipahu High School
Grades 10-12 Chemistry & Physics Teacher

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Cutting of Teacher Salaries

Louise Cayetano <louise.cayetano@gmail.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:39 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: "Higa, Mitzie" <mhiga@hsta.org>

Dear Chair Catherine Payne, Vice-Chair Brian De Lima and members of the Board of Education,

My name is Louise Cayetano, a veteran teacher at Fern Elementary School. I will be entering my 32nd year of full-time teaching in our public school system. I would like to ask for your support of public school teachers and not let cuts occur to teacher salaries.

During my tenure, I have experienced the chipping away of public school, teacher salaries by governors of this State. Our Legislature also removed annual step increments which were incentives to remain in the teaching work force. These have had devastating affects on teacher recruitment and retention.

Many times, HSTA was left hanging to explain to angry teachers why it was best to ratify the new, negotiated contract based on written and verbal promises by Govenors. Taking zero increases were proposed but would be made up later, was one instance. That never happened, but public sector unions deemed "essential" received substantial raises on the backs of public school teachers, EUTF benefitted as well when HSTA was forced to dissolve our progressive, medical plan.

Cutting of teacher salaries weakens the work force. Numerous, long term substitutes in our public schools have not gone through formal, teacher preparation programs and their turn over is great. We need to make teaching a highly sought after profession and that can only occur if we have attractive salaries.

It is stated over and over that teachers are valued in our society because we nurture, challenge, and inspire our future work force and leaders. If we all believe this, then why are we always under attack? Why do we have to always prove our worth? I ask for your support in protecting teacher salaries to maintain its attractiveness to those considering entry into the profession, to others who transferred to the U.S. mainland to teach and would consider returning, and finally to retain those who are currently teaching.

Please support no more cuts to teacher salaries for our keiki, the health of our public schools, and our future.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,

Louise Cayetano,
STE(A)M teacher
Fern Elementary School
1121 Middle Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819

cc. Mitzie Higa, HSTA



Teachers

Maria Rossman <mrs.mariarossman@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:40 AM

I am very disappointed a pay cut for teachers is being considered. My entire career since 1986, has been teaching in public elementary schools in Hawaii. I have seen a vast change since 1986 (when my public school high school teacher with a Master's degree plus 10 years of teaching) and I were told there were NO JOBS teaching here. Now there are teacher openings everywhere! Why? Why can't Hawaii keep and attract teachers?

Qualified economists and students of the **history of the DOE in Hawaii** may be able to corroborate the following points:

Teachers do not become teachers in Hawaii for the money. The cost of living is exorbitantly high here in Hawaii. Most teachers work 7 days a week, sometimes for hours into the night and in the early hours of the morning. They take classes and search online for teaching resources, for no other reason than to better serve students, even when they probably will not be compensated. They **spend their own money** on school supplies, snacks, holiday treats, and rewards **NOT FOR THEMSELVES, BUT FOR KIDS.**

Cutting salaries will take its toll on the children. Hawaii can't keep teachers due to the **cost of living** and the **lack of respect for the profession**. Cutting salaries will put forth a message that **demoralizes** our professionals. Presently we have been engaged in distance teaching, meaning that we have had to scramble to learn new technology, find ways to deliver student work that is equitable, engaging and that allows parents an opportunity to work at home themselves.

No one knows what the future holds. We need to diligently prepare for a possible second wave of COVID and/or school closures in 2020/2021, just like we prepare for a hurricane that (God willing) may not come. **Cutting pay will not attract qualified teachers.** Check the job listings for teachers statewide to see for yourselves how many openings we have! **Children's education will suffer.** Show us that you care for our public school students. **Support teachers!**



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

Reducing teachers salaries

Carol Holland <carol.holland@mauihigh.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:50 AM

Aloha,

I hope you are all well and healthy. That said I can NOT believe that we are still fighting this fight you absolutely can NOT cut teachers salaries, we are already underpaid and cutting pay even more will be disastrous for our education system. Teachers like myself at Maui High School World History 10th grade will leave because I have higher education degrees and I can go elsewhere and make more money or just retire. You ARE failing students. Teachers are members of the community and we VOTE so please consider us in your planning. There are many other ways of saving money.

Carol Holland

--

Carol Holland

M.Sc. Oceanography., M.Ed. Secondary Education.

Social Studies - World History 808-727-4129

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined." -Henry David Thoreau



Testimony

mrdelacruzrhs@yahoo.com <mrdelacruzrhs@yahoo.com>
Reply-To: "mrdelacruzrhs@yahoo.com" <mrdelacruzrhs@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:51 AM

Aloha,

My name is Reginald Dela Cruz and I am a Special Education teacher for Roosevelt High School. I have been teaching for 16 + years, and I have always felt our work as teachers has been and continues to be taken for granted. The mentality of “teachers should do it because it’s for the keiki” has always been used against us. The bottom line is we are professionals, and should be treated as such.

Over this past couple of months I have been learning how to teach all over again because of the COVID19 outbreak. Distance learning and distance teaching has been an eye opening experience, but it has also required a completely different mode of teaching for our students. I am so grateful for all of the other teachers out there who voluntarily try to teach teachers how to manage these weeks upon weeks of distant teaching. Please do not think that because of the “shutdown” teachers are not working. We are working harder than ever: managing classes online, developing online curriculum on the fly, communicating with parents more frequently, motivating the students to keep pushing, developing strategies on how to distance teach the students who have cognitive disabilities and autism, collaborating with other teachers to learn as we go, attend staff meetings weekly... the list goes on and on- Not to mention the stress and effort for the teachers who have children of their own, like me- Double the work easily!

Although I do understand the situation the State is in because of the safer at home mandate, taking money out of the teachers’ hands (who already is being paid an insulting rate as it is) is preposterous. When factoring in the cost of living, Hawaii teacher salaries rank at the bottom of the list. How is lessening our compensation even a consideration? This has frustrated myself and the rest of the teachers who give their hearts and souls to all their students rain or shine, or COVID19 shutdown... Please keep pushing for legislation to INCREASE teacher pay, and not continue the decades long decline of our profession.

Mahalo Nui,

Reginald Dela Cruz

Roosevelt High School

Special Education Teacher



BUDGET CUTS FOR TEACHERS??? ARE YOU KIDDING?

Jennifer Lund <lotuslola9@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:51 AM

Furthermore, when I read things like this:

As of today, 558 people have recovered out of 626 cases, an 89.1% recovery rate, Green said.

“You should be reminded that our health care system has to be adequate before we bring tourism back or bring our economy back,” Green said, “because people could get sick and that’s what we’re always mindful of. We have 2,773 hospital beds, but only 1,404 are occupied. That’s fifty one percent (51%). This means that we can resume some of the normalcy in our health care system and that we have capacity, if we were to have a surge in COVID-19, to take care of people.”

I should be reminding YOU that if we need healthcare workers in order to bring tourists back, aka; our economy; aka; apparently the same one that pays for our healthcare workers and teachers ~ Then, we shouldn’t be cutting their pay.

Nor should you be cutting the pay of teachers, who, along with healthcare workers, are one of the backbones segments of our society and who had to keep working amidst this crisis, albeit working differently.

I would also like to mention that the teachers at WHEA went above and beyond. Our virtual classroom learning environment was BY FAR more comprehensive and well thought out; in fact it was absolutely awesome. Why? Because a) WHEA, unlike the rest of our public schools, actually functions in a 21st century environment; meaning it was far less difficult to transition class time to virtual class time because the kids are already familiar with so much technology and different learning platforms. and B) because our teachers are incredible, and care about the kids.

Teachers like this, who care, should be well paid for what they do. Or we lose them.

Let’s pull our ass out of backwards thinking and look forward.

Why don’t we put MORE tax on the people who brought the virus to our islands in the first place: TOURISTS. ADD another tax for them... they will still come. AND consider Quality over Quantity. Greed loses in the end. Look at Thailand, and other once beautiful places that have been ‘loved to death’. For our ohana, our island ecology and our future, start thinking progressively and creatively. Budget cuts in our core workforce is not an answer. It’s a train wreck.

Jennifer Lund

Begin forwarded message:

[Quoted text hidden]



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

Teacher's Proposed Salary Cut

Thomas Rouse <trouse@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 9:56 AM

To whom it may concern,

Reducing our salary at this time would be extremely detrimental to my ability to support my family. My wife has lost her income, and now I'm the sole breadwinner. I work tirelessly for my students and consider our school community to be a part of my family, and as teachers, we need to be able to meet our own basic needs so we can continue to meet the needs of our students and be our best selves. I love teaching and am so grateful to be a member of this profession for 13 years, and I've been made "rich" as a result of my experiences and efforts when I think about all the students I've had the privilege to educate and interact with throughout my career. I'm just asking to maintain my current livable wage. I knew upon entering this profession that I wouldn't be made rich materially as a result, however, I was confident that we'd always be paid at least a minimum to survive adequately within the community that we teach. I humbly request that the powers that be do their best to avoid reducing teacher's salary, thank you for your time reading this and your efforts on behalf of us all.

Respectfully,

--

Thomas Rouse
King Kekaulike High School
[121 Kula Highway](#)
[Pukalani, HI 96768](#)
(808) 727-3571
AP Psychology / Senior Project / Social Studies



Teacher paycut/freez/furlough

nico arihood <nico.arihood@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:01 AM

Aloha,

My name is Nicole Arihood and I am the K-5 ELL Coordinator/Lead Teacher at Pu'u Kukui Elementary on Maui.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the topic of reducing teacher salaries in various manners is on the agenda for the BOE. Cutting salaries would devastate our already critical teaching shortage we have in Hawai'i. Lowering the salary or freezing salaries would reduce our recruitment pool of teachers with excellence. Teachers are already hesitant to move here with the low pay proportional to cost of living here, and with reduced pay or freezes, potential teachers will not want to come work here with our students.

Reducing teacher pay will not only harm my livelihood to pay my mortgage, bills, and survive here in Hawai'i, but would also impact the students I serve. I have worked very hard teaching here in Hawai'i and have purposefully taken PD coursework and university classes to capitalize on the salary movement schedule. I have done this so I could quit my three other part-time jobs and be able to only focus on my teaching career (which at this very point in time can solely pay my bills). This is my second year I have had only ONE job- teaching- to pay my bills, and not four jobs. It has taken me over ten years to be able to reach this point, and reducing/freezing salary would force me to take on 1-2 part time jobs again so I can survive. I am not getting any younger, and working that much again is something that would be devastating to me and my family in my time, spirit, and ability to stay motivated to give 100% to teaching my students.

I have been taking doctoral classes the past two years and submitting credits for upward salary movement to secure my retirement year payout caps and become a better teacher for my students. Reducing/freezing or furloughing us teachers will be a kick in every teacher's gut, just like the last furlough debacle, which has taken us around ten years to slowly recover from. My 1st grade teacher friend called me sobbing two weeks ago when discussions of cuts in pay were first mentioned. She spent the whole morning calculating her finances and she would have to move out of her apartment to something

substantially less in rent- which does not even exist here on Maui. She is diligent on paying her student loans from 20 years ago and had JUST quit her part time nannying job a few months ago, so happy to only have ONE job now to survive here. She would have to go back to nannying until 1am on school nights to supplement her teacher pay if cuts were to happen.

Students would be affected by pay cuts due to fewer licensed teachers being recruited and more experienced teachers weighing options and opting for early retirement. Thus perpetuating the horrific teacher shortage here mentioned earlier. Students being left with VERY UNQUALIFIED long term substitute teachers is NOT what our keiki deserve. Don't we all want what is best for our students?

VERY UNQUALIFIED substitute teachers will NOT be the solution for our students to meet Student Success Indicators in our Strategic Plan/Strive Hi! How is student chronic absenteeism going to be reduced with lowered academic teaching with substitutes or non-qualified teachers in the classrooms driving students with rigor and fueling a growth mindset to achieve and attend school? School climate will VERY much suffer. What about our special needs and ELL students receiving the specific attention and care by qualified teachers needed for success in and out of school? We already have a shortage crisis in special education teachers, and factually I am one of maybe only two(?) TESOL certificated teachers on island currently. I worry already too much about how my impoverished students can survive daily. Our 'high needs' students need specialists who are dedicated to caring for them- our most vulnerable students- and not perpetually worried about how OURSELVES are going survive. Closing the achievement gap- that wouldn't even be possible when the ones teaching students would be unqualified, or having elevated levels of stress trying to meet basic human needs of their own and feeling the general despair in the educational climate here. Goals of filling positions from SATEPs would not be met.

As a teacher of 21 years, with my teaching years split evenly on the Mainland and here in Hawai'i, it has not be easy in any way, shape, or form to be able to create a life here in Hawai' as a teacher. Just last year after almost ten years of teaching in the HODOE I FINALLY made an annual salary comparable to what I was making at a low SES public school in AZ in 2001. That took me 18 years to 'catch up' to what schools on the Mainland pay teachers- an actual salary that matches the cost of living. I took an almost \$25,000 pay cut when I moved here to teach.

I am OK at weathering storms, but have been in severe crisis mode along the way with social services benefits at one point to assist. Many teachers cannot weather storms here and will quit, or never show up in the first place. My school already yearly has at

least 1 or more teachers recruited from the Mainland who quit mid-year or don't return the next SY. Now that pay cuts/freezes/furloughs are potential actions the BOE would like to consider, I am terrified the ramifications will not only be immediate, but reverberate for the next decade ahead. All with consequences to OUR KEIKI ultimately.

Our department of education will never have a good ranking among the entire U.S. when education is on the chopping block and not put as a true community priority. Leaders who decided the \$millions/billions(?) the Super Ferry or the \$10billion+ Honolulu Rail Transit were brilliant ideas were not thinking of education and our keiki as priorities. It's a general mindset I'm talking about that leaders in Hawai'i unfortunately do not have, and paycuts will not perpetuate a positive push for educational priorities either. You are an integral part of this mindset and you must choose the direction you really want our school system to head.

Thank you,

Nicole Arihood



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

Testimony

Tracy Manlansing <tmanlansing@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:03 AM

Pay cuts in our Hawai'i public education system would result in many of our mainland teachers going back to the mainland, therefore shortening staffing even more, increase in class sizes and having devastating downfall on teacher moral, quality student education and drastic decrease in extra curricular activities (clubs, sports, elective courses, etc)

--

Mahalo Nui Loa,
Mrs. Tracy Manlansing
College & Career Counselor, King Kekaulike High School ~ Room H201
Class of 2021 & Class of 2023
CEEB Code: 120218
(808) 727- 3593
Naviance Log In: <https://student.naviance.com/kekaulikehs>
School/Counseling Website



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

Testimony

Leona Kassel <leonakassel@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:04 AM

Dear Hawai'i Board of Education,

In this moment of multidimensional crisis, I ask you to make decisions about our state's education priorities as if your own children attended our public schools. I ask you to prioritize our students' learning as if your children would endure the rippling repercussions that stem from protecting or sacrificing funding for education. I ask you to create the equitable access to exceptional learning opportunities that all of our children deserve.

We must seek equitable and just solutions to our current economic challenges that provide our public schools with stable funding. Are you considering measures, such as the property surcharge for public schools utilized in the majority of states, to provide Hawai'i's keiki with the equitable learning opportunities that they deserve? Are you considering any other initiatives to support public schools and establish a more stable funding source for education during these devastating economic times?

All of Hawai'i's children deserve access to exceptional public schools, regardless of zip code or socioeconomic status, educational opportunities are a fundamental component of our communities that we must prioritize. As a public school graduate, I can say with certainty that the most significant factor in my education was the quality of my teachers. We need you to advocate for the stable educational resources that our keiki deserve by prioritizing education funding. Our students are counting on leadership with integrity at this critical moment in history. I urge you to protect our public schools that are so essential to the strong and resilient communities required to overcome unprecedented challenges.

Sincerely,
Leona Kassel



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

Thank you

Nir and Hila <sheikboutiquehi@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:05 AM

Aloha miss McCormick
I would like to thank you for your time and effort specially at this time of crisis
I was so relieved when you called me and told me school is going to start On line after one week of
quarantine
with three kids at home I wasn't sure how I'm going to do it
the weekly meetings and assignments kept Shalev engaged in learning
Talking to you an his friends was the only normal thing in his daily routine
However I never Support home school
And learning on line can not compare
To be actually seating in class and be part of a group and a team
I hope life will get back on track soon
that going to school is part of our kids daily routine

Sent from my iPhone



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

support our Teachers!

Ryan Luckey <ryan@leilanis.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:08 AM

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

to whom it may concern, I am writing this letter on behalf of our teachers here in the state of Hawaii. It is my understanding that there are proposed pay cuts on the table. Just hearing this makes me question, WHY!!? Teachers are the cornerstone of any strong community, they are the bridge to our future buy the time they invest and participate in our keiki's development and future. Cutting their pay would have many negative trickle down effects, from teachers picking up their families and leaving our state to lack of interest in career path opportunities for our high school senior and college students. Pay cuts should not be an option in this time of economic uncertainty, people need this money to not only make a reasonable living in our extremely expensive state, but to also help stimulate our struggling local economies. This would be such a silly and counter productive move on our governments part and would most certainly come back to haunt this administration in the future.

Please reconsider this extremely poor area to cut costs, Teachers like our Health Care workers are vital to our welfare and must NEVER be compromised!!

Ryan Luckey
Chef - Leilani's on the Beach
[2435 Kaanapali Pkway Bldg J](#)
[Lahaina, HI 96761](#)
808-661-1570 - kitchen
808-280-3667 - cell



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

Draft COVID Rebalancing Framework

Suzie Wallace <suzie.wallace@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:11 AM

Dear Board of Education Members,

I understand the pressure that our state is under to secure funding to resume all orders of business and operations. However, after the devastating effects of this pandemic the last thing we will benefit from on this island is a reduction in our most basic infrastructures such as the development of our people, especially our impressionable youth.

Is the impression that you want to leave with our youth that you will not seek out every avenue to continue to build up a system that is already struggling to support them? I understand it is a tough choice to exhaust emergency funds but our state is in a deep recession, impacted much more than other states. In this case, we must buckle down, find the funding from as many sources as possible to support our teachers and youth and not follow through with the pay reductions suggested in the "Draft COVID Rebalancing Framework."

Trust me, developing our children into solid, well-rounded individuals is an asset for our island in the long run. I have been a DOE teacher for the past 13 years and, as is, I can barely afford to continue to stay and do my part in supporting my students to become thoughtful, kind, and skilled people. It's not fair to them to leave our children with long-term subs that are typically not as vested in their education just because our state did not put clear thought into balancing our budget to consider the long-term future of its constituents.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration. May we all work towards a better future for Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Suzie Wallace
Science Teacher
Radford High School
(808) 383-8830
suzie.wallace@k12.hi.us

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

TESTIMONY: A PAY CUT ON EDUCATORS IS A CUT ON EDUCATION

Chris Pascual <chrispascual79@gmail.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:11 AM

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

Aloha, my name is Chris Pascual and I am a teacher at Konawaena High School.

A pay cut on educators is a cut on education. A cut on education is an attack on the right for our students to have access to education.

The Board of Education and Teachers are the major organizers that fight to ensure public education is constantly improving and we can not let this pay cut reverse and set back our school systems which will be negatively impacted by a massive exodus of vacating teachers.

It is time to act on new means to provide for additional revenue streams to fund public education in the form of a property tax surcharge that would start to address the socioeconomic gap in Hawai'i. Only in Hawai'i do we see multi-million dollar properties adjacent to extremely underfunded public schools.

My question to you is, what does the pay cut achieve in advancing public education? We must push back and demand that any decision making moving forward must address the needs of the students and families of our schools and aim to explore opportunities of betterment in this time of crises.



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

TESTIMONY: A PAY CUT ON EDUCATORS IS A CUT ON EDUCATION

Chris Pascual <chrispascual79@gmail.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:13 AM

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

Aloha, my name is Chris Pascual and I am a teacher at Konawaena High School.

A pay cut on educators is a cut on education. A cut on education is an attack on the right for our students to have access to education.

The Board of Education and Teachers are the major organizers that fight to ensure public education is constantly improving and we can not let this pay cut reverse and set back our school systems which will be negatively impacted by a massive exodus of vacating teachers.

It is time to act on new means to provide for additional revenue streams to fund public education in the form of a property tax surcharge that would start to address the social economic gap in Hawai'i. Only in Hawai'i do we see multi million dollar properties adjacent to extremely underfunded public schools.

My question to you is what does the pay cut achieve in advancing public education? We must push back and demand that any decision making moving forward needs to address the needs of the students and families of our schools and aim to explore opportunities to manifest justice in this time of crises.

Thank you,
Chris Pascual



Testimony on reducing teacher pay

Sara Heller <sara.r.heller@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:16 AM

To whom it may concern:

My name is Sara Heller and I am an elementary special education teacher at Moanalua Elementary School. I teach students grades k-6 and help them with their behavior and coping skills as well as their academics. Although I am not in this job for the pay, I would love to be able to make enough to live and teach in Hawaii without needing another job or roommates.

I moved to Hawaii to teach in July 2014 and have been here ever since. My first years as a teacher, I lived with two roommates because there would be no other way for me to afford living here without their help. As I was teaching, I started to pick up babysitting jobs so that I could have money to spend on things other than rent, groceries, and my other bills. Since then, I have worked to get my Masters degree in special education at UH and have used that to increase both my knowledge and my pay. Still, it is not enough to live comfortably without living with someone else. I am just paying for my own needs and wants, if I were to have a child of my own it would be difficult to afford both my needs and my child's needs.

If you cut teacher pay, I see the current teacher shortage in the state increasing further. I myself would need to get a second job or would possibly think about leaving the teaching profession and changing my career to something that pays better. I would hate to quit teaching, but that would be the reality for me if my pay were to be cut. I urge you to not cut teacher pay, as I foresee great teachers leaving the profession. I also believe great teachers would choose to leave the state to teach elsewhere where the pay and cost of living are better matched. Our keiki deserve to be taught by great teachers who are properly compensated for their work.

Sara Heller

--

Sara Heller



My testimony

Melinda Odoardi <melnodie@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:18 AM

Melinda Odoardi
Ilima Intermediate School
Special Education, 7th & 8th grade

The entire world is struggling through this Covid-19 pandemic. How is it that cutting 20% of teacher salary is going to alleviate the loss of state revenue caused by this virus and State shutdowns? Hawaii has already been dealing with teacher shortage and inadequate teacher salaries way before Corona came along and this has already affected our keiki in so many ways. Without repeating the numbers of teacher positions that are not filled with highly-qualified teachers. Without repeating the amount of money and time that the Department of Education is taking to fill these positions by traveling to the mainland to recruit and entice teachers to come to Hawaii with stipends and promises. Without the added burden and stress put on the backs of existing teachers in the Hawaii DOE that work their butts to the bone on weekends, late weekdays, and during breaks.

Let's not bring those specifics into play. Let's just talk about the keiki, the reason many of us educators stay in this job.

Your keiki is our keiki. Just ask any educator. However, we still need to eat, pay bills, pay mortgage, and we too have families just like you. If you cut our salaries further, some of us must seriously consider leaving the profession to find a better-paying job. Nay, a stable job. We must then consider putting aside our moral compass to teach our leaders of tomorrow because that is our passion. Therefore, this will cause a rise in teacher vacancies in Hawaii and greatly affect the quality of education provided to the children of Hawaii. Put that on your resume, Governor Ige.

The State must look further into other ways of bouncing back from this pandemic. As stated in the Civil Beat article, [Cutting Teacher Pay Is An Easy But Unacceptable Solution](#), "Where is the \$14.5 billion state budget are cuts possible? One of the difficulties is the lack of fiscal transparency in the state budget and the DOE budget. Analysis of budget worksheets would reveal where the money is, what has been spent, what can be carried over, and what the surplus is anticipated to be."

Like our students, sometimes people forget that teachers are humans too. On occasion, you might spot a teacher in the aisle of Foodland grabbing groceries for dinner and a student will run and hide behind the chocolate chip muffins in the bakery section. Go ahead and cut our salaries by 20% and hide. We can still see you and we will still buy groceries to make dinner. However, our grocery budget will be much smaller. Or, we will

no longer laugh about seeing students hiding in the aisles because we will no longer have any students.

Sincerely,
Melinda Odoardi
Special Education Teacher
Ilima Intermediate School



Hawaii DOE Teacher Pay Cuts

Leaf Van Alstine <lvanalstine@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:25 AM

Good Morning,

I am currently a Social Studies teacher for 10th grade World History at King Kekaulike High School on the island of Maui. I know our state is experiencing challenges right now that are unprecedented in recent times and that decisions need to be made to protect our health and safety.

As a teacher in Hawaii with a Masters Degree, I barely make enough money to pay my student loans, my rent, and to help support my son going to college. I do not spend a lot of money and am fortunate that my family is on the same island as me and we can share food and other resources. I love my job and feel blessed to spend time every day with my students. I spend over \$200.00 a month of my own money on classroom supplies and hours beyond the designated workday hours to make sure I am doing my best for my students.

As a parent of a child who went to public schools in Hawaii; I needed my families support to help with child care during furlough Fridays, I had to budget hundreds of dollars every year for supplies that the schools were unable to provide, I had to on multiple occasions explain to my son why his favorite teacher was leaving the classroom because they were not making enough money and I spent hundreds of hours volunteering for fundraising to make sure there were arts and physical education at his school. My son and his classmates could see their community's commitment to their school but even as young children noticed the lack of teachers and resources at their school. As a middle schooler, he came home multiple times and told me about how there were not enough substitutes or teachers so they sat in the cafeteria all day and did nothing. As a high schooler, he had classes where the long term substitute had no idea about the subject or there were multiple substitutes throughout the year and no teacher.

As a student who attended Hawaii public school, I remember the dedicated teachers I had and appreciate them more than ever. I also remember classes with more than 5 different substitutes in one year who did not even know the subject. I remember calling my aunt on the mainland to get help on college applications because we did not have a college counselor. We had classes where no teacher or staff member would show up and we would just sit outside the classroom for the entire class period.

The teachers and educators in Hawaii are some of the most kind and dedicated people I have ever met. Throughout my life, I have seen them treated with disregard by the state. Right now, we are being asked to give more, to learn and adapt on the spot. We are serving not just as educators but as lifelines for young people who are suffering. We are organizing graduations, AP tests, food distribution, driving textbooks to students who need them, making sure students with disabilities are still receiving services, loaning computers to families, and so much more. I have not heard one single co-worker complain about any of this; only ask what else they can do to help.

And once again, the state is saying that education and the young people of Hawaii do not matter, are not a priority or worth the investment. That is the message that has been sent time and time again when the state chooses to cut funding for education in Hawaii. Cutting teacher pay will not just make individual teachers' lives harder, we will not just lose more teachers; we will unequivocally send a message to the young people in Hawaii that education doesn't matter and that they are not valued. That is a sad trend that benefits no one and especially not the residents of the beautiful and amazing state of Hawaii.

I hope as a teacher, a parent and former student that a better choice for the children and families of Hawaii is made this time.

Thank you,
Leaf Van Alstine



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

Kapolei High School Counselor

Micah Banton <micahbanton@hotmail.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:29 AM

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

Hello,

I understand that we are in a crisis, I am home with my kids working to help our class of 2020 graduate. I am still calling parents, students, coordinating resources and monitoring their progress. Our state has been in need of quality teachers for years and we were finally on track to becoming an exceptional work force with experienced and well qualified teachers. However, if the State decides to cut teachers pay to balance the budget, not only will all the momentum be gone, but I will be as well.

Our students need quality people, teachers, counselors, custodians, and administrators. If you show the Island that the quality of our school doesn't matter because of politicians inability to maintain our state budget then you are dooming the State of Hawaii to the worst education in our Nation. I have worked in the Tacoma Public School District in the State of Washington and they have not even hinted at cutting teachers pay. We are already begging quality people to stay in the profession, to stay in our State, if this happens begging will not be enough.

Bottom line, you cut our pay and many quality teachers/counselors go away. I would be one of them. Although I am born and raise in Hawaii I would move my family back to Washington State where they have a much greater respect and admiration for educators, which is why their system works so well.

I am not a politician so unfortunately I do not have recommendations or suggestions of ways to produce the money we need. But I assure you the results of cutting teachers pay will lead to a mass exudes of talented hard working individuals with passion for our youth and certain failure of our school system.

Please consider my words and give me a call or reach out if you would like to talk.

Aloha,

Micah Banton



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

Potential Budget Cuts do to COVID-19

Ron Smith <ron.smith@mauihigh.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:30 AM

My name is Ron Smith. I have been a special education teacher for nearly seven years, all of which have been spent at Maui High School mostly teaching Language Arts to sophomores. A significant portion of our staff, students, and parents would overwhelmingly agree that I am essential to the overall success of our school. I am humbled and heartened by this; and I frequently reflect upon my work and professional interactions in order to further develop and improve.

I have come to a level of resignation, and perhaps even peace, realizing that Hawaii teachers' salaries are embarrassingly low compared to those of mainland teachers. I also sympathize with our state officials as they attempt to rescue and restore our island economy due to effects from COVID-19. I affirm, however, my disgust that the individuals most recognized for ensuring our childrens' academic excellence and holistic preparedness to be viable community contributors appear to be the first casualties during economic upheaval.

Please keep in mind that my fellow teachers and I are an essential part of the country's investment portfolio. That said, asset managers typically advise their clients not to sell during a bear market (or during economic downturns). Why? Because markets fluctuate and assets restore - sometimes better than before downturns. With this analogy in mind, understand that sacrificing your teachers is one of the last investments you should sacrifice. The dividends our students can bring to our local economy and social stability is immeasurable. You are wise and creative enough to find other areas in the budget to trim. Thank you in advance for doing so.

--

Ron Smith
Special Education Teacher
Maui High School
Room P-6B
(808) 727-4065 (Classroom Number)
(808) 727-4000 (Main Number)
ron.smith@mauihigh.org
Ronald_Smith/MAUIHS/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us

Jamie Yap
Principal
Maui High School
Administrative Office
(808) 727-4020
Jamie_Yap/MAUIHS/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us

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

Teacher Appreciation

Michele Hodson <mauimichele@mac.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:34 AM

May 7, 2020

Dear BOE,

I am writing today to acknowledge my sons amazing teacher at King Kamehameha III school in Lahaina. Ms. Aure is a wonderfully inspiring person. She is so creative in her teaching techniques and I really admire her dedication to her students. My son Taj has thrived in her 5th grade class and is very disappointed that school ended early due to the pandemic. Ms. Aure has risen to the challenge of online instruction during these difficult times. I am so grateful for her perseverance in motivating the kids to keep up with their studies online. She has been totally accessible to the class and me through her cell phone, texts and virtual classroom messaging and live meetings.

Teachers like this are rare so please make sure they are well compensated and supported. All our keiki need good teachers and these teachers won't stay in Hawaii if they cannot afford to live here.

Aloha,
Michele

Home Harmony Inc.
808-280-2567



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

Vatsala Andrade

vatsala andrade <vatsalaandrade@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:34 AM

Aloha,

I worked as a teacher in NJ, NY, CA and in Hawaii. It is a shame that teachers in Hawaii are paid the lowest in the country. I made twice my salary in NYC doing the same job, teaching.

I don't understand why Hawaii does not respect the teachers. Why Hawaii does not understand the importance of teachers. The children are our future. The teachers help shape our future. This is the most important job in the world. Every other country understands it, the nation understands it, but Hawaii doesn't get it! Hawaii doesn't see the connection between the lowest salary and the lowest education and test scores. Take care of the teachers, raise the salary, and the quality of education will go up too. Hawaii's education level is three years below NYC. WHAT A SHAME! A restaurant employee in Hawaii makes more money than a teacher. WHAT A REAL SHAME!

Vatsala Andrade
Kapaa Elementary School
Second Grade Teacher



teacher salaries

Kevin Grant <kgrant@iaoschool.org>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:35 AM

My name is Kevin Grant. This coming school year will be my 13th in the State of Hawaii Department of Education. I teach at Iao School on Maui. My subject areas are Media/ Photography, and Science. I teach approximately 325 7th and 8th graders. I also have taught after school program called UPLINKS, and helped to teach the summer enrichment programs. In addition, I volunteer an enormous amount of hours to coach youth sports teams consistently and throughout the years since I have been a teacher. As you can see, I do have to work a bit of part time to supplement the income and limited time that I have, even after working for the DOE for many years, and volunteering to help the children of Hawaii.

Reducing teacher pay will harm not only me and my family but also the students we serve. The senior teachers (and I speak on behalf of many colleagues) will consider retiring. I (and assuming other teachers who work in similar capacities) will be forced to move away, or find other jobs, disabling our ability to volunteer, and be effective, prepared teachers. This will leave teacher shortages in Hawaii at a greater number than 600. On a given day at my school, there are too many substitute teacher needs, and/or not enough to cover unhired teaching lines.

I have walked the strike picket lines twice in my career. Receiving no pay for 14 days twice. I have been affected by the Linda Lingle furloughs for almost 2 years. And we voted her in. How quickly do government officials forget how we helped them during their campaigns? We were told the state could not afford pay increases. Our salary pay scale has been compressed. Even when we eventually got raises, it was a 1.8% raise. We are now in a negotiating period.

Covid19 is not the teachers' fault. We teachers are often at times used as the "sacrificial lambs", and "guinea pigs" so other unions can watch and see. We did not create this mess! So why do we need to balance the state budget by our well earned, well deserved salaries? Every person who resides (at any time) in Hawaii should contribute to balancing the state budget...even the tourists.

HERE ARE SOME POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:

Increase general excise tax

Restrict travel within the state and especially out of state.

Cut pay from every level of government (Transportation, Taxation, Judiciary)

Cut pay from the County level employees

Freeze hiring (offices can use their current manpower and work harder)

Cut discretionary budget funds (millions of dollars here)

Schools do not need to pay for keynote speakers from around the country to do workshops in their districts. Monies can be saved here.

Every level of government should pay for this mess. Private sectors too.

Utilize federal monies.

Thank you for your time, consideration and support for schools, teachers and students.
I am a teacher and I am a front line employee too.

Sincerely,
Kevin Grant



Testimony in Opposition to Cutting Teacher Pay

Elizabeth Pine <elizabeth.pine4@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:38 AM

Aloha Hawaii BOE,

My name is Elizabeth Pine and I am writing to dissuade you from slashing teachers' wages. I write specifically from the perspective of someone who has been an educator in Hawaii since 2010.

Before the coronavirus crisis, Hawaii was taking solid steps toward improving the state of education for our keiki by addressing one of our more chronic crises: that of our teacher shortage. It has been well established that considering Hawaii's cost of living, Hawaii's educators' hard work is rewarded with some of the lowest pay in the nation. Since I joined Hawaii's educators in 2010 as an emergency hire through Teach For America, I have been saddened to see many of my colleagues leave the state because there is so little incentive to remain a teacher here. In many dual-income households, when one spouse is not an educator, all it takes that spouse to get a job offer in another state for that educator to move. Yes, they loved their students, colleagues, and life in the aloha state, and I can't recall an instance where it was easy for them to leave. But many teachers cannot make the dream of homeownership a reality, let alone save for their own children's future, when they have been struggling financially for their entire careers. The only reason I have been able to remain a Hawaii educator is because my spouse is much more reasonably compensated for his work than I am.

In the aftermath of this blindsiding pandemic, staffing every classroom with a qualified teacher is more important than ever. Students will have been out of school for an entire academic quarter with families attempting some version of homeschooling, some of whom are reaching out to thank us and let us know it's far more challenging than they expected. When school returns to in-person sessions, we will see that the achievement gap between students from families with resources and students from families who are struggling has widened. Even for students who were on grade level when we finished in-person classes in March, they have already missed out on at least a month of new learning material that would have been taught to them. This means that even students who were performing on grade level are now behind their peers from private schools or mainland public schools who have found ways to continue teaching new material.

By cutting teacher pay, the hope of confronting the new challenges we will see as a result of the coronavirus epidemic on top of the myriad challenges we already face in Hawaii's schools is dismal. I've talked with several educators who are considering retiring earlier than expected or leaving the state entirely if their pay is reduced. You must understand that your actions will directly push teachers out of the state. I would also draw your attention to the timing of these pay cuts. It is the most frictionless time of year for teachers to leave the state; we are not in the middle of a school year where leaving would let down a classroom of students. Leaving Hawaii in the middle of the summer makes it reasonably possible to seek employment as a teacher in another state.

Don't punish our keiki with such an inequitable and drastic cut to their teachers' livelihoods.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Pine

2nd Grade
Holualoa Elementary School



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

Do Not Reduce Teachers' Salaries!

Kim Leuenberger <leuenberu001@outlook.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:45 AM

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

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

To Hawaii State Board of Education:

Do not reduce teachers' salaries! Hawaii already suffers a critical teacher shortage. This teacher shortage is impacting the education of our Hawaii students negatively. Imagine if teachers with my experience decide to retire early because of a pay cut. Then what will the DOE and the BOE do?

I have been teaching in Hawaii since 1992. An almost 20% pay cut would devastate my family's financial situation. I have a child in college and so far he has not had to take out many student loans because my husband and I have been able to financially support him. A pay cut of any sort would debilitate my family's ability to be financially stable. COVID-19 has made finances more difficult during these times for our family, and we were looking forward to the relief of gradual reopening of the state and businesses. But a 20% pay cut for teachers is an extremely inappropriate consideration for balancing the budget.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Leuenberger

Teacher, Grades K-8, 25+ years teaching experience in

Hawaii

Innovations Public Charter School



PROPOSED PAY CUTS, TESTIMONY

Saafiga Foster <sfoster@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 10:48 AM

Aloha

My name is Saafiga Foster and I teach 9th grade PE at King Kekaulike High School. Hawaii teachers are one of the lowest paid in the country and with the high cost of living in Hawaii, it is already extremely difficult for teachers to survive and provide the basic needs for our families. I'm against pay cuts to teachers and state workers. Cutting our salary would put teachers and their families in jeopardy. Most of us already live paycheck to paycheck. Furthermore, there are other options to balancing the state budget other than cutting teacher's pay. Please consider those options first because cutting teachers pay would affect everybody involved, including the DOE who is already suffering from a teacher shortage. I have always believed in the philosophy that if you value people and pay them for what they are worth then the result will always be positive. Those who feel valued will want to put forth their best and do better. The reality is that teachers have already displayed these attributes time and time again, in spite of the state's shortcomings. Even in dire situations like the recession Hawaii experienced several years back and COVID 19 which we are currently in, teachers always put students first and continue to teach Hawaii's keiki by finding creative ways to engage and encourage students during these times. I humbly ask that you, the state, will do the same and show the same Aloha and value to us, as teachers. Do not cut our pay. Help us continue the task of educating and inspiring the next generation of Hawaii by showing us what we are worth and paying us for our efforts.

Mahalo,

Saafiga Foster
King Kekaulike High School
Physical Education
9th Grade teacher



Teacher Salary Decrease

Linda <maui.bumpers@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:06 AM

Aloha Hawaii BOE Officials:

It is with much respect I ask that you please do not decrease the teacher salary in the 2020-2021 school year. Why?

* I was raised on Maui.

*I teach at the very high school I graduated from.

*I have been teaching on Maui for over 30 years.

**** I'M A MAUI GIRL.**

*I got my Master of Education and teaching certificate while living and teaching on Maui.

*As of today, I make half as much money as my sister-in-law teacher on the mainland and I have a Master degree in education.

*Hawaii teachers are the 4th lowest paid in the 50 United States *(+citation below)*

**** I STAYED ON MAUI TO TEACH**

*I am now 60 years old and I finally saved enough money to put a down payment on a small apt. last Oct.

*I will not be able to pay my mortgage on my new home if there is a salary reduction.

*My brother owns 4 homes in Washington State and Missouri that equal the price of my one apt. on Maui.

*Hawaii has the nation's highest cost of living. *(+citation below)*

*My father was a veteran and he and my mother loved Maui. Our family were in Hawaii because my father was a federal employee. Both of their final resting place is in the Maui Veterans Cemetery.

****MY FAMILY AND I SUPPORTED THE HAWAII WITH TAXES AND EMPLOYMENT FOR OVER 45 YEARS.**

I have been an important part of the growth of the Hawaii economy since I have been a teenager. Please show your support for teachers like me, and others, who stayed on Maui.

You asked us to stay and teach; appreciate us enough to not cut our pay.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my voice.

Have a blessed day,

Linda Carnevale
H.P. Baldwin High School Teacher

Maui
(808) 250-2025 cell

+*Citation:*

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2019/07/09/the-states-where-its-best-and-worst-to-be-a-teacher/39647529/>



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

Pay cuts for teachers

Kalyani Muralidharan <kalyani_muralidharan@ams204.k12.hi.us>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at
11:10 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Say "No" to 20% pay cuts for Hawai'i state teachers. That is a slap in the face of all teachers throughout the state. I started teaching in Mass. in 1996. My starting salary was \$40,000. I left Mass. to move in here in 2006. I was making \$55,000 at that point. I took a few years off to raise my kids and started substitute teaching in 2010. In the Spring of 2016, I was hired full-time at Moanalua Middle School for the spring semester. In the fall of 2016, I was assigned to Aliamanu Middle School as a F/T ELA teacher. I have taught 7 and 8 the grade GenEd ELA and inclusion classes. As of today I still make less than what I was making in Mass. In fact, I make less than what is recommended for a parent and child by \$20,000 living in Hawai'i. A pay cut of 20% means I stand to lose \$10,000/ year. That is money I can never get back. And, honestly, I can't afford to lose that type of money. And I am one of the lucky ones with no mortgage or rent; I own my condo outright. How may I ask will the state be able to recruit new teachers in state and from out of state when our salary is less than the poverty rate? This is a very shortsighted proposal. It needs to be thrown out with the trash. The state legislature should be commending us for continuing to support our students not slashing our salaries!

Thank you,
Kalyani Muralidharan
Proud teacher at Aliamanu Middle School
7th grade ELA



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

Please Reconsider Hawaii Teacher Budget Cut

SANDRA GAMBOA <sandragambo1@hotmail.com>
To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:21 AM

Aloha Hawaii Board of Education,

Hope this email finds your team and families well and healthy.

We wanted to reach out and pass our concern about the recent Salary Cut being discussed for our Hawaii Teachers.

We are business owners, and our business has been terribly impacted by the closing of commerce mandate. And although, we are not making any income we are still working full time picking up the pieces of this mess by attending clients and partner's questions. If it wasn't for our wonderful teaches who are keeping our kids busy with assignments, making sure they are not just learning but also staying within the right state of mind, giving them learning and EMOTIONAL support thru these times, we would not be able to be navigate thru these current times - parents can't teach. And not to mention, our teachers are also busy with their own children but doing their best.

Good teachers should not get their salary cut. Perhaps other rules should apply, in terms of terminating teachers who don't do a good job, but salary cuts is pretty cruel during this current situation.

We wanted to make sure our voice is heard. We do not support this initiative.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

Thank you,
Sandra Offergeld



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

Testimony

Catherine Ritti <catherine.ritti@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:23 AM

Dear Board of Education Members,

I'm writing to encourage you to please avoid cutting teacher pay. I have been teaching in a Hawaii public school for seven years. Even with our current pay, I have witnessed my friends and colleagues struggle to make ends meet. Many of my colleagues work second jobs. Many of my young colleagues are burdened by student debt that they can't seem to get ahead of. Many of my colleagues cannot afford to live in a place of their own. Many of my colleagues worry about how they will afford to take care of elderly parents. Many also struggle to afford daycare for their children. This is the reality now, so cutting our pay will devastate our teachers.

75% of our teaching force is comprised of women. This is also a gender pay gap issue, when teaching is considered along side other professions with similar education requirements.

Please show that you value the work of Hawaii teachers and advocate for them to keep their salaries.

Thank you,

Catherine Ritti



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

Please Do Not Cut Teacher's Salaries!!!

Barbara Hauptert <barbwired@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:28 AM

Aloha,

I have been a teacher on the Big Island of Hawaii since 1994. My two children have both graduated from Hawaii public high schools, Konawaena and Kealakehe. My daughter is an elementary school teacher, and my son is a fire fighter, both in Kona. Our lives and the lives of our students have been hit hard by the current pandemic. Please support our teachers and students to ensure that our future will not be affected by salary cuts.

Mahalo,

Barbara Hauptert
Grade 2 Teacher
Holualoa Elementary School



don't cut teacher pay testimonial

Jennifer Hartl-Davis <jennihd@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:36 AM

Aloha-- My name is Jennifer Hartl-Davis, I have been teaching middle school English Language Arts in both Special Education and General Education for over 20 years. I currently teach at Aliamanu Middle school.

I am writing to plead with your board and all other concerned parties to A) not implement directed leave without pay on teachers. This action will cause only devastation to Hawaii's students who are already struggling to succeed in their educational goals due to the extreme situation of being forced to use distance learning under the situation of the COVID 19 quarantine order, AND the many challenges they faced prior to the onset of the pandemic. These challenges included overheated classrooms, under-qualified classroom teachers- due to emergency hires on non-teachers- caused by a shortage of licensed teachers, along with the many social challenges faced by a large portion of Hawaii's residents due the economic challenges of living in a very expensive city and state. Teachers work very hard every single day to help students overcome all these challenges by putting in hours far beyond the end of the contract day (and week and year), they themselves work in those overheated classrooms, long past the final bell. along with the very high stress of their profession many have (and need) second jobs in order to make ends meet for themselves and their families.

B) pay teachers the salaries they not only deserve, but need in order to stay in the profession.

Personally, I have taught summer school almost every year in order to supplement my regular teacher salary. I have also worked "on the side" as a tutor, a waitress, pizza delivery person and other odd jobs to supplement my teacher salary.

Even now, after more than 20 years, with a masters degree (that I am still paying for) I just barely make it to the end of the month. If I were not married to a person who also earns a modest living, I could not make it on my own. On my current salary, according to ads I have seen on line and in print, at best, I would be able to afford a rented room with a stranger in someone else's home. I would still need to have a "side job".

Further, during the pandemic my spouse's business is closed, so more pressure falls upon me and my salary to support our family. It is a well documented fact that many once-dedicated teachers have left either the profession or the state, or both, in order to find more economically viable professions or places to raise their families and have a better quality of life. With all the stress already caused by the state's shut down, reducing teacher salaries would make everyone's situation worse, lengthen the road to recovery and worsen the already critical shortage of qualified teachers in Hawaii's public schools.

During the pandemic, I, like most other teachers am spending many hours, on my computer to do the best I can to deliver distance education to my students. While I absolutely want to serve my students to the best of my ability, it is at best very unsatisfying to teach in this way. The main reward of teaching is the interaction with the wonderful young people who come to our classes every day wanting not only to learn, but also to interact with the trusted caring adults who want nothing more than to help their students gain the knowledge and skills to become successful, competent, happy members of our society. It takes lots of energy and countless hours beyond the contract day, plus talent, skill, continuous learning and self-improvement and more, to be the classroom teacher who does that for her/his students. Please do not further hinder our students' opportunity to have highly qualified, dedicated in teachers in their classrooms by increasing the economic strain already upon them as they practice this vital profession!



Teacher Pay Cuts

Luxmi Oconnell <luxmi.oconnell@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:41 AM

Aloha Board of Directors,

My name is Luxmi Quall, and I am a Middle School Social Studies Teacher and Girls Middle School Soccer Coach at Lahaina Intermediate School on Maui. I would like to begin by stating I love my job, and I want to stay in my position for many years to come. This is a luxury.

Each year the school year ends, I have an idea of who is staying at our school and who is leaving. Sometimes those that leave are to move closer to friends and family whether still on island/state or another place on the mainland. Sadly it is second nature to count how many teachers we lose, and I begin to guess how many empty positions we will begin the new year with.

My first year teaching at LIS I was one of fourteen teacher's hired. This was the 2016-2017 SY. Prior to my arrival there were emergency hires that taught in my classroom. One year Semester at least the prior year alone. That is a lot of changes and transitions for a child to go through let alone have the best educational support they need. The end of that year brought many teachers leaving the island for good. LIS then had to again hire a large amount of teachers.

Fast forward through the next few years more teachers were hired and stayed in their positions. Only minor adjustments were made. This was a triumph in itself. Raises were promised and things seemed to be going in a good direction.

Sadly high turnover rate is rearing its ugly head again. We have many teachers. And what is becoming apparent is that they do not even complain about it. It is like it is expected. This is a teacher's worst nightmare. I cannot imagine my own experience as a student with that reality. It is a clear message continually sent to students about the value of education.

The pattern of teachers leaving varies. It is not simply first year teachers who realize the profession is not for them. It is veteran teachers who took a position in Hawaii and refuse to work at a rate less than they're worth. The DOE goes to recruit on the mainland advertising that teaching in Hawaii is great. The DOE is desperate for teachers so they recruit on the mainland. When teachers from the mainland come to teach they are treated poorly and extremely disrespectfully. Numerous times my paperwork was supposedly lost, unfiled or "late" or past deadlines when the documentation was there to prove deadlines were met. By cutting pay this forces not only mainland teachers who have dedicated their time to moving here to better the education for students, but for home-grown educators too. This is their state, land, and home and so much more. in Hawaii teachers are not paid well already. Cutting our pay will forcefully push teachers to vacate positions in search for a financially safer place predominantly on the mainland.

What is it really like? What do teachers actually go through?

I spent days hunting for a home when I came to Maui. Nobody had leads and places were extremely expensive. I found an apartment for \$1200 a month. That left the other paycheck a month for bills and other essentials a typical person would need. I was making \$600 a week. Rent was starting to go up

so I was forced again to move to another place hoping that I could afford the living and make it through another year of teaching worried about my financial situation. Rent has not only increased in that time, but the increase of short-term vacation rentals has made applying for a place to rent a competition in Lahaina.

Fast forward a few more years, and our most recent contract, along with pay differentials, put me in a position of breathing comfortably each month. Last school year was the first I did not consider moving off-island. I saw a future. My projections of contract raises, along with my investment into my own education, would raise my pay to be able to afford a home in the community I teach in.

The announcement that a 20% reduction in salary is being considered sent a shockwave to the long-term viability of my effort and work to stay in Lahaina. During these difficult times my husband's position with his company has been terminated along with forty plus other positions with the same company. My salary is all we have now through these difficult times. It is demoralizing as a professional, but it is absolutely absurd and unfair to the students in Lahaina and Hawaii that educators who want to be a part of their life cannot because they cannot afford it. Personally, a 20% reduction in salary could ruin my financial future.

I implore you to consider alternative options to reducing pay. I ask that you think of the scenario as it appeared in the beginning of this year, when all parties finally started to understand that this is a real problem. We are hemorrhaging teachers from Hawaii, increasing the rate of attrition yearly, and a massive reduction in pay will exacerbate the issue. Aside from the personal lives of teachers that will be impacted, every family in Hawaii will feel this cut.

Sincerely,

Luxmi Quall

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Luxmi Quall
Social Studies Department Head
LIS Mentorship
Lahaina Intermediate School

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

Teacher Pay Cuts

Kallie Schimmoeller <kalliealyssa12@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:48 AM

Good afternoon,

My name is Kallie Schimmoeller and I am an 8th grade math and science teacher at Wheeler Middle School. I'm writing to urge you to not go forward with the Hawai'i teacher pay cuts. I'm originally from Ohio and I moved to Hawaii to pursue my dream of being a middle school teacher. If our salary gets cut, I will unfortunately have to move back to Ohio because I can't afford to live here with the pay cuts. Please, take this into consideration while making your decisions. I know that there are many more teachers like myself who will not be able to afford to stay here with the pay decrease.

Thank you for your time,
Kallie Schimmoeller



Testimony to Pay Cuts

Geena Okata <gnaokata@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:50 AM

Email your message to testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov, and be sure to include your name, school or worksite, and subject or grade level.

Geena Okata
Honowai Elementary School
Kindergarten

As a proud educator in the beautiful state of Hawaii, I am appalled at the thought of getting these pay cuts. Teachers who are dedicated to the profession have been working with what we have to meet the needs of those in our community. We often highlight about how teachers make an impact on the students, but teachers also work with families thus impacting the community. Teachers are working diligently to implement lessons that students need to retain or improve in, gathered new resources to be flexible online, attended online trainings to begin the journey, had courage, came together to support one another, and most importantly worked with families to get this all started. These families are the community that we serve, they are the workers that are essential to healthcare, tourism, recreational activities, businesses, stores, and countless others in the workforce. We teachers are the foundation of the island to provide for the families who need us when they are at work, who need us when they are challenged by their child, who need us when they seek help in teaching their child, and whom deserve respect. I am a proud Kindergarten teacher, I am not a daycare worker or nanny. I know our worth that we deserve and should be established with esteem as a critical asset to our society. So please stop cutting our worth, pride, and respect that we are working so hard for.



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

Please DO NOT cut teacher salaries!

Kim Ah Lee Sam <mrsahleesam@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:54 AM

Aloha!

My name is Kim Ah Lee Sam and I currently work at Waialua Elementary School. I am a 5th grade teacher. I realize that COVID-19 has drastically changed how we do things and has impacted us all so very much. I know that cuts will need to come from somewhere. However, I have been working my butt off during this Distance Learning time. In fact, I feel as if I've been working harder than when I am in my classroom teaching. Doing more work and then having to face a paycut is crazy. I work harder but I'm going to get paid less. Not only does it not make sense to me but it will also affect me personally as well.

During the summer months, I have to pay auto registrations for both of my vehicles. With having to deal with a paycut, I'm not sure I will be able to afford to pay my registration, let alone pay my other bills. Please, please, please do not cut our pay. Please exhaust all other possibilities prior to discussing cutting our pay and the pay of all front line workers.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kim Ah Lee Sam :o)



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

COVID budget crisis

Brett Cornelison <brett.cornelison@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:54 AM

I love my job. I love teaching in Hawaii. I make a difference for my students.

The harm being done by this lockdown is greater than the COVID threat.

This budget crisis is manufactured and could be easily averted.

If you choose to continue this lockdown, you will needlessly harm millions. If you pass the cost to teachers by the proposed pay cuts, my path is clear.

I will leave the state and teach elsewhere.

Governor Ige, you are responsible for the biggest calamity this state has ever known. History will judge you for it.

You will soon be out of a job.

Maybe you can teach my class. Good luck finding someone else to do it.

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Potential Impact of COVID-19 on State Funds for Education

Terry Holck <warubozu1@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:54 AM

Aloha Chairperson Payne, Vice Chairperson De Lima, and Board of Education Members,

Since the closure of school campuses due to COVID-19, I have seen teachers who are very uncomfortable with using technology and have absolutely no knowledge about how to teach virtually, bite the bullet and learn how to do it because of their commitment and dedication to their students. Teachers have worked tirelessly to ensure that learning did not stop for their students. They have created Google Classrooms, interactive learning experiences, art/music/physical exercise videos, and checked in with their students for their social-emotional well-being.

I understand the need for cuts due to the devastating impact COVID-19 has had on Hawaii's economy. With all I have witnessed and heard about how much teachers have done and continue to do for their students during this time, I urge you not to support any cuts to teachers' salaries in order to help balance the state's budget. Governor Ige has already stated that he will look at other alternatives, including state stimulus funding and borrowing from the Federal Reserve.

As you know, Hawaii already suffers from a great teacher shortage. As the former chairperson of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board, I have seen how many of our students go without a licensed teacher. Year after year, the HSTB members had to approve many Emergency Hire permits, due to a lack of qualified teachers. I fear that if teachers' salaries are reduced, that number could drastically increase. Even worse, vacancies may be filled with substitute teachers who have no teacher training or experience.

Veteran teachers may decide to leave the profession, if they feel they are not valued and must take a pay cut. New hires may need to leave the state in order to earn a living wage as a teacher. They may even leave the profession altogether.

Our students have already suffered due to the school closures this year. Do we really want to jeopardize their education even further with larger class sizes or courses not being offered due to a shortage of licensed, qualified teachers? Would you want your child to be taught by someone who is not licensed, has not been trained in teacher pedagogy, and does not know the content they are teaching? I think not. Therefore, I humbly ask you not to support any pay cuts for our dedicated teachers.

Mahalo for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Terry Holck
Nānākuli-Wai'anae Complex Area Resource Teacher



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

COVID budget crisis

Brett Cornelison <brett.cornelison@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 11:57 AM

I teach science at Mililani High School. My wife teaches at Hau'ula elementary grade 2. When I leave, she goes with me.

[Quoted text hidden]



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

No Pay Cuts For Teachers

Fasil Bizuneh <fasil.bizuneh@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 12:01 PM

Aloha,

My name is Fasil Bizuneh. I am a teacher at Kohala Middle School in the West Hawaii School District on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony against the proposed 20% pay cuts for all state employees.

In order to hire and retain the required number of qualified and experienced we must not let this proposal come to fruition. We must show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education is already struggling with the hiring and retention of qualified teachers, and this proposed pay cut will only make things worse. . Our teachers are worth at least as much as their current salaries and qualified and experienced teachers are important for the future of our keiki.

I have two young children, and my wife and I are considering buying a home here in Hawaii. Every little bit helps. A 20% pay cut would make our dream of home ownership here in Hawaii almost impossible.

I am not sure if I will be able to remain as a teacher in the Hawaii public school system.
We need your help. Mahalo.

Fasil Bizuneh
Math Department
Kohala Middle School
808 772-9574



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

Please no pay cuts

Norma Combs <ncombslotus@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 12:03 PM

I am a Middle School Special Education teacher and Drama coach. A pay cut would devastate my family. My husband is an electrician, out of work now. We depend only on my paycheck. I also am the caretaker for my elderly parents at home. We have been barely making ends meet during most times my husband has been out of work. During the regular school year, not only do I teach and hold IEP meetings, but I also volunteer my time to our drama club. I help to fund the productions we put on yearly. A pay cut and lack of funding for our teachers are going to be painful. We are working tirelessly to push out quality lessons for our students through our computers that are time consuming. I work more now because I have to learn how to do many of the technological strategies available for our students. I also mail my students work or kind notes of encouragement sent so they can be motivated. All of my actions costs money that I currently have to give. Any less would hinder any advancement I have continued with my students as some do not have computers at home. Please rethink your stance on taking away our much needed pay. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sent from my iPad



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

Teacher Pay

Elizabeth Scott <elizabeth.scott@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 12:03 PM

Aloha,

I am a 1st grade teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary School. I have been teaching in Hawaii for 7 years. I believe cutting teacher pay would hinder teachers from living and working in Hawaii. We already have a problem hiring and keeping schools staffed with the pay that we are getting now. Cutting it would only increase this problem. which in the end would effect the students education. If we can't support teachers with a living wage in Hawaii they will leave and our students will not get the education they deserve. Let's not forget King Kamehameha III's dream of having the most educated people in the nation. Without teachers we can't have an akamai community. These students are our future, don't take their teachers away,
Mahalo,

--

Elizabeth Scott
King Kamehameha III Elementary
[\(808\) 662-3955](tel:8086623955)
elizabeth.scott@k12.hi.us

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

NO CUTS TO TEACHER SALARIES

Nicole Bear <shuttle626@hotmail.com>

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 12:06 PM

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

My name is Nicole Bear and I live and work as a substitute teacher in Lahaina. My daughter attends Princess Nahi'ena'ena Elementary.

Reducing teacher salaries below their already dismal levels here in Hawaii will have a devastating impact on our keiki. We are already suffering from a shortage of qualified teachers, and this will only serve as a barrier to hiring as potential candidates will choose other careers to ensure they can afford to live here. It will also drive good teachers out of the field for the same reason.

I chose to be a substitute teacher to fill in the gaps when teachers needed to be away from their classrooms for trainings, illness, etc. I DID NOT sign up to take over a classroom long term because the position was never filled. During the 2019-2020 school year it was very common for kids to go to classes where they never had a regular teacher all year, and were just given "busy work" or spent the time on their phones because they had given up on the class.

How do you expect students to value education if you don't show that you value good educators? And now, in the time of this pandemic, when teachers are working harder than ever to offer educational opportunities in new and unique ways they were never prepared for, this is a slap in the face.

Please reconsider these cuts to one of the most essential professions in our society.

Sincerely,
Nicole Bear



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

Reduction in Pay

Brian Flat <bflattkms@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, May 7, 2020 at 12:11 PM

Aloha,

I love teaching, with all of my heart. Living in Hawaii is always a financial struggle but I enjoy teaching Social Studies, AVID and coaching that I've withstood the challenges. It's been difficult as 4 of my first 5 years teaching in Hawaii I received pay cuts. And now here we are again just as I was fortunate enough to become a home owner buying a small condo in 2019. Since early December I have been able to put money into my savings only once. I am sure that I cannot survive a pay cut of nearly 20%. I'm not sure I can withstand any pay cut for that matter. I understand these are unprecedented times but please consider the amount of teachers that will be forced to leave the profession or the state.

Thank you for your time.

Brian Flatt