

# Late Testimony

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kristy Colbert <kristy21c@yahoo.com> on behalf of Kristy Colbert  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:31 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Kristy Colbert

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Debra Kuribayashi <debbiek888@icloud.com> on behalf of Debra Kuribayashi  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:31 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I am testifying on Action item H. Board Action on MOU between State of Hawaii BOE and HSTA (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response:2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargining Unit 5 employees.

GET IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME. Why does the State want to rush into starting school on Aug. 4, 2020 when decisions for school opening have been late in the making? Where is the thoughtful planning that really should have begun during 4th quarter of this past school year? Again things are being rushed and who will be paying for this? The students, teachers, and parents in the end if there is no vaccine and cases continue as they have been or increase more.

What plan does the DOE have down the road also? If we have spikes in the community or state? Please see what measures have been done to answer questions to arise as the private schools have already done. DO IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME>

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Microsoft Account Team <nearthebay\_hanalei@hotmail.com> on behalf of Microsoft Account Team  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:33 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Safety for Essential Workers

As a 30 year DOE employee, this has been the hardest school opening with the many inconsistencies and changes that have affected any planning for school opening. Trying to keep our staff and students safe with whatever guidelines that have been given but no answers to the "What if?" As the SASA, I feel a personal responsibility for our staff for their health and safety and honestly, I am not comfortable with receiving the public to our school. Please give us more time to prepare and plan before an outbreak happens in our well protected island.

Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Ann Freed <annsreed@gmail.com> on behalf of Ann Freed  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:34 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Reopening

Aloha kakou,

Please do not reopen schools at this time under these conditions. Allowing each school to decide how they are going to open with no scientific uniform policy is insane.

COVID rates are going up not down. And schools are disease vectors! Please no more deaths! Wait until things are safer or until vaccine.

Ann S. Freed  
Community Advocate  
Mililani

Sent from my iPhone



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Chris Pascual <chrispascual79@gmail.com> on behalf of Chris Pascual  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:35 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Hard to Staff Differentials

To the Board of Education,

I am writing in opposition to a temporary discontinuance on the teacher differentials.

This proposed action speaks volumes on how effective programs that support teachers and students become the first response to remedy and solve the state's financial problems.

Let us look to the solution for the Board of Education to demand a property surcharge for education. We need to demand that our students deserve more not less. Take the action step to provide our students with more.

-Chris Pascual

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Debbie Hisashima <dhisashima@gmail.com> on behalf of Debbie Hisashima  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:35 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha Board Members,

My name is Debbie Hisashima. I am the academic coach at Pukalani School on Maui.

I am sure that many others have shared their thoughts with you, so I will make just two quick points in regards to Dr. Kishimoto's message to the teachers.

1. In an effort to rally her troops to return to the classrooms, Dr. Kishimoto compares us to the other courageous workers such as the doctors, nurses, grocery store cashiers, postal workers, etc who are at work keeping our economy going. True, these community contributors are providing a great service, but they are doing so behind plastic partitions and other quality PPE's. Their contact with possible infected individuals is fleeting - seconds or minutes long - and their working environments are most likely up to safe standards. In contrast, teachers will be spending 6 hours a day in stifling hot classrooms trying to teach and manage students who will need constant supervision. (I taught summer school and lost track of how many times I had to ask children to keep their distance.) I know that schools must reopen at some point, but please do not compare teachers to other workers and guilt us into mustering up more "courage."

2. Dr. Kishimoto has been saying that the DOE provided teachers with so much training for virtual teaching. Perhaps I missed something, but I believe the first links I received for "optional" Google Classroom training arrived in my inbox in July. I'm grateful to have this support, but please do not tell the public untruths. Emailing links to teachers less than a month before the start of school is not "great." I understand that both the superintendent and the BOE have people to report to as well, but please do not step on the teachers to gain better light for yourselves. The training time that Dr. Kishimoto is giving teachers in the first two weeks is counter-productive. Saying "go, ready, set" will surely not set anyone up for a successful start of year. I believe that if the first two weeks begin without students, teachers will truly be able to focus on learning and planning, and THAT will lead to quality start.

I am non-classroom teacher, but I was just notified today that because two more teachers at my school made the hard decision of taking a leave, I will most likely have to step in to help fill the teacherless classrooms. The decision to require virtual-only teachers to report to campus will cause more teachers to take a leave of absence. I am happy to step back into the classroom, but my role on campus is to support teachers, and there will be no one there now to do that. On a daily basis, I teach students as young as 5 years old about consequences. Every action has effects so I am asking you to give extremely careful consideration to every decision you make. Also, consider the fact that most of the decision makers have not taught in classrooms either at all or in a long time. Please listen to the teachers and seek to understand what it is that we are saying.

Mahalo for your time.  
Debbie Hisashima

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kimberly Deas <kimberly.deas@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kimberly Deas  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:35 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Good Afternoon, I am respectfully submitting testimony on Action Item G: [Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year.](#)

Special education keiki needs your help! We cannot backtrack on our Phase 1 differential payments. We are only scratching the surface in closing gaps in special education. There is much needed work and keeping special education teachers to commit is the first step. If you don't have us, then you have no solutions. Keep the incentive alive to help Hawaii special education and fulfill those promises to our special populations.

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

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**From:** Jennifer Nakamura <bipolarbear420@gmail.com> on behalf of Jennifer Nakamura  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:36 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony for DOE RETURN AUG 4TH  
**Attachments:** Screenshot\_20200722-130444.png; FB\_IMG\_1595459842479.jpg; Screenshot\_20200722-131905.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130628.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130636.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130453.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130648.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130655.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130519.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130621.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130545.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130701.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130552.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130508.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130558.png; Screenshot\_20200722-131912.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130709.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130500.png; Screenshot\_20200722-130611.png

**Re: [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)**

My testimony here is in regards to the plans and return to school set for August 4 th 2020.

I understand and appreciate the flexibility, patience, planning and understanding going into this strategy or plan, however, I feel that in general we are severely underprepared for 300,000 students to return to public schools in Hawaii.

My first and foremost issue is the safety and well-being of the people here. when schools decided to close in March, the count on Oahu for covid19 positive cases was only at about 95 people. To date there are 1418+ cases on Oahu, confirmed.

I have a very big issue with the press release that was posted of a DOE official basically calming the public's nerves and making it sound like the DOE is completely ready for a safe return to school. My issue is that I worked at a school for over 5 years... I have worked at many schools. My most current employment has been at the same school for almost 5 years now... And my concern is that in 5 years I have almost never seen our custodians sweep the stairways or hallways. We have had to clean our own bathrooms, we have had to remop after a horrible job being done by classroom cleaners. In fact our classroom cleaners do not use any kind of cleaning solution they just dip a mop in to a watery bucket and then proceed to drip and drag sludge and water all over our classroom floor. Quite often we have had to go back and mop after they finish because of the thick layer of grime and water left all over the floor. In fact in the 5 years that I've been employed at this elementary school, I have not once witnessed custodians cleaning windows or other important areas around campus.

Another big issue I have is that many of us including staff and students live in homes with seven, eight, nine, ten or more people in each home. This means that your potentially exposing many more people than you realize if anyone happens to be sick. our school has no procedure or plan for monitoring temperatures or screening children each morning. Verbally confirming with students how they feel is not very effective or guaranteed to be flawless.

I have many colleagues who work in a school and have students or children of their own who attend other schools. There are so many things left with loose ends. I feel like the Board of Education and the states Corona virus response team should have had people go in person throughout the summer to prepare and witness protocols and procedures. I have zero confidence about the safety and sanitation that will take place in regards to our student bathrooms our teacher bathrooms, lunch and other common areas... In fact our school has one single water fountain that is used for 300 plus students to refill

to give up their summer days they didn't have to sign up. I'm gratefu...  
See More

9m [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Bridget Mowat** 🖐️

No training! They've been concentrating on how the are going to educate out children outside of the normal classroom setting.

6m [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Danica Walsh** 🖐️

No training!!



2m [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Lisa Morrison** 🖐️

They offered a training on Google Classroom -- which I already learned in 2015. Does that make me feel ready for students to attend on Aug. 4? NO

have had time anyway I took 3 intensive summer school classes.

1h Like Reply



**Olin Lagon** 🖐️

My wife was a part time teacher. She got laid off. We need to reduce costs and I can see why she lost her job. I am guessing cost cutting is only beginning.

1h Like Reply



**Joelle Neuman** 🖐️

No training 😞



1h Like Reply



**Selena Holmberg** 🖐️

Nope



1h Like Reply



**Bill Taylor** 🖐️

I was in my bunker what training ??



In Like Reply



**Johanna Kaupu** 🖐️ Jen Hisae correct.



**Kelley Ando** 🖐️ Jen Hisae I think the P...



**Mia Pearl** 🖐️



GIPHY



1h Like Reply



**Kyle Chang** 🖐️

I remember suggesting that we take the summer to improve distance learning since it was appearing to be a national failure, and being told

2h Like Reply



**Wendi Molcilio** 🖐️ Jen Hisae, you spea...



**Lori Miyashiro Umiamaka** 🖐️ right? It'...



**John Fitzpatrick** 🖐️

I did take a professional development class on my own time in order to try to get a pay raise. It was a good one but only 16 teachers out of the 24 teachers that started were able to complete it.

1h Like Reply



**Lorilyn Aceret Cruz** 🖐️

Nada!



1h Like Reply



**Scott Scotto** 🖐️

0



1h Like Reply



2h **Wow** Reply



**Suzanne Braun** 🖐️

Zero



2h **Like** Reply



**Marie Domingo** 🖐️

🤔 🙄 None nada z e r o



2h **Like** Reply



**Jen Hisae** 🖐️ Author

That's a pretty brazen public statement she made than huh, that thousands of DOE teachers received training over the summer. What a way to mislead and lie to the general public.



2h **Like** Reply



**Wendi Molcilio** 🖐️ Jen Hisae, you spea...



**Lori Miyashiro Umiamaka** 🖐️ right? It'...

**93 CASES**

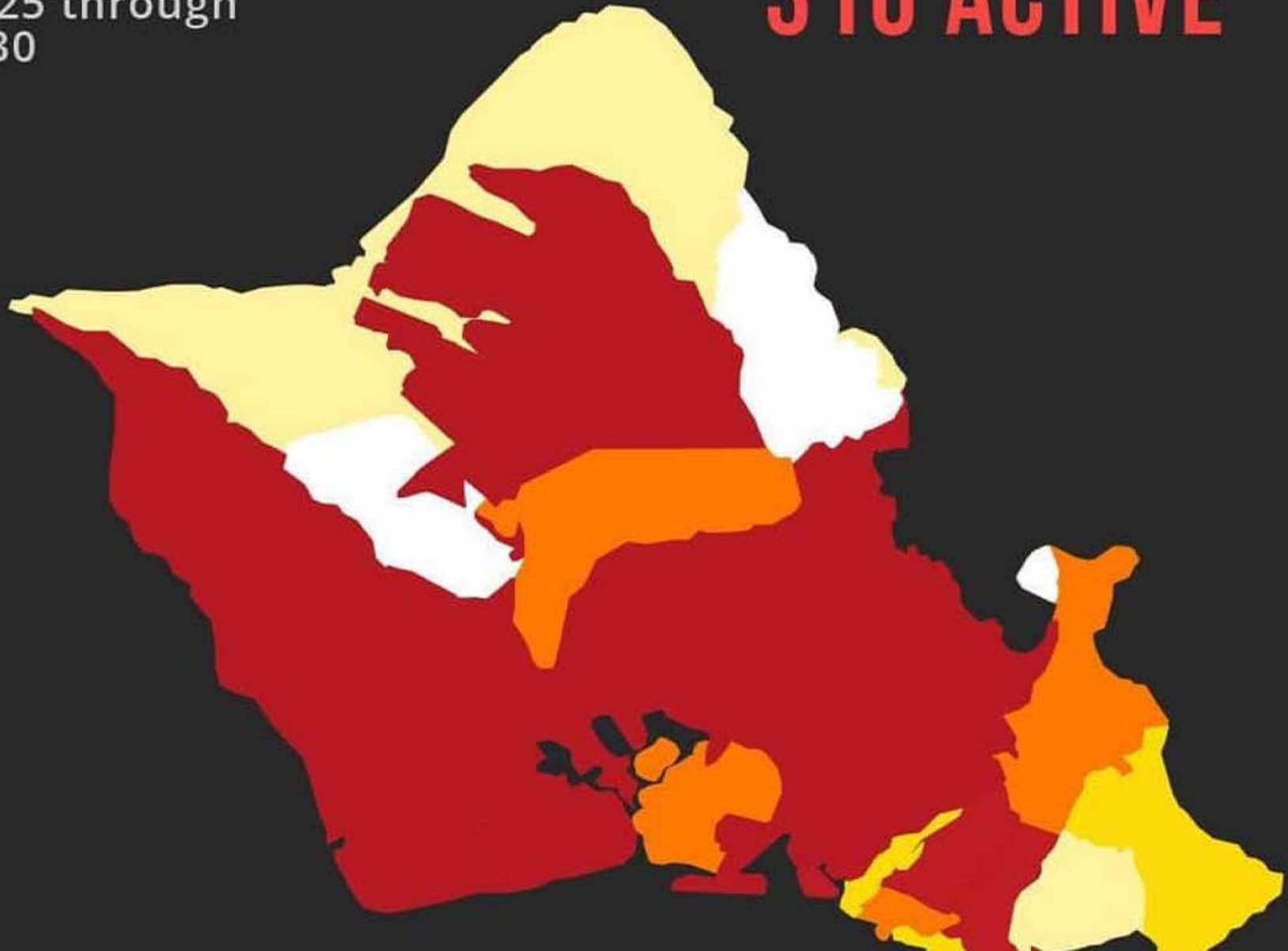
**+6 NEW CASES**

Stay at Home Order:  
Stay at home & work  
from home started  
from Wednesday,  
Mar. 25 through  
Apr. 30

**1418 CASES**

**+25 NEW CASES**

**310 ACTIVE**



1h **Haha** Reply



 **U'i Arquette** 🖐️ Bill Taylor me too 😊



**Kirstyn Galius** 🖐️  
not true



1h **Like** Reply



**U'i Arquette** 🖐️  
Not I!



1h **Like** Reply



**Carrie Tanaka Wong** 🖐️  
None... didn't hear of any.

1h **Like** Reply



**Bill Giebink** 🖐️

One of these days someone should ask the superintendent exactly how many teachers have been trained and how. The answer will be



not provide training to anyone that was for school, and even the meeting for special education teachers was not actually a training. So few people could attend it that were supposed to that they had to post it for review on their website. And even then, its not a training-- its more of a meeting that could have been an ext... See More

48m [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Kini Kaawa** 🖐️

No training offered thus far

46m [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Juliana Roma Romero** 🖐️

I am a 12-month teacher and have been working both remotely and in person all summer. I was never notified regarding any type of training



**Dee Wu Wong** 🖐️

I taught summer ESY this year and I was not offered any COVID 19 training.

1h [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Ci Ci** 🖐️

My school already had training on Google Classroom prior to COVID19 crisis. Plus our academic coaches, counselors and administrators are wonderful. But hopefully we will get COVID19 training soon.

54m [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Darlene Cadiente** 🖐️

Nope not one !



54m [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Kellen Inafuku** 🖐️

I have not received any such. If we did it would have been optional if



**Scott Scotto** 🖐️

0



1h [Like](#) Reply



**Peggy Feurey Mierzwa** 🖐️

What type of training would you like to see?

1h [Like](#) Reply



**Jen Hisae** 🖐️ Peggy I would have liked...



**Erin M. Mickelsen** 🖐️ Peggy Feurey Mi...



**Rebecca Reichert Arlander** 🖐️

No training. But honestly I wouldn't have had time anyway I took 3 intensive summer school classes.

1h [Like](#) Reply



**Olin Lagon** 🖐️

My wife was a part time teacher.



and not my new schools emails to even help in the process to decide on the model for instruction.

44m Like Reply



**Kandice Kartchner** 🖐️

As for training of regular teachers--nope! I attended a few HSTA trainings, I attended two trainings that were held by **Shane Asselstine** that rocked but were not what I would call DOE training ( **Shane**, you rock so hard, and I wish I could pick your mind so often! PLEASE train my whole school on things!) Certainly I don't count the numerous offered SimpleK12 free training sessions as DOE training's... See More

43m Like Reply



**Ally Smith** 🖐️

2h Like Reply



**Jennifer Suzuki** 🖐️



GIPHY



2h Like Reply



**Jonathon Medeiros** 🖐️

Teachers did not receive COVID specific training over the summer. Many teachers pay to pursue their own learning over the summer but the DOE has not yet provided anything. That will likely occur during the first four days of the





**Jill Gordon** 🖐️ And this is an enormous...



**Kyle Chang** 🖐️ Jill Gordon it sounded li...



**Karen Kama** 🖐️  
Nothing



Tenor

1h [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Gayle Watabu** 🖐️  
Nope! Nothing! Zero! Nada!!!

1h [Like](#) [Reply](#)





**Kelly Bailey** 🖐️

Nada!



1h [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Keialohalani Kt** 🖐️

Nothing



1h [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Lori Iwami-Sakamoto** 🖐️

A Google classroom training was offered, but I didn't participate



1h [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Carol Truitt Sappington** 🖐️

None. Just coteaching/ inclusion training and then additional sped training.



1h [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Kiara Del Aragon** 🖐️

You mean the voluntary, on our own

I'm just curious what thousands of teachers received training over the summer? And what kind of training? Covid19 procedural training??! online options training??



👍 😂 😮 38



**Amber Olson** 🖐️

Any trainings teachers did over the summer was of their own initiative and most likely unpaid.

2h Like Reply

👍 15



**Blythe Marie Emler** 🖐️

No training

👍 4

2h Like Reply



**Jennifer Suzuki** 🖐️



did, it would have been optional if we didn't receive a stipend (i think, someone correct me if im wrong, thanks).

We aren't "working" during the summers and are not being paid (we get paid all 12 months but that pay is based off of 10 months, so working during breaks or summer requires [i think, could be wrong on requirement] stipends.).

51m [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Kandice Kartchner** 🖐️

i pointed this out in my testimony, but frankly this is how it is: they did not provide training to anyone that was for school, and even the meeting for special education teachers was not actually a training. So few people could attend it that were surprised that they had to

many teachers have been trained and how. The answer will be enlightening.

1h [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Page Kaohu** She'll obfuscate like usual.



**Karen Meyer** 🖐️

Teachers at our school were offered 'free distance learning classes' some younger ones took it because it counted towards their pay raise. I've spent sooooo many summers in classes over the years I just couldn't bring myself to do yet another one. Especially for no pay and no raise possible.

1h [Like](#) [Reply](#)



**Jen Hisae** 🖐️ Author

so it does sound like some teachers were provided training but NONE of



42m Like Reply



**Katherine Pi'ilanihale Kumaewa** 🖐️ J...



**Maria Hinchey Oka** 🖐️

My complex offered stipends for two half day trainings. My school offered 4 half day trainings on various topics mostly related to teaching in a blended environment and digital learning options. Those training sessions were developed and organized by our curriculum coordinators. And they were optional so if a teacher didn't want to give up their summer days they didn't have to sign up. I'm gratefu...  
[See More](#)

9m Like Reply



**Bridget Mowat** 🖐️

No training! They've been concentrating on how the are going



**Ivory Abordonado** 🖐️

I heard that an experienced teacher sat through a training and basically learned how to decorate a classroom. 🤣 🙄 🙄

1h Like Reply



**Lisa Alford** 🖐️

Windward district offered voluntary virtual tech training...Google Classroom etc. but that's it.

1h Like Reply



**Lisa Berinobis** 🖐️



1h Like Reply

water throughout the day. Our classrooms are hot and humid and we will have many more issues that will arise once we return to school.

If the state worked together with the Board of Education and the Corona virus or Covid response team that has been put together by the city and state, perhaps they could go to each site and physically observe procedures and steps that are taken. Similar to how the board of health issues a pass or no pass grade that is posted in a business window at any food establishment, our schools should have a pass or no pass process before allowing students to return and potentially exposing hundreds and thousands of people to risk.

I could go on and on but apparently it is 1:32 p.m. and your Board of Education only allowed comments and submissions of testimony until 1:30 p.m.

The most frustrating part is as an employee of an elementary school I have had zero communication with my principal. For five years I have let my principal and tech person know that I have zero access to a DOE email account. Nobody has ever fixed that and I assume just like the lack of integrity and commitment I see day-to-day, the department of Education and the board will probably not fix many of the problems we are facing today. I will be copying this email and sending it to every senator and representative in our local legislature as well as to the HSTA and HGEA as I feel we could do much better to properly prepare for a safe return to school.

attached are screenshots in regards to that video that I have mentioned.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Nakamura



## Testimony BOE

**From:** Ms. Angela Hoppe-Cruz <hoppe.cruz@gmail.com> on behalf of Ms. Angela Hoppe-Cruz  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:36 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha kākou,

My name is Angela Hoppe-Cruz, I am submitting testimony specific to *Agenda Item: Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees*

I am writing to you as a concerned community member of the Waianae coast, a parent to three children all of whom attend public charter schools on the Wai‘anae Coast. Several of my family members are educators on the Waianae Coast, 2 of which fall into the at-risk category. Like you, I have been following the impact of COVID-19 in our state of Hawai‘i. As the numbers increased I assumed that since DOE closed physical learning spaces in March with a documented 12 COVID cases, there was no way we would reopen with case counts that triple that amount to date. Without a vaccine it is not safe to do so for the health of not only our keiki but all school staff and faculty from the principal to janitorial staff.

I know that our community will band together from our principal to janitorial staff to do all that they can within their power to protect our keiki from the COVID-19 virus, however, without a vaccine, we cannot guarantee they are safe from contracting this deadly disease.

The health and safety of our school community from the principal to the custodial staff is of my utmost concern. I am opposed to the reopening of schools until a vaccine is secured or our COVID-19 case numbers decrease to single digits and remain at single digits for at least a month before phasing back in physical face to face instruction.

Many of our families on the Waianae Coast live in inter-generational households and or like mine are care takers for kūpuna. Exposure to "school ohana bubbles" with varying levels of social distance practice is a wildfire in the dead heat of a Waianae summer waiting to happen. Per the CDC individuals with underlying health conditions are at [increased risk](#) for complicated COVID-19 infection, to include, diabetes, asthma, obesity. We cannot gamble the lives of our community members. I am pleading with our Board of Education leadership to pause on the reopening plans, to collaboratively work with HSTA, DOE, Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission and community stakeholders to innovate the educational landscape needed for our keiki, for our most vulnerable community members.

- Name: Angela T. Hoppe-Cruz, Parent, Waianae-Community Member
- Meeting: General Business Meeting

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*Me ke aloha,*

*Angela T. Hoppe-Cruz, MSW*

*"My wish for you is that you continue. Continue to be who you are, continue to astonish a mean world with your acts of kindness."*

***-Maya Angelou***

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** heiki wolf <heikiwolf@yahoo.com> on behalf of heiki wolf  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:35 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha, Honorable Board of Education Members

,I am e-mailing to address Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 Employees.

Please DO NOT allow the return (in-person) of Hawaii's students to school buildings on August 4. The intricacies of how this will happen have not been made know to the people who it affects most... students, parents and educators. I feel as though the responsibility of ensuring safety for students is being put on schools and educators without the training and preparation necessary to achieve the level of success that is being presumed.

I am a full-time teacher at Hilo Intermediate School and I teach part-time at Hilo High School as well. I have been a teacher in Hawaii for over 26 years. I am also the proud parent of a Public School educated High School Senior. I think that an in-person return to school is irresponsible and short-sighted given the steady spread of COVID-19 we are experiencing at this time.

One of the main reasons given for reopening schools for in-person instruction is that students' mental health is at risk if they do not return to school physically. Many schools are seeing students 1-2x a week, some once every 2 weeks! What will a socially distanced classroom really do for the mental health of our students? You may be on campus or even in class with others, but social interaction will be EXTREMELY limited and not at all "normal" in any way. In my opinion, the benefits of being in school physically do not outweigh the risks to student safety and general public health.

We NEED a better plan before students physically return to our classrooms. Please consider delaying the start of in-person classes in Hawaii's Public Schools.

Thank you for your time.

Heiki Wolf

Hawaii Public School Teacher and Parent

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** James Shire <jrshire@gmail.com> on behalf of James Shire  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:39 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Re: Testimony regarding opening Hawaii's campuses

Dear Hawaii BOE

I wish to amend my testimony to reflect where my sister teaches.

\*\*\*

My sister is a teacher at Aiea Intermediate School. She has taught our island's keiki for over a decade and has made a significant and lasting impact for the lives of many. It is my hope that she will continue to serve and teach for many years to come. Her own career and vocation has been an inspiration to many, including myself and my own work as a clergyperson in the Episcopal Church and as an educator. Though I am not currently residing in Hawai'i, I still consider it my home as my family and sister live there.

The COVID-19 pandemic has upended our entire world. People have lost jobs, our communities have been disrupted, and families have lost loved ones. For many months we have been living in varying degrees of isolation in an attempt to slow the spread of infection so that we do not overwhelm our healthcare system. Hawai'i has been very successful in flattening the curve and not overwhelming hospitals and doctors. However, there is a real cost to this because we are separated from work and our communities and we want to return to a sense of normalcy. One aspect of returning to that normalcy is reopening our schools and allowing our keiki to return to in-person instruction albeit in a modified form that limits class sizes and respects social distancing.

To be blunt, to open Hawai'i's schools right now would be a death sentence to the most vulnerable in our ohana.

COVID-19 is a dangerous and deadly illness. Though the mortality rate for COVID-19 is relatively low, people of all ages can be infected with the coronavirus that causes it and develop severe symptoms and complications that will last for their entire lives. We often assume that a moderate or mild case will be the equivalent to a bad cold or flu, but even people who are not hospitalized, namely people who have moderate or mild cases, can still have lasting lung, heart, and even brain damage as a result of an infection. Additionally, scientists are still studying and researching COVID-19 and the coronavirus to understand the long-term health consequences and complications that an infection can bring. They have discovered much, but there is so much that is still unknown.

There is a common talking point that the mortality rate for young children with COVID-19 is extremely low compared to older populations, and so it is safe for children to return to school because they are less likely to get sick and die from COVID-19. Not only is such thinking morally reprehensible because some of our keiki will die from COVID-19 if we reopen our schools, but it ignores five major things.

First, it ignores that there are students who have things like asthma and other chronic health conditions. Under normal circumstances, they are able to come to school with little to no concern. But with the pandemic occurring, they are likely the keiki that would die from COVID-19. Often this is brushed away by saying that they can just go to classes online and healthy students can come to school. But if we can build an infrastructure that can support online learning to keep some safe, we should then be able to make online learning possible for all to keep everyone safe.

Second, it ignores the teachers and staff who make our schools possible. Many teachers are older and are therefore more susceptible to deadlier infections. We should not be so willing to throw away the lives of teachers and staff just to ensure that we can have some level of perceived normalcy in our lives.

Third, many of our keiki live in multi-generational homes. When they return home, it may not be to just their parents, but their aunties, uncles, and grandparents. If that child contracts the coronavirus from their school they will infect the rest of their ohana and their older relatives will likely experience more severe symptoms and will be at greater risk for hospitalization and death.

Fourth, the pandemic has hit poorer communities harder than more affluent ones. Chronic health issues like asthma, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease are more common in poorer communities. This is often related to the reduced access to healthcare that impacts the lives of our island's poor. Poverty becomes a force multiplier for COVID-19 which is why you see higher infection rates and mortality rates among the poor. Poorer students are at greater risk, and many of these poorer students live in multi-generational homes and communities. The effects will be devastating for the poor in Hawai'i

Fifth, it ignores the basic realities of how children live. These opening plans envision students wearing masks, keeping distance, and washing their hands frequently. This is not going to happen. Within five minutes or less, any attempt to keep order and distance between students will fail. Friends that have not seen each other for months will want to hug and reunite. High schoolers will want to connect with each other before, during, and after school. Elementary school children will touch their faces and then every surface because that is what children do. Even if schools and teachers do everything right, something will go wrong. A person will come in who is asymptomatic and therefore will not be screened out of the school. They will still be shedding the virus despite the lack of symptoms. It will spread to one person and then another. One surface or another may not be properly cleaned, and then someone will touch an infected surface and then touch their face to wipe sweat off of their brow in a warm building. By the time someone shows symptoms, it may be too late because an entire class could be infected because you have people in close quarters for long periods of time. If one class is infected then there is a good chance that the school is infected.

Now, when these points are raised, people may respond in a number of ways.

Some may say that as long as people have proper PPE on, then there is no problem. I currently oversee a meal program for the homeless at my church. When I go out to serve our take-away meals outside, I put on a surgical mask, face shield, and gloves. Some of my colleagues who work inside will also wear surgical gowns, and hair and shoe coverings. We do this for our very brief encounters with people that last for no more than one to two minutes at most. Even with this amount of medical-grade PPE, there is still a risk of infection and I do get tested frequently to ensure that I am safe to keep working especially if I am unsure if I have come into contact with an infected person or not. I am doing front-line work that has to continue to ensure that people are fed. Though teachers are important and education is important, we have the means to ensure that we can still have classes done safely at home where there is little to no risk of infection. Therefore, if you can work and teach at home and online, then do it. Even if the DOE can supply teachers, staff, and students with all the proper PPE for long-term and indoor environments like classrooms (mask, shield, gloves, gown, hair coverings, etc.), there is still risk because PPE is only effective if people are wearing it properly. In addition, there appears to be no mechanism to enforce students to actually wear masks and other forms of PPE, and if that's not present, all of this is for naught. Additionally, it appears there are no plans to provide proper PPE to anyone, and if that is not in place then you cannot even consider opening.

Others keep pushing that online education is less than ideal, especially for students with particular needs, and there is a concern that students may fall behind in their education. I am not unsympathetic to this position. I am an educator, and I do not like online classes that much. I also understand the concern about students falling behind, but an education can always be recovered, a life cannot. It would be better to have an online 2020-2021

school year that is less than ideal that saves lives rather than bringing in students with the high risk for illness that comes from an in-person classroom experience.

Finally, there is the reality that schools are a means for childcare for students of working parents, and a place where students can receive meals they would not normally receive. The logic is that if a student has to stay home for school, then a parent has to stay home from work, and if the parent has to stay home then there is that loss of income. I am also not unsympathetic to this, but this line of logic reveals the massive gaps in our state's socio and economic conditions. We have created a situation where the cost of living is so high and wages are so low that people have to make that choice between work or family. Though this was already occurring prior to the pandemic, the current crisis has revealed the extent to which we rely on schools to be places for parents to put their kids while they work primarily and education centers secondarily. This is a problem that is easy enough to solve through a universal basic income program that would ensure financial stability to all in Hawai'i and ensure that parents did not have to choose between staying home with their children or going to work and dropping them at school or daycare.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the BOE to not open campuses to students for the 2020-2021 school year. New infections are occurring throughout the US and in Hawai'i and it is therefore not safe to rush into any return to normalcy. We should not make this decision in despair or resignation, but with confidence that we are doing the right thing for our keiki, our ohana, and our islands, and with hope that the scientific community will have viable treatments before too long and a working vaccine developed faster than any in human history. If we can wait a bit longer, we can return to our lives with those whom we love most dearly confident that we have saved as many people as possible.

In turn I would urge the BOE and the DOE to call upon the state government to implement the following to ensure the safety of our students, teachers, and faculty and to ensure the highest quality education possible for the next year.

1. The start of schools should be delayed until September. By delaying the start of the term, this will allow teachers to better plan and organize their curriculums to be fully online for the next academic year. Additionally, the state needs to use this time to quickly build-up Hawai'i's telecommunication network to ensure all students have access to affordable, high-speed, and quality internet.
2. Hawai'i needs to implement a universal basic income for all residents. A UBI will ensure that parents do not have to choose between work or their families. This will allow children to attend online classes and parents to remain home to provide care. This UBI can be funded through an increase in property taxes, especially on secondary properties owned by top-earners and businesses in Hawai'i.
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My heart goes out to the many ohana who have been impacted by the ongoing pandemic, and I am proud to see so many in Hawai'i taking the crisis seriously. May everyone stay safe and healthy during these times.

Sincerely,

The Rev'd Deacon James Shire, SCP

On Tue, Jul 21, 2020 at 11:25 PM James Shire <[jrshire@gmail.com](mailto:jrshire@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Hawaii BOW

My sister is a teacher on Oahu. She has taught our island's keiki for over a decade and has made a significant and lasting impact for the lives of many. It is my hope that she will continue to serve and teach for many years to come. Her own career and vocation has been an inspiration to many, including myself and my own work as a clergyperson in the Episcopal Church and as an educator. Though I am not currently residing in Hawai'i, I still consider it my home as my family and sister live there.

The COVID-19 pandemic has upended our entire world. People have lost jobs, our communities have been disrupted, and families have lost loved ones. For many months we have been living in varying degrees of isolation in an attempt to slow the spread of infection so that we do not overwhelm our healthcare system. Hawai'i has been very successful in flattening the curve and not overwhelming hospitals and doctors. However, there is a real cost to this because we are separated from work and our communities and we want to return to a sense of normalcy. One aspect of returning to that normalcy is reopening our schools and allowing our keiki to return to in-person instruction albeit in a modified form that limits class sizes and respects social distancing.

To be blunt, to open Hawai'i's schools right now would be a death sentence to the most vulnerable in our ohana.

COVID-19 is a dangerous and deadly illness. Though the mortality rate for COVID-19 is relatively low, people of all ages can be infected with the coronavirus that causes it and develop severe symptoms and complications that will last for their entire lives. We often assume that a moderate or mild case will be the equivalent to a bad cold or flu, but even people who are not hospitalized, namely people who have moderate or mild cases, can still have lasting lung, heart, and even brain damage as a result of an infection. Additionally, scientists are still studying and researching COVID-19 and the coronavirus to understand the long-term health consequences and complications that an infection can bring. They have discovered much, but there is so much that is still unknown.

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Third, many of our keiki live in multi-generational homes. When they return home, it may not be to just their parents, but their aunts, uncles, and grandparents. If that child contracts the coronavirus from their school they will infect the rest of their ohana and their older relatives will likely experience more severe symptoms and will be at greater risk for hospitalization and death.

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3. Hawai'i needs to continue to require a 14-day quarantine for anyone coming into the state. Discussions are occurring to allow for people to waive that quarantine with a negative test result 72-hours prior to their arrival. Though there is a desire to restart tourism in Hawai'i, infection rates in the US remain far too high to consider this policy at this time. Additionally, the current nasal swab tests have a relatively high false negative rate, so it is better to err on the side of caution until infection rates drop.

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Sincerely,

The Rev'd Deacon James Shire, SCP



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** TIFF Lum <uluihi73@gmail.com> on behalf of TIFF Lum  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:39 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@BOE.HAWAII.GOV  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

Aloha,

I am testifying on Action Item "G"- Board action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard to fill geographic locations and Hawaiian Immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year.

The Teacher Aids work hard and their job can be overwhelming with children who have various challenges how ever they still show up for the children and are there as they know they are a big impact on the child's life long learning! Imagine if you were in their shoes how would you like to be compensated? Do tell?

Mahalo,  
Tiffany  
Uluhi73@gmail.com  
Parent of children who receive SPED education!

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Taylor Newton <tnewton0524@gmail.com> on behalf of Taylor Newton  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:40 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

To whom it may concern,

I am testifying on Action Item H Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response):2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for bargaining unit 5 employees. My name is Taylor Newton and my child attends Lehua Elementary. He is at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 due to him having pneumonia earlier in the school year. What measures will be taken to protect him, his classmates, and his teachers with a weakened immune system? We cannot control what kids and parents do on the weekends or control who they are exposed to. You can not guarantee that there will not be an outbreak among students that can be spread to siblings or parents. If it is not safe to open tourism then why do you think it is safe for our Keiki to return to class? Why are our Keiki being the guinea pigs and being forced to go to school a month prior to our state opening up travelers? We cannot stop the spread of ukus in a class but you think you can stop the spread of a deadly virus? Let's do the right thing by our Keiki and our teachers and delay the start of school or at least switch to a virtual option.

Thank you,

Taylor Newton

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jenna Nihipali <jnihipa@yahoo.com> on behalf of Jenna Nihipali  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:40 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** RE: Delaying the Date Student Return to Physically Return

**Re: Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.**

CHAIR Payne and members of the Board of Education,

My name is Jenna Aipia, I am a Makua of Ke Kula o 'Ehunuikaimalino ma ka moku o Keawe. I am submitting testimony in support of delaying the date that students physically return to campus for the 2020-2021 school year.

Ke Kula o 'Ehunuikaimalino is located on a small campus in South Kona. Over the last few years, we have seen an increase in student enrollment, so much so that we do not have the physical space to house all of our haumana. With the implementation of social distancing, we are left wondering how our already overcrowded kula will be a safe space for our haumana and limahana. Our kula has not been given clear safety protocols, nor have all of our limahana had the opportunity to be trained on how to implement the vast amount of new expectations placed upon them for this school year.

Mahalo nui no kou kōkua,  
Jenna Aipia

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Sheynoa Mataafa <sheymataafa@gmail.com> on behalf of Sheynoa Mataafa  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:42 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Concerned teacher / concerned parent

Aloha BOE Workers ,

I'm emailing you concerned about schools opening . I agree our students should be learning and our teachers teaching . I have 4 kids who are in school and on different schedules . (2 attend Elem and the other 2 are in intermediate) . I won't be able to pick them up , drop them off , or watch them the days and time they're not at school . I teach 8th grade . I don't think we're ready for our schools to be opened. If someone tests positive our school will close down. Is that what we're waiting for?

We should be using this time to prepare distant learning on line . For those students who don't have computers can go to school to the computer labs .

I'm emailing so we can push school back and come up with a better plan .

Thank you ,

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Paul Heil <pubaluap@yahoo.com> on behalf of Paul Heil  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:44 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Reopening of school

Good day,  
My name is Paul Heil and I am an inclusion teacher at Kauai HS.

I am writing to express my concern about reopening school with personal contact, even with the CDC guidelines of social distancing and mask wearing. My story is personal that I am in a very compromised health position and am not sure if it would be detrimental to my well being to return to classroom instruction. These are the conditions I currently affecting me: strokes, high blood pressure, heart problems, and diabetes.

For the safety of both faculty and students, I believe the BOE NEEDS to rethink personal instruction and continue with virtual learning for at least the first quarter, if not the first semester of the 20-21 school year.

Sincerely,

Paul W. Heil

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Chelsea U <chelsea.maris@gmail.com> on behalf of Chelsea U  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:44 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Cuts to Shortage Differentials

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 have now completed seven years 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. Teachers understand that the Board is struggling to make decisions. It takes so much thought and care when trying to map out the best course of action for the public and for the wellbeing of our keiki. After a decision is made, teachers scramble. We have been working harder and longer than ever, collaborating with our coworkers as to best follow the new guidelines and serve our student population. Unfortunately, as a special education teacher, we often stand alone. Our students are so unique, as evident by their need for individualized instruction. Even the special education teachers within the same building or same grade level face unique challenges that others do not always understand. Our universal struggle is the paperwork that accompanies our responsibilities. With COVID-19, we received additional responsibilities and paperwork with the expectation that it be done unrealistically quickly and meticulously enough to stand up in a court of law. Again, we were alone in this struggle.

COVID-19 brought about an unexpected silver lining. The community found a greater respect and appreciation for teachers. If the Board decides to overturn their promise of the differential pay, it goes against the feelings of the community. They realize the importance of teachers and pulling financial support tells the community they are wrong, that teachers are not worth the already low salary. Teacher salaries in Hawaii are already the lowest in the country when you factor in the cost of living.

Personally, this financial turn of events will force me to leave the island. I already make too little to afford the "affordable housing." Additionally, I have been accepted to the University of Hawaii's graduate program for educational administration. Many states offer tuition assistance to teachers looking to further their education while Hawai'i does not. I applied with the confidence that the differential pay would last for five years.

What kind of example does that show my students? Work hard, go to college, and still struggle, or in this case, fail and have to go home. How does this further impact the state? I foresee a lot of special education teachers (if they are certified) seeking general education positions. If it was hard to fill these positions before, the general education teachers who applied for special education will leave their new positions. It does not do well for the state to lose many special education teachers, who have positive rapports with parents, at time when Due Process cases are more likely.

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. Special education teachers are the ones who often loop with their students and create a positive connection for those who struggle in school with their education. 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 the differential pay, 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



# Late Testimony

Karen Kohagura, Second Grade Teacher at Pahoa Elementary School

General Business Meeting on Thursday, July 23, 2020

Discussion Item VI-G: Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year.

I strongly disagree that the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) should defer differentials for next school year. The hard-to-staff differential (\$3,000) which applies directly to me and the teachers at Pahoa Elementary in the Kau-Kea'au-Pahoa Complex Area has helped to keep our faculty stable over the years. This factor has been very important to the students in our community which has been impacted by natural disasters in recent years (Hurricane Iselle in 2014, and lava flows in 2014 and 2017).

During the December 5, 2019 Board of Education (BOE) meeting, Superintendent Christina Kishimoto and BOE Chair Catherine Payne pledged to fund the differentials from existing HIDOE money if state lawmakers did not fund it for next school year. This new proposal breaks that pledge made to the teachers. It also puts an additional stress, both personal and professional, on the teachers who will be impacted by this potential cut in our income.

I really love teaching elementary students. My passion has kept me in the teaching profession for 31 years. I am 68 years old and had intended to teach for as long as I remained in good health. However, I am feeling very unappreciated for all the years of my service during which 100% of my life has been dedicated to loving and teaching my students.

Furthermore, despite what HIDOE and the Department of Health (DOH) says, our public schools are not ready to safely reopen on August 4, 2020. First, the DOH has not yet provided written guidance on the reopening of school buildings. Next, the Return to Learn: School Reopening Plan Health & Safety Handbook has guidelines on what to do after we notice that a child is ill. This is not a proactive approach to prevent COVID-19 from spreading to others. Thus, although I am ready to teach my students, I do not feel that our learning environment will be safe for my students and me by August 4, 2020.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit my testimony

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Sheridan Rosenberg <Sheridan@santabarbaraaviation.com> on behalf of Sheridan Rosenberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:50 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** RE: State of Hawaii Board of Education General Business Meeting, July 23, 2020 - Action Item G - Discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in hard-to-staff geographical locations

Dear Department of Education Board Members,

Greetings from Santa Barbara, California! My name is Sheridan Rosenberg and I am submitting my testimony opposing the discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations and the Hawaiian language immersion programs for 2020-2021 school year.

I know this seems strange to hear from someone on the mainland about an issue that doesn't directly impact them; however, this issue was brought to my attention by a dear friend who *is* directly impacted and I feel as if I have relevant testimony and can speak from personal experience about consequences to the entire community should you approve this agenda item.

California has been home to my family for six generations. My mother's side of the family traveled over the Oregon trail and down into Northern California where they settled in Mendocino County and San Francisco in the early to mid-1800s. They were loggers, grew grapes and pears and founded small businesses like bars and gas stations in an area of Northern California that has one of the highest populations of indigenous people in the entire US.

My mother was, for many years, a traveling nurse, social worker and teacher for the Indian reservations throughout Mendocino County. She, like all her colleagues, were not just teachers and health providers, but a lifeline to people in extremely remote and hard-to-staff communities. For so many, adults and children, she was also their lifeline to the outside world and to literacy. She attributed most of the alcoholism, abuse and deep poverty to one common denominator – access to good teachers who were committed to their community to provide ongoing early intervention and support for literacy and educators who won't leave them behind. It is the only real long-term solution to deep poverty.

I have lived in Santa Barbara since 1983 and I am now seeing the same problems in our community that my mother saw in Northern California. We have a very high population of indigenous and Hispanic families living in deep poverty who have completely fallen through the cracks. The only hope for them are teachers who are committed, who care and who are qualified to take on the crisis of literacy. We can all agree that it takes special people who are committed to spending their lives helping these people and we absolutely need to pay them well and make employee retention a priority. Driving away trustworthy and committed teachers in the hard-to-staff geographical locations exacerbates not only deep poverty, but also the school to prison pipeline. Where there is a crisis of literacy, there is also a crisis of crime, substance abuse and domestic violence.

Please reverse course while you can and support your teachers who are saving lives and money simply by their commitment to work in these remote areas and provide a lifeline to people who are so often neglected and forgotten. Vote "no" on Action Item G.

Sheridan Rosenberg

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Santa Barbara **Aviation**



First, I would like to thank the BOE, the Department and our Union for the tremendous work and thoughtful negotiations that have been taking place during this pandemic. There is no question that there is a lot to balance as we move forward, safely and together.

I am writing to request your consideration of four items: honoring the differential pay; following the CDC and National Academies guidelines with fidelity; providing administrators with guidance about virtual participation; and delaying the start of school.

1. **Honoring Differential Pay:** This is not an easy one for me to advocate. I am very cognizant of the struggles of folks all around me and in my family. I know I am blessed to have a job that allowed me to work from home since mid-March and a regular paycheck. As a special education teacher who has spent my entire career working in designated hard-to-fill areas, I also understand the struggles to fill positions with qualified teachers who can make a longer-term commitment to the students and the community. Special education teachers, Hawaiian immersion teachers and teachers in designated geographic areas were given differential pay to run through the course of our current contract. There were reasons you decided to recognize these teachers. The reasons are no less true today. This is not a time to back pedal. Not only for your integrity and honor but also to continue to recognize the additional and extreme pressures and responsibilities that are being laid at the feet of teachers and staff. Stay true to your word and we will figure out how to get through this together.
2. **Following CDC and National Academies guidelines:** I am over 65 years old. I do not want to retire, nor can I afford to. I love what I do and my family still needs my salary. The CDC has stated that folks over 65 are at higher risk. My administrator, who is working with the best guidance he can obtain, is forced to look at the ADA to see if the school can provide accommodations based on my age. I am certain that I am not the only one in my position. I do not question that the administration at my school is working overtime to make certain that we are all as safe and as cared for as can be. That being said, without the guidance of the DOE, DOH and BOE; those of us who are 65 and beyond are faced with a life-changing decision. I have thought long and hard about what I would do to save the lives of the students with whom I work. This is not one of those times where taking a proverbial bullet makes any sense for anyone.  
In addition, National Academies are calling for returning staff to wear surgical masks (at a minimum) and that N-95 masks would be preferred. While I know schools are being required to provide protective equipment, I have not heard of the quality being specified. An additional concern, is, of course, availability and from whom we are taking the equipment.

3. **Providing administrators with guidance about virtual participation:** If there is anything we have learned in this pandemic, it is that we do not have to be in the room where it happens to be part of the conversation. Yet, it is the norm - that teachers will be on campus, physically distancing, meeting in smaller groups - when we are expected to report back. Please advise administrators that it is preferable, whenever possible, to have folks continue to work remotely. This is a simple and effective way to mitigate risk.
4. **Delaying the beginning of school:** Throughout this testimony, I have shared reasons and concerns that make the beginning of school on August 4<sup>th</sup> a decision that leaves too many variables unaddressed and too many questions unanswered. In addition, HSTA has made clear the several unanswered questions that they have been attempting to get answered. Please give serious consideration to delaying the start of school. One continual refrain I hear is that folks are concerned about the health and emotional well-being of students. Let's be clear that most of the ways we have effectively cared for students are not available to use with any safety. This will be compounded if teachers and staff are concerned about protections and safety and looking for guidance; especially when cases are identified among students and staff. Please, please, think this all the way through. Figure out what we can figure out. There will be plenty to deal with along the way. Do not start from a place of confusion. We expect some uncertainty. We also expect answers to some very basic and necessary questions.

Thank you again for your work and for your consideration.

Deke Law

Special Education teacher

Kamaile Academy

Wai'anāe



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Debbie Tasaka <djtasaka808@yahoo.com> on behalf of Debbie Tasaka  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:53 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Concerns: reopening schools

On camera, the words “we” and “we as educators” have been used repeatedly by the Superintendent. In reality, the only “WE” are the front line teachers AT the schools everyday for the children.

Nurses are at the frontline in hospitals and other facilities caring for patients. As a nurse manager, it is my responsibility to make certain THEY have all the support, training and equipment/supplies they needed to provide highest quality & safe care. The TEACHERS & students DESERVE this, too!

It was also recently reported by the Superintendent that Gov. Ige appropriated funds to, 1) hire 15 more nurses to support the health aspect & train school Health -Aides and 2) hire & train IT persons to support teachers, parents & students in virtual education, etc.

Schools are currently expected to reopen 8/4. Will these staff be hired, trained and be ready on 8/4, too? What’s the role of each school, principal, teacher, health aide when there’s a child showing cold symptoms? What kind of training & education do the health aides have ... we are not talking about a scrapes & bruises.

My mother was a public school teacher for more than 30 years and now 2 of my daughters & a son-in-law are public school teachers for 5-15 years. They have a lot of concerns/questions and I’m proud to say they are all very dedicated to their profession!

Please show & give ALL public school teachers the respect, care and support they truly deserve as “front line” educators by delaying reopening to, 1) allow & solidify training of teachers, nurses, IT, 2) time to prepare a safe learning environment and 3) ensure safety procedures / processes and support systems are set up, in place and understood by all.

Once schools reopen, ALL members of the DOE AND BOE should get out from your offices to visit all school campuses ... talk to teachers, see how everything is working, improvements needed & hear concerns. Please WALK THE TALK ... it’s one thing to talk about the “what” in front of a news camera or from an office but it’s the “how” that’s important.

These are unprecedented times with much to learn about this virus. You all know that health and safety are of highest priority! Meeting 180 school days and concerns about losing \$6,000 - \$13,000 per student is the least of concerns.

Thank you, Debbie

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Dena Kon <konboys@yahoo.com> on behalf of Dena Kon  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:54 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Dena Kawazoe-Kon, and I am currently a Special Education teacher at Kalihi Elementary School. I have been a Special Education teacher for 22 years. I'm providing a testimony on behalf of [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees](#). It is my understanding that the differential that was promised to us is now in jeopardy. Not only is our differential now compromised, but the Governor also has considered reducing our salary by 20%. Further, in addition to these reductions, we are asked to work on the front line which may affect the well-being of myself, my family, and my students. Once again, we are asked to sacrifice, yet our responsibilities continue to increase. Too often, we are under-appreciated, but risk so much. I humbly ask the Board to consider keeping your promise for the work we contribute to our state and the communities that we service.

Dena Kawazoe-Kon

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Richard Young <richard\_young@live.com> on behalf of Richard Young  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:56 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony - Solutions - we need to take the time to work together

Aloha Honorable Board of Education Chairperson Catherine Payne, Vice Chairperson Kenneth Uemura, Board Members - especially Maui Board Member Kili Namau`u and Dr. Cristina Kishimoto.

My name is Richard Young and I am currently a Vice Principal at `Iao School from Baldwin Complex Area on Maui Island. I have worked for the Department of Education for 32 years in many capacities at both schools and district levels on both Oahu and Maui. I would like to address my testimony to Agenda item VI action Item H to be heard at the BOE Meeting on July 23, 2020.

There are many resources currently being provided by many organizations on how schools should reopen. Everyone, I think, agrees schools need to reopen. Where I believe most employees are getting frustrated is in the transitions as well as the training being afforded to everyone. Great people from many schools have sat down and developed plans this past summer as kids and teachers have been on summer break. It really has not been a totally inclusive process focused on equity and voice because much of the effected groups (students, teachers, SCC, parents) have not been accessible to work with and contribute to the plan.

In order to plan where there is "buy in" people have to be included in the process. My proposal below represents a win-win-win for the state, our families and our school staff.

Teachers and staff return on Wednesday July 29th to create a plan which utilizes the current options outlined by the department. We allow 3 weeks for school staffs to adequately plan and prepare individualized learning plans for their Grade Level teams, Distance Learning teams, Special Education, 504 and English Language Learner Teams. During these first 3 weeks there are no general population students attending at this time. Those who will attend are the student leaders from each grade level from the school to act as a consultancy group alongside the teachers, SCC, PCNC, and administration to plan, prepare and train.

Following the 3 weeks of planning and preparation. The schools now move into 2 weeks of 1/2 days to transfer the plans for general population of students and to practice expectations and learn procedures. Students first day would be August 19th. Full days would begin on August 31st.

This proposal should give enough time to plan as well as, provide training for staff and students for a safer transition.

I have found in my past assignments people work best when they communicate well with one another and trust the intentions of all. It is time for the Hawaii Board of Education, The Hawaii State Department of Education, The Hawaii State Department of Health, HGEA, UPW and HSTA to work together for our true employers.... our students and families of Hawaii. Let's work together for everyone's success!

Mahalo

On an additional note - our PPE supplies order with our district, have not arrived at this date and time. We will need those to open successfully.....

Respectfully Submitted

Richard Young



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Vickie Murata <[vickiemurata@yahoo.com](mailto:vickiemurata@yahoo.com)> on behalf of Vickie Murata  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:59 PM  
**To:** [Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov](mailto:Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov)  
**Subject:** Concerns

To Whom It May Concern,

This is in regards of delaying the opening of public schools of which I absolutely agree in postponing. There are far too many issues to deal with prior to allowing a population of 2,000 students and over 100 employees just on one campus let alone the many other school sites and their population of students and employees! Please be mindful of our lives which you are putting at risk with the lack of solutions.

This is a new virus and has many of our doctors baffled and uncertain in how to ease fears that many are not assured of treatments but can only recommend staying home is the safest. Can you imagine the amount of patients the doctors will have to deal with from highly populated schools that opened and that were not equipped to screen, distance, mask? Too many variables to work on so soon.

I think training teachers before having the schools open will provide the ease and insecurities of working with technology. I would like schools open for teachers only to work in their classroom online and keep the students at home. Lot less pressure for all concerned parties. Again, please be mindful of putting our lives at risk.

Thank you,  
Vickie Murata  
Maui High

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kimberly Deas <kdeas@solomonelementary.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kimberly Deas  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:01 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Good afternoon I am submitting testimony on Action Item **H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.**

We have the opportunity and duty to open schools safely for our students, staff, families and the community. As the school community has certainly done it's part to help keep our state safe by following the stay at home mandate, social distancing\* and wearing masks\*.

Now upon return to school, we should not have to suddenly forgo those same safety practices \* that continue to be required throughout State . We need more time to reopen successfully with policies designed and thoughtfully communicated to staff, students and families.

For the past weeks there has been limited and conflicting information regarding school opening . Questions have not been answered by DOH, DOE or at school level There are so many unclear, non existent health and safety policies, conflicting information regarding PPE esp special needs and preschool classes, unrealistic expectations of bubbles in classroom esp with service providers, specials teachers and subs floating between grades, classes and schools.

Kiddos, families and staff will return back if priority is given to developing a safer learning environment with time to learn new policies, prepare physical space, materials and collaborate on distance learning and contingency plans .

-- Respectfully

**Kimberly Deas**

**Solomon Elementary School**

**Pre-K Sped**

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Megan Oberg <meginamary@gmail.com> on behalf of Megan Oberg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:04 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** testimony differential

Aloha,

This school year I made the decision to return to Special Education because of the financial compensation. I originally left special education 7 years ago because of the additional time I had to put in for IEPs, along with the instability associated with the job throughout a school year. My job line would change based on numbers and student needs. If the numbers dropped in one grade level, I would then be assigned multiple grade levels and had to suddenly adapt to my new responsibilities. A general education position is much more predictable and rarely has such significant shifts within a school year. When I switched to general education, I was still able to work with all students, but without the additional stress and uncertainties that are associated with a SPED position.

I would NOT have left my teaching line as a general education teacher without the additional compensation. Next year, I already plan on returning to general education because, again, there is uncertainty associated with SPED.

Thank you,  
Megan Oberg

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Amanda Dewey <ScottAmandaD@hotmail.com> on behalf of Amanda Dewey  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:08 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

I have been an educator for 13 years and love my position, school, and students.

I am testifying on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

Thank you for making the decision to keep our students and educators safer by agreeing to the 6ft distance between people. However, there are still many unanswered questions that need answering in order to open schools in good conscience. Some of these questions include some very large considerations, such as: What is the exact protocol when a student or educator gets diagnosed with COVID-19? In the possible situation where there is community spread, will schools close? Are there going to be additional funds to hire more custodians so schools can follow the cleaning protocols? Are we going to have the necessary non-instructional employees so that students can be safe when outside the classroom? With so many teachers considering leave options and with a sub shortage, how are we going to make sure students have the educators they need? How are teachers going to be training in 4 days to teach in person, online, and possibly at a distance? How are “bubbles” a good idea if students are going outside their bubbles evenings and weekends?

As a state, we need to be in a much better position with testing, tracing, and quarantine to be confident that we’re not putting our children and communities in danger by re-opening in person.

We are essential personnel, but are not prepared like other essential personnel to handle our job responsibilities. We need guidance on PPE, safety decisions like mask wearing, etc. As educators, we have not been considered as decisions have been made. We do not have a “bubble” and will be in contact with many different groups of students daily and weekly. All of this, while differentials and furloughs are being considered as well?

As a parent of two young children I want nothing more than for my kids to have an in person education, but have accepted that their safety is more important and refuse to put my family in danger until I feel that it is safe for them to return to campus. This situation puts me in a very difficult position because now I am struggling to figure out how I keep my job, keep my family safe, and keep my children educated. It has caused me much anxiety to try and figure out how to do all three. First quarter has me especially concerned for two reasons: first, I'd like to, as a parent, make sure that campus is going to be a safe place for my children and that case numbers stay low, before I put them in a possibly dangerous situation. Second, if travel opens up September 1st and there is a spike in numbers, I do not want myself or my children to be in a situation where we’ve committed to be at school.

COVID-19 is no joke, it is a virulent and easily communicable pathogen. Today alone, there has been 63,000 cases and 1,707 deaths. Are we going to be able to sleep at night if just one educator or student is diagnosed with, suffers from, or even dies from COVID-19 caught while at school? We need to be able to have forward thinking and prepare in a manner that avoids this situation all together.

I propose that we phase in on campus learning this year so that we can make sure it's safe for our keiki, educators, and communities.

Thank you for your consideration and time,

Amanda



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Nicole Costales <ncostales611@gmail.com> on behalf of Nicole Costales  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:11 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Teacher testimony

To whom it may concern,

I am testifying on Action Item **H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees**. My name is Nicole Ames and I am a 7th grade English teacher at Kalakaua Middle School in Kalihi. I am deeply concerned about the plan that the BOE has put forth in regards to the reopening of schools in August, especially Superintendent Kishimoto's statement yesterday insisting that things will be "safe" due to the creation of "ohana bubbles" and the providing of PPE. After watching the meeting between Superintendent Kishimoto and senators, I feel the BOE is propagating misinformation and half-truths to the public in order to make it seem as though the plan to return to school is safer than it actually is. Below are corrections to the half-truths given by the superintendent and represent the concerns of many teachers:

**1) Superintendent Kishimoto and Dr Park claim that the idea of Ohana bubbles will limit student exposure to only the students in their class and allow for easier contact tracing.**

As a middle school teacher, I personally can testify that the idea of a "bubble" does not exist in middle school according to our current school plan. According to our school's plan (which is similar to many of the middle schools on island) students will report to school in a rotation of 4 groups once a week in-person (to allow for 6ft distancing in classrooms), and the rest of the days will be distance learning. On the day that each group is on campus, students will stay in their assigned classroom and teachers will rotate between the classrooms each period to teach their specific subject (7 classrooms to be exact). Teachers are exposed to all ~150 of their students, plus by proxy, whoever those students have been in contact with in their households (sometimes 15-person households). In addition, they are also exposed to the other 6 teachers that rotate within those classrooms and any other students THOSE teachers have contact with. This idea of a bubble stresses the importance of keeping your bubble small and to people you trust. Kalihi has one of the highest instances of COVID and many large households. Our classrooms are thus not a bubble. They're a hoard. This not only puts students and teachers at risk, but the community at large as the students bring whatever germs they are exposed to in school home to their (often times extended) households. The DOE has failed to address how they will react if a positive case is identified.

**2) Dr Kishimoto kept insisting in the meeting yesterday that teachers had been receiving training in a distance learning platform since March and that parents have the option to tell their schools that they require 100% distance learning.**

The distance learning platform that she is referring to is a self-guided e-learning platform that is not taught by a teacher. Many parents are unaware that they can ask for this and many schools are not prepared to offer a 100% distance learning program, either from lack of training or from confusion as to what options they are supposed to be offering.

As for the training she is talking about, most teachers have no idea what she is talking about.

Personally, my school provided some professional development about different resources we could use to teach remotely, (like google classroom, google meets, and bookwidgets) but I would not call these trainings and they were certainly not organized by the DOE, but by individual teachers at my

school out of necessity. Other teachers I have talked to said their schools gave them a handout of resources they could use and that was it.

**3) Kishimoto claims that teacher numbers have stabilized and that there is not a mass exodus of teachers. This is incorrect, I personally know many teachers that are planning to take leave. They are just waiting on the final word of the plan (many of the plans at individual schools that Kishimoto spoke of have not been officially approved by the BOE) and the webinar from HSTA on Monday that will inform teachers of their leave options.**

As a teacher, I will be the first to say that education is important and essential for our children in the islands. However, the rushed plan to bring students back to school in the middle of a pandemic lacks common sense and forethought. If students and teachers are not made to feel safe in this dire time, there will be severe consequences for the education system of Hawaii. We are already in a teacher shortage, and things look to be about to get worse.

Personally, I know many teachers who are at risk or close to retirement who, despite their passion for teaching, are considering leaving the profession due to the lack of health safety they feel they will have in the coming months. As a pregnant woman myself (the CDC very recently added pregnant women to the high risk category, saying that they are at increased risk for manifestations of severe illness due to COVID-19, such as intensive care unit admission and mechanical ventilation- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecology) I am considering not returning this year due to fears for my health and the risk of contracting/transmitting COVID-19 to my elderly family members that I live with. In addition, I have learned that if I test positive upon admittance to the hospital when I am in labor, I will be separated from my baby upon birth. I cannot risk the health of myself, my family, or that of my newborn.

Other teachers with working spouses that can afford to be a stay-at-home parent might make the choice to do so. In any of these cases, we are facing a potentially severe loss of teachers due to the lack of consideration the BOE is displaying toward the health and safety of its students and staff. This will devastate the teaching workforce for years to come and greatly impact the quality of education that our students receive.

Already, our school has difficulty finding substitutes in a normal school year. However, with the lack of a concrete and safe plan from the BOE, finding one for my maternity leave has become impossible. Who will teach our children when even more teachers leave due to fear for their health?

The BOE and Superintendent Kishimoto refuse to consider opening schools with 100% distance learning, however, with community spread numbers higher than what they were when we closed in March this is the only safe option. Dr Park herself said the only way to ensure safety is to stay home. **Teachers are willing to teach online, but if this were to be the case, we need more time to prepare.** The state had since March to prepare for the start of the new school year and to think about possible options. Yet, here we are two weeks before school is due to start and numbers are going up, school schedules haven't been approved, concrete decisions haven't been made, and all stakeholders (teachers, parents, students) have very little idea of what is going on. Teachers, administrators and parents are not being asked what they want. Newspapers and the news channels make it seem like the plan to open is solid, but that is far from the truth. The BOE needs to start being honest. Their communication has been terrible and it is not improving as Dr Kishimoto claims. Principals and teachers are afraid to voice their concerns or give their names for fear of retribution. We need more time in order to adequately meet the needs of our students.

In order for students and teachers to safely return to school we need 100% distance learning, we need time, and we need leadership that understands the fears and concerns of the community. Without this, the return to school will be a disaster, more harmful to our students and community than helpful.

Sincerely,  
Nicole Ames

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Porscha B <5monstahs@gmail.com> on behalf of Porscha B  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:12 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** delay the opening of schools

My children's school just released plans for reopening and the schedule the kids will be on. There is no option for distance learning. The only options are somewhat of a hybrid schedule or pulling them out of their school and enrolling them in a homeschool program. I didn't keep my kids home since March, safe from this pandemic just for them to go to school and catch it. So more than likely I will be homeschooling my children. Is that best for them as far education, probably not. I am not a teacher. But health and safety of not just my children, but the kids and staff at their school trumps education at this time.

I have talked to family and friends about the options their schools are offering and the plan laid out in case someone in their school tests positive. I don't feel like any of those schools have a clear plan if someone tests positive. For the safety of the students and staff, and peace of mind for parents there should be a plan in place. How are parents supposed to feel comfortable sending their children back to school if teachers aren't? There are too many unanswered questions from parents and teachers to open schools again. I'm not sure if officials are rushing to meet the Aug 4th reopening. But if teachers are telling you they need more time, you should listen.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jackie Chung <jackieluv@gmail.com> on behalf of Jackie Chung  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:14 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Dear BOE,

I'm testifying on Action Item G: Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year.

The public school system has been short-changed and underfunded for decades. It appears that those who make the big decisions in this system want this to continue by suggesting that the extra compensation that teachers received for 1 semester is frivolous and overly generous and something that should be taken away for any emergency that you deem more important. By doing so, you are telling the public that teachers are unimportant and of no consequence. You do not value us and that is apparent as I need to write this letter to beg for pittance.

I ask you to please do the right thing and give teachers their due.

Regards,  
Jackie Chung  
Special education teacher  
Kapalama elementary school



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** S.M. Yamauchi <sm.yamauchi@gmail.com> on behalf of S.M. Yamauchi  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:14 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Good afternoon Hawaii Board of Education,

I am testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

My name is Shirley Yamauchi, gr. 7 teacher at Kapolei Middle and starting the twenty-first year of my career with the HDOE. We **cannot** open school campuses to students on Aug. 4, 2020. What is the big hurry in opening our schools, when tourism is not starting until September? I have not received any COVID training during the past few months of summer, I also checked with other veteran teachers at Kapolei Middle who also confirmed with me that there was no COVID training offered to our BU05 teachers.

My five-year-old son Taizo Cailing is enrolled to begin at Mauka Lani ES on August 4th. I cannot even begin to figure out how to pick him up from school, while I am at Kapolei Middle. We have only one laptop at home, which is a DOE issued laptop from Kapolei Middle, for staffers. Signing Taizo up for 100% distance learning is not an option for us, due to our lack of technology and finances. My stepson, Micah Cailing cannot return to his college campus at Cal Poly Pomona, as they have shut down for the entire fall 2020 semester. Why is it that college campuses understand the deadly threat of COVID, yet Hawaii's DOE is in such a hurry to reopen on August 4th? As I often tell my students, this is not a contest. In the days leading up to March 13, 2020, I gathered up all of the student hand soap donations, left behind by various multi-track students, and had them delivered to our temporary assignment Vice-Principal D. Coronil's office. Kapolei Middle has been a Title I school for only one year out of my twenty-year career. Why is it that a non Title I school not have hand soap in the student bathrooms? Are we suddenly going to have hand soap and other PPEs for students and teachers on August 4th? Or will they all be back-ordered? This is a chance that I do not want to take. I would like definite answers and plans before my son and I report back to our respective schools in the Campbell-Kapolei Complex Area. I am the breadwinner of my family, on a public school teacher salary, and cannot take the chance of becoming ill or dying from COVID.

Please reconsider delaying the August 4th opening date for the HDOE. My son is five years old, if I die, he will be without his mother for the rest of his life. I have had respiratory issues since 1978 on Hawaii island.

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

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<http://www.isecretshop.com/register/1112247>

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Piper Selden <piperselden@gmail.com> on behalf of Piper Selden  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:15 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony for 7/23/20

Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto  
Superintendent  
Department of Education  
State of Hawaii

My name is Piper Selden, and I am an English teacher at Waiakea HS on the Big Island of Hawaii. I would like you to reconsider the current plan to return students to school in just a few weeks. I do not believe it is safe, and I believe that doing so would not only be reckless but will endanger the lives of students, faculty, and families in the State of Hawaii.

The measures announced by Hawaii DOE do **not** meet CDC recommendations, and do not adequately consider the risks to our community or the consequences that are likely to result if the state proceeds with the current plan. It is unacceptable.

While it is encouraging the state and HSTA reached an agreement to maintain six-foot distance between students in the classroom, this is far from adequate to even minimally protect the health and safety of our community. **Among the most serious inadequacies in the current reopening plan are:**

1. No mandatory mask requirement. This contradicts the latest CDC recommendations, particularly a call from CDC Director Robert Redfield for "universal masking". Especially in closed or poorly ventilated spaces such as many of our classrooms, it is absolutely essential to have a mandatory mask requirement for all teachers and students.
2. The current state plan relies on a fictional construct known as "Ohana Bubbles", which especially in the absence of a universal mask mandate, puts a family's health at the mercy of other families. However, no amount of distancing, disinfecting, or use of PPE will be sufficient to keep groups of people in confined, poorly ventilated spaces safe, because behavior of all those individuals outside the classroom cannot be assumed to have been safe.
3. The current DOE plan is to leave masking optional (at teachers' discretion) is unacceptable. Fundamental matters of scientific fact such as masks should not be left to teacher (or even school administrator) discretion. That would allow too many loopholes that will result in poor or no compliance that puts their child's lives at risk. It also puts an undue burden on teachers and/or school administrators to decide and enforce mask rules.
4. It is likely that some teachers, foolishly, do not believe in the importance of masks. They of course have the right to believe untrue things, but as responsible public employees they do not have any right whatsoever to inflict that false belief upon others in their care. As an analogy, some teachers may not believe in vaccines, but we do not allow their opinion to change our vaccination requirements. Policy should be based on science, and on life-or-death matters of public health, certain things – like vaccinations, masks, and social distancing – mandatory, with no exceptions.
5. Taken together, the current state plan is a recipe for a public health disaster, and puts the lives of students, parents, and teachers at great risk. It is completely unacceptable. Under the current state plan there is no possibility that teachers will not feel safe at school and won't be.

Therefore, I am calling on you to announce and implement the following measures:

1. A distance-only online class option for all schools, including a telework options for teachers who have autoimmune diseases and other high-risk conditions and/or must care for immune-compromised immediate family members;
2. Delaying the opening of schools (face-to-face) until at least 4 weeks have passed with no Covid cases in our state;
3. A statewide mandate to require the use of masks at all times when on public school premises. (With reasonable exceptions only in the case of teachers and administrators who are alone in their classrooms and offices.)

At the very MINIMUM, students and teachers should be able to work remotely; 6' social distancing should be mandatory; and masks should be required for anyone on school campuses.

If these minimal requests are met, the lives (and deaths) of students and teachers will be on YOUR hands. Can you live with that?

Piper Selden  
Writer, Teacher, Liver of Life

"We write to taste life twice, in the moment and in retrospect." --Anais Nin

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Starsha Kekahuna <starshaarmstrong@gmail.com> on behalf of Starsha Kekahuna  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:16 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

I encouraged the Boe not to open up schools this coming August. As for me I am a parent of six children which I have four in school, one of them is a sickly child and he tends to catches colds easily. I'm afraid for my child and highly encouraged Boe not to open. I'm open to an online education until covid 19 subsidized.

Thank You.



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Rachel Domingo <rdomingo@waipahuh.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Rachel Domingo  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:16 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Concerns for the School Year

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Rachel Domingo and I am a high school teacher on the West side of 'Oahu. I, along with many of my colleagues, as well as friends who have children in the public school system, do not feel that it is safe to open schools just yet. We do not have contingency plans put into place, and if we do they were poorly advertised.

Teachers are the heart and soul of the education system and we do not know what is expected of us and what to do when we reopen or how we are going to do it. I just received notice that our students will not have access to school computers until October! That is a whole quarter of students not being able to do assignments at home, when I only see them face to face once every two weeks! It is a pacing nightmare and it does our students no good to rush back to something we aren't prepared for. I am usually not one to complain, but I truly feel that we need more time and preparation before we reopen schools to thousands of students.

Please keep in mind that in Hawaii, many of us live in multi-generational households; I am 29 years old, but I also live with my parents who are in their 60s and my grandma who is in her 90s. I also have to take their well-being into consideration as I plan to return to school. Please reconsider the start date to this school year. Teachers want to be back in the classroom, I want the economy to open up and start running again, but I need to know that it is being done safely and methodically.

Thank you for your time,

Rachel Domingo

--

Rachel Domingo  
Waipahu High School  
ext. 89425

"Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it." ~ Maya Angelou

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Will Gostage <will.gostage@gmail.com> on behalf of Will Gostage  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:17 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I am testifying on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

Aloha Chair Catherine Payne and Members of the Board,

I'm writing to support a Phased Return to school. As a parent, I do not feel that we are ready to return to school in person and maintain everyone's safety. My children will be participating in 100% distance learning. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Mahalo,  
Will Gostage

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** MARK ANGLIN <markganglin@aol.com> on behalf of MARK ANGLIN  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:23 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

- Name: Mark Anglin
- Meeting: General Business Meeting (full Board));
- Agenda item: REOPENING SCHOOLS WITH STUDENTS PHYSICALLY PRESENT DURING PANDEMIC
- Position: Oppose. Comment: We are not convinced that the state and city have established safe standards sufficient to maximize the safety of our teachers and students. Teachers being left to decide if their assigned students will wear masks in the classroom is absurd, given that this issue is emotionally charged, is inconvenient and uncomfortable, and is still a political issue in the eyes of some. Also, if the uptick in cases has forced the state to delay the return of tourism in Hawaii, shouldn't that uptick also concern us about child/teacher safety in our schools. Move to distant learning until we get a better understanding of infection trends because once this gets out of the box, as we know it will be very hard to get it back in.

Most sincerely, Mark Anglin

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Linsi Osland <linsi.osland@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Linsi Osland  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:25 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** SPED differentials

Aloha,

I am a second year elementary special education teacher at Kealakehe Elementary School. I am licensed in both special education and elementary education, and decreasing the pay differential for special education teachers would strongly influence my desire to stay in the field of special education as we move forward with hybrid and distance learning this fall. This spring, general education teachers were expected to provide enrichment activities due to the lack of preparation and educational equity that we faced during these unprecedented times. However, special education teachers were required to log all contact attempts with families, meet virtually with students, collect data related to annual goals, revise/write annual IEPs, update quarterly progress reports, and provide evidence of instructional attempts and opportunities provided for students. If special education pay differentials will be eliminated or cut entirely, I will have to consider other options that may include leaving my role as a special education teacher to teach general education or relocating to the mainland due to financial limitations.

The need for special education teachers, and teachers in general, is already so high. Decreasing the sped pay differential will only continue to increase the need in this field, which simultaneously harms our keiki who deserve a quality education.

--

Linsi Osland  
3rd Grade Special Education Teacher  
Kealakehe Elementary School

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## Testimony BOE

**From:** Kelly E Duell, MA, NBCT <mauitechgirl@gmail.com> on behalf of Kelly E Duell, MA, NBCT  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:26 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Re: Testimony

I need to add that today my school's admin asked NCTs to supervise lunch 2 days a week and clean up trash. They said they do not have enough employees to supervise lunch. If there are not enough adults to supervise then we are not ready to open.

This is the same admin who stated that I cannot teach due to limiting contact but now it's ok for me to supervise a class? That doesn't make sense!

We obviously do not have the means to open safely!

On Tue, Jul 21, 2020 at 10:17 PM Kelly E Duell, MA, NBCT <[mauitechgirl@gmail.com](mailto:mauitechgirl@gmail.com)> wrote:

I am testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

"The health and safety of our keiki and the staff of our public schools must be paramount in any decision-making. We must take every precaution before students are brought back on campus. This is a process we cannot afford to rush," Rosenlee said.

I teach at Kealakehe Elementary School, which is the largest elementary school in the State of Hawaii, with close to 1000 students preK-5th grade. We are double the number of students that the school was designed to handle and have little space in normal circumstances.

Ya'll want us to go back to school and risk our lives for the sake of the economy-that is the most absurd thing you have said yet! We are NOT essential workers! We NEVER signed up for putting our life and that of our families, on the line to teach children. This is NOT an expectation. We are NOT like a doctor or a nurse who knows when they enter that career, it could be life-threatening. THEN you want to cut our pay, take away our hard to fill position pay, and furlough us. By the time you do all that we will be living below the poverty line, or and don't worry about that you may catch covid and die! We are already underpaid and overworked, and now you want us to die for the DOE?! Why don't you teach fulltime in a classroom for this year? What? You don't want to put yourself in harms way? What? You don't want to risk your health or that of your family? Hhhmmm, but it is OK for you to force teachers to do what you refuse to do yourself! A good leader, leads by example and will never make anyone do something they are not doing themselves. I do not see this in any of the DOE people or the BOE.



Take a look around the world-how many countries had to re-shut down and close schools, and why was this? Because they could not open correctly and safely. The countries that did reopen successfully, there is a reason and Hawaii is NOT following their example! Look at so many districts on the mainland, they are 100% virtual for Fall semester to ensure the safety of all educators and students, why do you think they are taking this stance? Maybe because they care about their people. Hawaii is doing its own thing, the blind leading the blind. The decisions are idiotic at best!

Do not give me any of that crap about it is unhealthy for the children to be out of school; they are traumatized, they are struggling emotionally-well how do you think they are going to react if they are the one who spread covid to their classmates and teachers, who get very sick or die? How do you think they will "feel" when they see classmates and teachers not coming back to school because they are hospitalized or they died? How do you think they will feel when they have lifetime illness and injuries because some idiot adults, sitting in their big ivory tower decided the economy was more important than their lives? Did ya'll even consider these scenarios?

Please do not tell me teachers are allowed to teach virtually-that is NOT an option for any of us. If you utter the words that teachers can apply for an exception I will scream! I spoke to the Union and they said before Covid it was taking months to process, and now they think it will be around 6 months. So the choice is quit, use all your sick time, take leave without pay, all while waiting for a decision from the DOE, who has the audacity to overrule a letter from a medical doctor. Do you honestly believe the DOE is going to grant any exceptions, especially because there is a huge shortage? I think we all know the answer is no, they will not. DOE only cares about the almighty dollar.

The World does NOT know or understand Covid, there are constant changes in information, things that were a must last week or last month are not needed, i.e. wash all items you bring into your home from stores, now they are saying that is not necessary. We were told we needed to wear a mask when outside or exercising, now they are saying fresh air is necessary and wearing a mask while exercising can be deadly. We were told that even one droplet could be passed to another person, now they are saying you must be exposed for 30 minutes to the infected person. The changes are never-ending and you want us to go back to school!

The DOE has NOT given us any direction and has not answered any of our questions and concerns. Dr. K made boldfaced lies in the last BOE meeting: we were NEVER given any training on any of this; we have NOT been provided with PPE nor cleaning supplies; summer school teachers NEVER said things went well; she stated that 85% of parents want their student back in school, this cannot be true if 35% of parents have elected 100% virtual learning; she said 4th quarter was a success (how is she making this determination when there was zero data collected, no grades given, and teachers did not give any input. I can tell you it was a catastrophe at best and a large percentage of students did not participate at all!); and the list

goes on; whenever she opens her mouth, she is telling a lie! She does NOT care about the teachers or the students, that is obvious considering she has repeatedly broken the MOU and has given no thought to our words. She is ill-prepared due to her lack of experience successfully leading any school district and she has NEVER taught in a classroom EVER! How can you, the BOE, continue to support her and why did you select her in the first place with her proven track record of misconduct, lying, dishonesty, stealing, and cheating?!

Go on Facebook and read all the posts from teachers and parents; there are hundreds/thousands of questions that the DOE has NEVER answered. Teachers are having anxiety and panic attacks about the exposure you are forcing us to undertake.

The "safety" precautions are a joke! Dump the liability on the teachers by allowing them to choose whether kids wear masks or not; besides all the issues that that is going to cause when some teachers do not enforce it and others do. CDC states very clearly that everyone should have masks on, but DOE says it's ok if a teacher doesn't want to have their students wear one-what is that?!

These so-called bubbles-what a joke! They are in this "bubble" while in their classroom, but when they go to recess, lunch, A+, ride the bus, go home, go play with friends, go to sports practice, these bubbles are popped. Only way a bubble works is if the people in the bubble stay in the bubble 24/7! That is common sense, which apparently the DOE does not have any!

Open schools so parents can go back to work is UNACCEPTABLE! We are NOT daycare or babysitters! A matter of fact, most us have more education than all the BOE members, the governor, and DOE management! Parents will NOT be going back to work because they have to be home with their children, who will only be in school 2 days a week. Parents are NOT going back to work because the majority of them work in tourism, no tourists, no jobs-that is fairly straightforward and I have a hard time understanding that you folks cannot figure that out!

My school principal told me Monday that she is cutting my Physical Education classes because they are not priority or essential. 1st: Physical Education is required in the State of Hawaii; 2nd our students need formal instruction taught by a licensed, highly qualified teacher to help them be prepared for a healthy life; 3rd: these children NEED to exercise for many many many reasons, and it does not make sense to eliminate these classes; 4th: if anyone thinks these students will receive instruction virtually with parents helping them, they need to have their heads examined because that will not happen, period. Our students do not have the equipment or space at home to receive instruction and practice proper skills. I could go on and on and on, but I am sure I am beating my head against the wall!

I was in a meeting where the VP stated that they were given very little money to make accommodations for covid. Where is the covid money that was to be used to help make schools safer? Did our stupid so-called fake leader divert the money as she has on so many other

issues? Why is it that schools cannot afford to make the necessary accommodations due to lack of funding?! This is a slap in the face to all educators! Keep in mind she diverted ESSA funds that were meant to go to Physical Education, Art, Music to ELL-WTF is that?!

I have pages and pages and pages of more thoughts, feelings, and concerns, and would be happy to send you every last word, just let me know.

I am hoping teachers go on strike or do a sick-out; then let the DOE figure out how to educate the children without the teachers. Stop treating us like the rented mule! OUR LIVES MATTER!

I will not apologize for the tone of this email, as you folks need to know the truth for once, without it being sugar-coated.

Very unhappy educator,

Kelly E. Duell, M.A., NBCT

Please see below for further concerns from the teachers who are part of the HSTA Union.

Given the numerous unanswered questions and teachers scheduled to report to campuses on July 29, the Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) has no confidence that our school buildings and classrooms are ready for students to open in a manner that minimizes the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

“Our schools are woefully underprepared to deliver a distance learning program should a school be shut down by the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) due to the spread of COVID-19,” said HSTA President Corey Rosenlee.

Therefore, HSTA implores the state of Hawaii and the Board of Education to delay the opening of school buildings to students. The HDOE and DOH need more time to properly create and implement health strategies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and schools need more time to prepare educators for an online environment.

The coronavirus has created an ever-changing situation within our communities, and significant stress and fear for our students, parents and guardians, as well as all school staff. While the HSTA believes in the importance of ensuring students are provided instructional services in school year 2020–21, it should not be at the cost of a safe educational environment.

## **Department promises not kept**

Nearly one month ago, HSTA reached an agreement on a memorandum of understanding (MOU) about schools reopening. Yet the HDOE has still not fulfilled their side of the agreement.

We have repeatedly asked for important details, such as written guidance from the state Department of Health (DOH) on the reopening of school buildings. The state even agreed in contract language that such guidance would be provided before schools reopen, yet it has not been provided. [Testimony before lawmakers](#) and [news conferences](#) do not equate to comprehensive written and endorsed guidance from the DOH. Health Director Bruce Anderson told lawmakers last Thursday Gov. David Ige asked him “just today” to convene a panel of experts to determine the trigger points for opening and closing schools. It’s unclear whether that has happened with just over a week before educators are supposed to report back to their schools.

Secondly, the superintendent claims that teachers have received training throughout the summer. That statement is misleading. A small fraction of teachers participated in voluntary professional development regarding virtual learning over the summer. Yet many teachers have told us they were unable to participate or not even aware that training took place.

The HIDOE also claims students will have access to a 100-percent distance learning option. To date, nothing has been published by the HIDOE on how this option would be accessed or utilized by families. Some initial reports from school principals redirected families to E-School as the official platform 6-12 grade students could use. This guidance is simply not true. E-School is only a supplementary program and not designed or approved to replace the curriculum provided at a student’s home school. The department has provided no guidance for K-5 students’ access to 100-percent distance learning options.

“We are two weeks away from school buildings reopening to students, yet critical questions remain unanswered. Educators are still confused and unclear on the necessary measures and steps needed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread in our schools,” Rosenlee said.

While the HSTA has continued to work in good faith with the state, HIDOE, and public charter schools throughout the summer, we continue to ask the following questions:

- When will the State of Hawaii’s Department of Health provide written guidance on the reopening of school buildings, which the HIDOE agreed to in our MOU?
- What options are available to families seeking 100-percent distance learning options for their children? And will classroom teachers have to provide that 100-percent distance learning instruction in addition to the model they’re currently expected to teach?
- What are the clear protocols for requesting and receiving approvals for an exception to wearing face coverings at schools? HSTA believes everyone must be required to wear face coverings at schools, especially within six feet of each other.
- What happens to the students and adults on a school campus if a student, teacher, other school employee, and or one of their household members test positive for COVID-19?

- What standard practices and additional personal protective equipment (PPE) methods should be followed by employees who need to get within six feet of others, especially students who are medically fragile and/or very young?
- How will schools determine that newly enrolled students, especially those from military households, followed 14 days of proper self-isolation upon arrival in Hawaii?
- When a school needs to shut down due to a COVID-19 infection, how will schools move to a 100-percent distance learning environment, and when will teachers be trained?

Teachers will be most at risk when schools reopen. They will be in close contact with dozens, and potentially hundreds, of children for multiple hours in a given day. Yet they seem to be more of an afterthought in the health director's overall concern for health and safety. In testimony before lawmakers last week, Anderson admitted, "The disease is far more serious for older people. That doesn't necessarily help the teachers, of course, or the faculty who are worried. But for the kids themselves the risk is relatively low for serious disease."

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Audrey Broden <audrey.broden@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Audrey Broden  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:26 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Teacher pay differentials

To Whom it May Concern:

I am emailing to please reconsider taking away the teacher differential for all of Hawaii's hard working and dedicated teachers that this would affect (myself included). I am a teacher for students in a lower FSC classroom and have worked with students in an FSC classroom for 12 years. Prior to the approved differential, I have worked endlessly to ensure that my students have had the best education that I possibly can give them by teaching them appropriate behavior and social skills, adapting all of the curriculum so that it is tailored to their individual needs, and making sure that they have numerous opportunities to participate in grade level opportunities with their general education peers. I was very appreciative that we teachers were recognized and appreciated for what we do on a day to day level. I felt finally understood that we as teachers that are in a specialized education field face a whole different level of work demands and reach other student populations. On a daily basis I am taking data, going to IEP meetings, writing IEPs, progress reports, teach students who are physically and verbally aggressive, support system to parents, developing new plans daily to accommodate all of my students, emails between district and the rest of the team members for the students that I am care coordinator for, and making my own supports so that my students can feel more successful. This is just a snapshot of what my day looks like as a special education teacher. Last school year, I became care coordinator to a few other students that were not part of my classroom as did my fellow special education teachers. The reason being as we did not have enough qualified teachers at our school for the additional case loads. However, we rally together and do the best that we can to support our school and to ensure that all students are supported. The additional pay allowed me to continue paying my student loans and also purchase many of my own materials so I could support my students even better as many have autism and need more specialized materials that can help them get through their daily schedules. This year, Due to Covid-19, there will be no funding for our classrooms. This means I will need to purchase all additional materials out of pocket so that I can support my students. During the stay at home order, my husband was laid off also, and the extra pay helped my family stay afloat during these difficult and stressful times. Please, please, please continue to support the state's special education teachers, Hawaiian immersion teachers, and teachers who teach at Title 1 schools. Also, because of the pay increase to teachers who work in these harder to fill positions, there have been more teachers that will now be teaching in these hard to fill spots in the upcoming school year. Thank you for your consideration during this difficult time.

Sincerely,  
A devoted and concerned special education teacher

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Debra-ann Kiyabu <debra-ann.kiyabu@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Debra-ann Kiyabu  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:35 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** MOU

Good Afternoon,

I am testifying on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between the State of Hawaii Board of Education and the Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 Employees.

My name is Debbie Kiyabu and I am a teacher at Wailuku Elementary School. I am respectfully asking that we push back the start up date for our schools. We were offered a few technology webinars during the summer, which I did attend to help me be prepared for this upcoming school year. I also took a few classes on my own which were offered by Eureka Math, ClassDojo, and DIBELS, as well as others to help me prepare for the school year.

Is this the preparation that Dr. Kishimoto is speaking of? I have not yet met with my Administration and received any information on specific procedures/protocols and plans on health and safety in the opening of school; no time to discuss and plan for changes in delivering curriculum with colleagues; and although I keep hearing that PPE has been ordered for us through the media, I have not received any assurance that we have enough for everyone in our school for the first day let alone the rest of the year. According to the DOE's plan, I will have 2 days of training/meetings for our typical opening of the school year (Blood Borne Pathogens, FERPA, Chapter 19, OSHA, etc) and 2 days to set up my classroom before the children enter school. This is how we typically start every school year. We have not been given extra time for COVID-19 pandemic training/prep. I feel this is not a wise way to start back in school as the COVID-19 numbers rise in our state. My hope is that when teachers start back we will have more planning/training time before the students return, not after they have already started. I want to be prepared and knowledgeable on what I can do, to the best of my ability, to keep my students as well as myself and family safe. I want a protocol to follow so that I know I am doing this safely and correctly, not guessing as I go. I am a 30 year veteran and I want to get back to the classroom with my students, but I want to go back in a smart and safe way.

Mahalo,  
Debbie Kiyabu

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Destiny Jones <urdestinyj@hotmail.com> on behalf of Destiny Jones  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:36 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I would like to testify on Action item:

**H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees**

My name is Destiny Jones.

My child, nieces and nephews attend Leihoku Elementary School. I also have family members who are staff there!

I disagree with the August 4th 2020 reopening of schools! It will not be safe our children, parents, guardians or staff!

My first question is this...

If students need to be up-to-date on immunizations before attending or entering school, WHY ARE WE ALLOWING SCHOOLS TO OPEN WHERE STUDENTS, PARENTS, GUARDIANS, TEACHERS, STAFF, ETC. INTERMINGLE BEFORE A VACCINE FOR THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) THAT CAUSED THIS PANDEMIC IS AVAILABLE?

I CAN NOT WRAP MY HEAD AROUND THIS!

My second question is....

Where is the platform the HIDOE said students could use for a 100 percent distance learning option?

As parents, and I am sure teachers feel the same, we want to keep our family safe while also educating our children in the safest environment we feel possible. I feel parents should have the right to decide on a 100 percent distance learning option during a pandemic, especially where there is no vaccine, yet, for the virus which caused it!

PLEASE FOCUS ON SAFETY AND EDUCATION AS A WHOLE. There none without the other!

The CARES ACT gave Hawaii funding for purposes affected by this scary pandemic. Over 30 local Oahu churches got up to 1 Million dollars in grants/funding. Can the HIDOE acquire funding to accommodate distance learning education training for teachers and staff, provide students with electronic devices for distance learning and health and safety training for all in wake of this pandemic?

Please keep our Hawaii safe!

Destiny Jones

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Lisa Wong <lisatoks@gmail.com> on behalf of Lisa Wong  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:38 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

As an employee of hido, I believe I need training before the 20-21' SY begins.  
It frightens me to think of returning and not knowing what to expect of what my job will entail.  
I hope and pray that the BOE considers wisely the choices to be made.

Sincerely,

Lisa Wong

# Late Testimony

To: The Honorable Catherine Payne, BOE Chair & Members  
From: Beatrice DeRego-Coffield, Kahuku High & Intermediate  
Date: June 4, 2020  
Subject: General Meeting Item IV – Reopening of Schools in SY 2020-21

To Chair Payne and Members of the Board and anyone who is going to show some actual concern here:

I am Bea DeRego-Coffield, Test Coordinator at Kahuku High and Intermediate, and it seems recently, a regular presenter of testimony to the BOE. Again, I ask you to make a decision on how to best return students to learning, without sacrificing ANY percentage of staff, students, or family members. I understand that the economy is crashing around us and that others see us as paid “service workers” to the cause. However, be assured that I am NOT a coward! I served with distinction in the US Army – a position that I was well aware could ask me to provide the ultimate sacrifice for my community. Teaching is a profession that should not require sacrificial lambs as a plea to the gods to have mercy. In order to open schools safely without being the petri dish for the nation, we need to push back the return of students to our classrooms until all the details are worked out.

The 4 considerations that must be addressed before students return remain:

1. **Ensure the safety of everyone in the school community.** This can be done when everyone knows exactly what will be occurring on their campus, what supplies are already provided to each teacher, the process and wait time for replacing the supplies, the actions that will close a classroom (such as no cleaning supplies available on campus), the protocols for students traversing the campus, where the student “holding” room is located, who is going to take the “daily check” to determine if a student is allowed on campus, etc.  
The DOH, who is apparently complicit in the DOE’s heroic antics to “save the economy” MUST provide specific rules (not guidelines open to interpretation) for the inevitable incidents of Covid-19 infection on a campus. For staff, they must be placed immediately on administrative leave and provided free medical care, and possibly the space to quarantine. This includes all bargaining members of every unit, all part time employees, and all regular substitutes of a school. And the ADA must not be allowed to dismiss the valid concerns of personnel by constantly raising the bar for valid accommodations such as teleworking.
2. The academic learning loss is a fictitious goal set up for corporate and economic purposes that assumes all students are ripe and ready in twelve years of college and careers. Those parameters were set up in a different time, and frankly many educators already know they are bogus. Some students learn in 9 years, and others take 23 (if we let them stay). Distance learning is currently not as effective as classroom learning, in some regards, because we have not been forced to implement these goals. Although there are students who will progress more easily with face to face learning, students who are trained from an early age to use intrinsic motivation may be more successful. Teachers need time to be trained to provide engaging, relevant curriculum

3. Every student – not just family – needs to be provided a device that they are responsible for maintaining, much like a football uniform. Every family needs regular, reliable internet access. This was needed before Covid-19. The pandemic exposed the inequity to the glare of media. Fund the innovative future instead of PPE and sanitation wipes.
4. Students that return are NOT going to maintain social distancing. No one can make them at any age. Surveys asking students if they want to return to class do not add specifics such as: “Do you want to return to a class where you must maintain 6 feet of distance from everyone, wear a mask, and follow all the transit signs posted all over your campus?” It has already been proclaimed by both the DOH and the Superintendent that some students, family members, teachers, and staff will get sick. There seems to be a fantasy that the infected will somehow pull through without death or permanent damage. Please be prepared for the lawsuits from families when their economic circumstances are completely upended due to the illness/death of a critical family member.



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Mrs. Nakakura <mrsnakakura@gmail.com> on behalf of Mrs. Nakakura  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:39 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delay the reopening of school

I am writing in support of my fellow teachers and students across the state. I am a teacher and have made the difficult decision to take LWOP this year due to the uncertainty of the safety of what this year will look like. I teach at a military school and the military can be a bit more risky as they are traveling and not quarantining. I have two children in elementary school and I have chosen the option of distance learning. I would definitely prefer them to be in the classroom learning from their teacher and not from an online program but the uncertainty of how things will run made us choose to keep them home. I worry about them not being up to par with their classmates who are learning from a live teacher, however, we had to choose the health of our family first.

I feel really bad that my principal is under so much stress finding a replacement for me and trying to accommodate all the teachers and families by giving them choices as to what will work best for their families. Principals are trying to figure it out on their own. Pushing the start date back would help schools be more prepared when they do reopen. Teachers go back next week and students go back the week after that. I don't see how everything will be in place by then.

Please consider this to help keep our teachers, students, and families safe and to prepare for a safer reopening of schools.

Sincerely,  
Kim Nakakura

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** linda wang <lehuadog@gmail.com> on behalf of linda wang  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:39 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Please delay return of students to campus

As a veteran teacher of 30 years I enter this school year feeling as if it's my first year of teaching. I have spent 3 UNPAID days trying to set up my classroom. My family members had taken off work to help me move and remove furniture and equipment to create an environment where students will be 6 feet apart. Meanwhile guidelines to how the students will navigate through this school year is unclear. Therefore my energy to plan for them is void. Please delay the return of students until there are specific written guidelines for what is safe and fair to all the parties involved to the reopening of school.

Thank you,  
Linda Wang  
Kindergarten teacher

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jordene Afoa <jordenea@yahoo.com> on behalf of Jordene Afoa  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:40 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** "Testimony"

Jordene Saragosa-Afoa / School Bus Driver

Stand with you teachers because this school bus drivah kinda NOT ready, until we have at least 1-2 weeks NO NEW CASES of COVID-19!!

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kristy Colbert <kristy21c@yahoo.com> on behalf of Kristy Colbert  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:40 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Hello,

I am testifying on Action Item **H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.**

I am a teacher at Hickam Elementary and a parent of three school age children. I am very concerned with going back to school with a lack of clarification of procedures. I would like to know what the protocol is for students or faculty that test positive for COVID. How will we be notified, will we go to virtual, will it be just a class or the whole school?

Also, how are we supposed to protect our students and ourselves with a lack of PPE. There are teachers spending hundreds of dollars on PPE and sneeze guards to better protect our students and themselves. When will we get PPE from the DOE, when will we get it?

Lastly, lunch inside a crowded cafeteria bursts all of our cohorts or bubbles. I'm terrified of having my students and children exposed at lunch with no masks to dozens of students at a time. This is not safe nor practical during this unprecedented time.

Please, delay schools. Allow us to get the answers, the ppe and take care of students, faculty and our community.

Thank you,

Kristy Colbert

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Cathy Oyama <cathy.oyama@gmail.com> on behalf of Cathy Oyama  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:41 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony - delay opening of school

Dear Board of Education members,

I urge you to delay the opening of schools. We want to welcome our students back to a SAFE and well-functioning environment. We also want to be ready with a well-prepared, coordinated, and thoughtful blended curriculum. In order to do this, we need time. Without the necessary time, what we are able to provide for our students will be subpar and possibly even unsafe. No one wants that, especially educators like myself who take pride in the jobs we do.

Sincerely,  
Cathy Oyama  
Waialeale Elementary School Counselor

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Lester Kunimitsu <lkunimitsu@gmail.com> on behalf of Lester Kunimitsu  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:45 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I am testifying on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

My name is Lester Kunimitsu and I am a teacher at H. P. Baldwin High School on Maui. I have been a teacher since 1985 and enjoy this profession. I am excited to return to school, however I found out that we are not being provided with a clear plan on how this school year will begin.

I expected the BOE would devise a strategy to return to a safe environment. I see that the stores and other establishments in my community have put safety measures in place. We don't have face shields, approved cleaning materials, procedures for students and teachers, and strategies in the event that some student or teacher has the Covid19 virus.

I have a wife and young child that depend on me to provide for them. I also have three foster sons who also depend on me. Please reconsider having our students and teachers to return to a school environment that is not ready for them.

If you truly care about our students and teachers as well as their families, put more thought into opening the schools prematurely because of public pressure. You had four months to plan this out and didn't ask the teachers for our help. We saw how little thought you put into the re-opening of the schools and I am disappointed.



## Testimony BOE

**From:** Laurie Takeno <laurieannndunn@gmail.com> on behalf of Laurie Takeno  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:45 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony RE: Action Item G

Aloha,

My name is Laurie Takeno, and I am a teacher trainer as well as a parent of a child in the DOE system. I am writing to testify **STRONG OPPOSITION** to Action Item G: [temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year.](#)

Children in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs are our most vulnerable children in the state--cutting resources that ensure they have equal access to highly qualified teachers will have significant negative impact on them. These teachers are already at a disadvantage because of the extra work and time that is required to provide individualized plans for SPED instruction, overcome extra obstacles of under resourced schools in hard-to-staff geographical areas, and translate all instructional material into another language on top of actual instruction. This is an issue of equity and injustice - these vulnerable populations have historically been overlooked and disregarded in our state. Hard to fill schools have long generational histories of ongoing teacher attrition; students & families experience chaotic and uneven educational conditions due to constant teacher turnover, which research has proven to have negative impact on academic outcomes. Short-term solutions by filling empty teacher slots with non-qualified substitute teachers (e.g, Bachelor's degree requirements are waived for these emergency hires) do not address the root of the problem & exacerbate conditions. No wonder there is a persistent, significant achievement gap in our state.

Action Item G is comparable to putting an able-bodied runner and a handicapped parapalegic on the same starting line together, saying you are giving an equal chance to both participants in the race. We know very well this is not a situation of equity, and that there must be some accommodations provided to the handicapped child to provide a fair fighting chance. We must continue to adequately compensate teachers for the extraordinary work they do in these teacher positions that serve our most vulnerable children and communities. During a time of crisis, cutting off the supports they need is the last thing we should be doing.

I understand the state is under immense pressure to find ways to stay fiscally afloat. Here are some alternative solutions that do not harm our most vulnerable populations:

- Temporary, proportional incremental percent pay cuts for any top wage earners in the DOE. Revisit when reviewing the budget each year. For top wage earners - wage earners tend to go to savings vs revitalizing the economy. We need to support Hawaii's economy by putting wage earnings into circulation.
- Temporary, proportional incremental percent pay cuts for all staff statewide that are making way above ALICE (Asset Limited Income Constrained) wages or above perhaps \$100,000. Revisit when reviewing the budget each year.
- Survey and meaningfully including the voice of all DOE staff to weigh in on creative solutions. Your DOE community is filled with innovative thinkers, brilliant solutionaries, creative strategists, & generous growth mindsets. They will be able to pool together a rich set of alternative ways to weather this storm collectively, in unanticipated but mutually community supported ways.

Thank you for your time in this important matter.

Sincerely,  
Laurie Takeno

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Cheryl B <burgharc@gmail.com> on behalf of Cheryl B  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:47 PM  
**To:** Testimony BOE  
**Subject:** apologies for this late testimony

Aloha BOE,

Short testimony...please delay the school opening. You know all the reasons. Money is not more important than our students.

Cheryl Burghardt

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Alice Lenchanko <mompsychology3@gmail.com> on behalf of Alice Lenchanko  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:50 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Schools

DO NOT OPEN SCHOOLS DURING A "PANDEMIC"!

Opening schools during a "Pandemic " is "Gross Negligence"! The State of Hawaii and Department of Education will be "accountable for LIVES lost to COVID19"! Complete negligence and liability...

Risking the LIVES of Hawaii's Teachers and Families.

Delay opening of schools and continue with online learning/resources. Opening up schools during a "Pandemic" which ultimately may cause death is not acceptable!

Sincerely,  
Alice Lenchanko

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Debra-ann Kiyabu <debra-ann.kiyabu@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Debra-ann Kiyabu  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:51 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

Good Afternoon,

I am testifying on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between the State of Hawaii Board of Education and the Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 Employees.

My name is Debbie Kiyabu and I am a teacher at Wailuku Elementary School. I am respectfully asking that we push back the start up date for our schools. We were offered a few technology webinars during the summer, which I did attend to help me be prepared for this upcoming school year. I also took a few classes on my own which were offered by Eureka Math, ClassDojo, and DIBELS, as well as others to help me prepare for the school year.

Is this the preparation that Dr. Kishimoto is speaking of? I have not yet met with my Administration and received any information on specific procedures/protocols and plans on health and safety in the opening of school; no time to discuss and plan for changes in delivering curriculum with colleagues; and although I keep hearing that PPE has been ordered for us through the media, I have not received any assurance that we have enough for everyone in our school for the first day let alone the rest of the year. According to the DOE's plan, I will have 2 days of training/meetings for our typical opening of the school year (Blood Borne Pathogens, FERPA, Chapter 19, OSHA, etc) and 2 days to set up my classroom before the children enter school. This is how we typically start every school year. We have not been given extra time for COVID-19 pandemic training/prep. I feel this is not a wise way to start back in school as the COVID-19 numbers rise in our state. My hope is that when teachers start back we will have more planning/training time before the students return, not after they have already started. I want to be prepared and knowledgeable on what I can do, to the best of my ability, to keep my students as well as myself and family safe. I want a protocol to follow so that I know I am doing this safely and correctly, not guessing as I go. I am a 30 year veteran and I want to get back to the classroom with my students, but I want to go back in a smart and safe way.

Mahalo,  
Debbie Kiyabu

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Lahela Spencer <lahelaspencer@gmail.com> on behalf of Lahela Spencer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:51 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Board of Education Meeting Testimony

Aloha,

Below is testimony for the Board of Education meeting on Thursday, July 23, 2020 regarding the reopening of schools for the 2020-2021 school year.

I strongly oppose the reopening of all schools here in Hawaii. Especially boarding high schools that host international students. Please reconsider your decision and plan for the health and safety of the staff, students and teachers.

Our teachers need to feel safe to be able to do their job effectively and currently, they do not feel safe.

Mahalo,

Lahela Spencer

(808) 989-3182

[lahelaspencer@gmail.com](mailto:lahelaspencer@gmail.com)



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kaylyn Hara <kahara130@gmail.com> on behalf of Kaylyn Hara  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:52 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

To the Board of Education,

Testimony regarding action item, "H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 Employees."

As a daughter of a teacher, recent graduate, and pre-medicine student, I am very concerned with how the Department of Education is wanting to reopen schools. Many teachers have chosen their profession because of their passion to educate students, spending countless hours to create the best learning environment for them. Education is important, however, in times of a PANDEMIC, encouraging schools to have numerous students on campus doesn't benefit the health of OUR society.

The Department of Education has felt they have safe precautions for schools, however, it conflicts with what the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) had suggested. Having **6 feet** between each other is necessary, in addition to requiring all bodies on campus to **wear a mask**. These were not addressed in what the department had said, which is concerning. SARS-CoV-2 is transmitted through the respiratory system, meaning that when an infected individual releases virus-laden droplets, those droplets can then enter the other's system through the eyes, nose, and mouth. With mask-wearing and social distancing of at least 6 feet, it is the best option to help ensure that there are less chances of spreading the virus. COVID-19 can also be transmitted through touching an infected surface, then touching one's own eyes, nose, or mouth, which wearing a mask can help to ensure that one doesn't touch their nose or mouth. This is beneficial as it serves a protection for everyone. With that said, wearing a mask and having 6 feet distance between people should be **mandatory**. If colleges are enforcing wearing masks properly (covering nose and mouth, why aren't all students of any age required to wear masks properly? This is a virus that affects **everyone** and nobody is not able to become infected with COVID. Also if our state mandates mask-wearing, why should schools say that mask-wearing isn't required? Does that really make any sense? What if a student not wearing a mask was asymptomatic? Think about how many other people were in contact with that student. According to the World Health Organization, there are at least 6-41% of people that are asymptomatic. This means that at the time of testing, they didn't display any symptoms or they just simply didn't have symptoms. Everywhere in our state has markings that designate where 6 feet of distance is, so why should schools have less distance between students? We are all susceptible to this virus, so there should be no exceptions of having less than 6 feet of distance, in fact, having more than 6 feet of distance would be safer.

Think of how schools will be a hot spot for spreading of the virus. **More time spent in close proximity leads to a higher chance the virus will spread**. Students and teachers stay in school for at least 6 hours a day, that is a long time. **Interacting with more people leads to an increased risk of getting exposed or transmitting the virus**. If the Department of Education wants to get as many students on campus, that will be at least 300 bodies on a campus, which is that many more bodies that have the chance of contracting COVID. **Indoor places have an increased risk than outdoors**. Classrooms are indoors and not in an open environment. Think of transmission risk with these simple phrases: **TIME, SPACE, PEOPLE, and PLACE**. Does the DOE's plan think about these transmission risks? I feel that DOE doesn't address these risks.

As a recent high school graduate, I really enjoyed having that distance learning. It allowed me to know that I would be **safe at home** versus having to worry about coming into contact with many other people. I don't

know if those other people were in contact with others, which would make me **stress** more about having to worry about the virus, instead of focusing on my school work. I feel that in-person learning would be a distraction from students' education. Distance learning wasn't challenging because technology is something that my generation knows how to use. All students have used some type of technology, so doing school on a laptop (tablet, phone, etc.) would be no different. Although I wasn't able to see my friends and classmates in-person, it wasn't detrimental to my mental health. **Tackling a pandemic first takes more priority than one's mental health.** There are ways for students to stay connected with each other. Technology allows us to see others faces with just a call or even having a Zoom meeting. Zoom was a great option for teachers to use because it allowed us to still learn a topic, while being able to see our classmates faces. It allowed us to interact with each other, while ensuring that we are safe. Even though I wasn't able to have the senior year that everyone experiences, I was okay with that because I rather keep my community safe from spreading the virus. Even with all the challenges COVID has brought, I was still able to graduate as a Valedictorian with several different honors, in addition to attending a well-known college. That didn't set me back from my goals, but pushed me to make the best out of the opportunities that were given. Selfish actions result in jeopardizing the safety of others, which isn't fair. Safety of our community is more important than having in-person classes.

As a pre-medicine student, I feel that having in-person classes isn't worth the risk. All healthcare workers are risking their lives by taking care of patients with COVID. It is selfish to know that the Department of Education wants to promote the spread of the virus. If numerous students were to require a ventilator, there is only one hospital on this island that specializes in pediatric care. Are there even enough resources to take care of the children? Not having enough resources will result in a high death rate, which is sad to see. Healthcare workers already work hard and long shifts, but with rising numbers of cases, they will have to work even longer shifts. Would you be able to work around the clock taking care of patients? Don't be selfish and just think about wanting to educate students in-person when we are in a world that has numerous ways to get educated through technology. Also hospitals don't accept volunteers at this time, which adds to the amount of work the healthcare workers have to do. As a volunteer, I found that we really helped the hospitals. For the department I worked with, I had made sure everything the nurses needed were stocked up so that they don't have to take time out of taking care of their patients to find the supplies they need. Now with the virus, they no longer have that extra help as hospitals don't want to take that risk of exposing their volunteers.

Thank you,  
Kaylyn Hara  
Former Kalani Student

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Mortimer, Anthony CIV (USA) <anthony.mortimer1@navy.mil> on behalf of Mortimer, Anthony CIV (USA)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:55 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Going back to school feedback vs Covid-19

I think it's a gamble we are taking sending the kids back to school this early. Current events tell us that the numbers are increasing not decreasing as far as reported cases. You are sending our children in Arms-way by allowing this. Another thing to consider is the percentage of kids who will not be able to tolerate wearing a facemask on a daily basis. Is it realistic to think four, five, and six years are going to maintain a facemask being worn daily? As adults many of us cannot tolerate a facemask all day. Lets not experiment with our kids. Though our economy requires schools to reopen, lets listen to our hearts. We can rebuild our economy, we cannot bring back little lives lost due to impacients. Find alternative ways to rescue the economy.

A mandate to educate by alternative vs tradition measure should be declared for both the public and private school sections.

Mr. Anthony Mortimer

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Elijah Phillips <ephillips@whis.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Elijah Phillips  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:58 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

If we are to open schools on August 4th, every single Teacher within the DOE that may possibly be facing a travel quarantine due to the Governors sudden change from August 1st to September 1st; should be classified as an essential worker and be allowed to be exempt from this so we teachers can be there for our students. If UH Manoa students coming in from the mainland can be exempt from quarantine to strictly attend class, our teachers should have the very same option.

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Catherine Ritti <catherine.ritti@gmail.com> on behalf of Catherine Ritti  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:58 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Schools re-opening

Dear Board of Education Members,

I've been a teacher in the DOE for seven years. I work at Farrington High School. I have grave concerns about the DOE's leadership and decision-making at this time. We keep being told that safety is a priority, yet, teachers are not being given the option to teach remotely, even if they are considered high risk. Many teachers at my school are in the high-risk category for COVID, and I am worried about their safety, and for the safety of my students and their families.

Studies have shown that older children (above 10) respond to and carry the virus similar to adults. This means that with the opening of schools, we will be facing an uptick in cases and more people will die. This is completely unnecessary, especially considering that online teaching is possible with proper support from the DOE.

This is also an issue of racial equity. Filipinos and Pacific Islanders are being hit harder by COVID than other groups in Hawaii. We need to ensure that folks from these communities, that comprise a large portion of our public school students and their families, are protected.

This is not the time to re-commit to the status quo. The DOE has decided that measuring test scores and attendance is of utmost importance at this time. This is evident in how they have decided that the first two weeks of school be spent testing our students instead of responding to their social and emotional needs and helping them readjust. Our priorities need to shift.

Delaying the start of in-person school needs to be an option. Individual teachers need the option to teach remotely during this time.

Other states are maintaining online instruction along with office hours for students to visit campus to get one-on-one support from their teachers.

I would like to see some institutional courage in our DOE and Board of Education leadership. It's possible to keep teaching our students and keep everyone safe at the same time. We just need to be creative and flexible in finding solutions.

Thank you for your time,

Catherine Ritti

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Teddi Bassett <tahoesk8mom@rocketmail.com> on behalf of Teddi Bassett  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:02 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** teddib@hawaii.edu  
**Subject:** Support of delayed opening for schools in Hawaii 2020-2021

Teddi Bassett-DeFord

Please strongly consider delaying schools reopening due to covid19

Teachers staff and students health must be top priority

The classrooms need full ventilation with industrial type fans and open windows

Masks must be MANDATORY

There should be no mask removal during class

Students need minimum amount of time spent together in confined area

Very concerned about safety and risks to teachers and my son

Teachers need full PPE

My son has congenital heart condition and I am high risk due to age. He is a senior at Waianae High School. He wants to look forward to senior year, of course.

It is a difficult time for students and staff.

Due to rising cases on Oahu and specifically the Waianae region it is not a time to set date of August 4 2020 to open school.

Too many cases arising on Oahu

Testing issues

Schools need constant disinfection

PPE for teachers

Low community spread

Lack of time and preparation and funding Etc

I do not want to see Hawaii as one of the first states to open schools as an "experiment" for the rest of the country.

We know children need school and interaction, but only when it is safe to do so. We are a small island with limited resources. I do not believe the community and hospitals will be able to handle the large amount of covid19 cases that will arise once students are on campus together. I do not believe teachers are safe to return at this time. There should be very small number of cases and community spread to open safely.

The date to open should be delayed due to community spread and teachers need more time to prepare.  
Safety of students and staff must be the priority.

Safety of family members at risk should be considered. Older children may introduce covid19 to family members at home.

A large amount of students together in the confines of a classroom will increase exposure to covid19. Masks must be mandatory. Classrooms must be fully ventilated and there must be strong enforcement of all safety protocol.

I do not believe Hawaii has scientific data to open school safely on August 4, 2020.

Please do not open school on August 4, 2020

Respectfully submitted.

Teddi Bassett

Sent from my iPad



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Ebony Williams <ebony.williams@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Ebony Williams  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:01 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** BOE meeting 7/24/20

Hello,

DOE schools are not ready to open for the 20-21 SY. I got a video yesterday from the superintendent saying the schools are prepared and having everything ready (PPE) This is not true.

DOE needs to give uniformed procedures for every school and stop leaving it up to admin. Different rules for different schools do not support parents with multiple kids. Some schools have a designated day for their students, some schools have a rotating schedule. How is the parent supposed to keep up with that?

Concerns:

- Why are after school sports starting Aug 19? We are supposed to practice social distancing. Most sports are contact sports.
- Why are resource teachers being considered in the grouping schedules? They should help with covering lunches, keeping parents off campus, and releasing students. Also, as on call subs.
- Admin is saying all available staff will be covering teacher lunches, making copies, and sitting with groups of kids? Isn't that exposing the students to more people? Is office staff qualified to monitor students alone?
- My school is releasing bus riders 30 minutes early to have them sit in a cafe, until the bus comes. I thought the students were supposed to remain in the same bubble.
- How do we do lost and found
- Parents shouldn't be allowed on campus
- Parents dropping off cupcakes/food for birthday celebrations.
- Students are able to get Geographical Exceptions. If an outbreak happens in one community, they can bring it to another community.
- Parents should provide a copy of the plane ticket when registering. To show they quarantined for 14 days.
- Admin said all available staff will help with grab and go lunch. That is exposing staff and students to more people.
- Admin is having grab and go meals in the parking lot, when HGEA website said, staff that work with food should hand it out from the cafe.
- Office staff is exhausted. Since March, we have been asked to do so much. Make/mail packets, everything has to be delivered to the classroom by the office, student supply pick up, yearbook pick up, mail out everything (when parents lie about their address and the mail comes back returned) This is on top of the job we already do. WE NEED HELP
- It's tropical storm season. Our school is used for evacuations. Who is sanitizing after storms?

Suggestions for elementary school

- Start school in September. Have the teachers report to work for the month of August. They can prepare their classrooms and contact parents with changes and procedures.
- No resource for the year. Use those teachers to help with subbing, covering teachers lunches. Kids getting on campus and students release at the end of the day.

- Parents should not be allowed on campus. Parents should drop their kids off at a gate. Resource teachers should take the young ones to class.
- Release: All available staff outside at 1:50pm at a designated spot, with their vest on. Release bus riders, staff makes sure they all walk to designated bus pick up area. 1:55pm release all the walkers, and a+. Staff guides the walkers off campus and a+ students walk to a+. At 2 pm release all the call riders. This will clear campus, and make students not miss the bus.
- Students should only bring the supplies they need for the day. Take it home everyday. If students bring all their supplies on day 1, and school closes down, their school supplies will be locked in the classrooms.
- If schools end up closing, have teachers come to work and teach distance learning from their classroom. They can bring their kids and social distance in their room.
- The superintendent needs to create a team that visits schools at random times to make sure they have PPE and the things she claims the schools have.

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Cindy Veloria <kcandsienna@aol.com> on behalf of Cindy Veloria  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:04 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

<https://hsta.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=31be4c2dbdddb0d80b4b4036a&id=8bca9b8f47&e=89cde4e9a5>

I am writing in regards to schools opening before the state is ready. I am currently employed at Waiakea Elementary where my son also attends. I find it offensive that you all said that schools need to open so that parents can go back to work and that we cannot shelter our kids forever. These statements are NOT in the best interest of our students and children! While I understand that we want everything to go back to normal and we want to have everyone available to go back to work I do not understand why it is being put on schools to be a daycare or babysitting service. Most of us who work in schools also have children and families who we will be putting at risk everyday you send us to school without clear safety protocols and procedures. I cannot comprehend how at the beginning of this pandemic it was decided that we would close schools and shelter in place and when that was decided our numbers were not as high as they are now and yet now we are choosing to open schools??!? Another senseless death due to COVID-19 is not what we need when we could prevent it.

As a parent I have made the decision to keep my child out of school as I cannot see this situation as safe. Thus I will have to arrange for care for my child when I am at work and as a parent I am stepping up and taking responsibility for this, not looking to the schools as an answer!! As an educator I am disappointed and in our system and how they do not value us. Your decisions are failing ALL of us. How hypocritical to have had almost all state and county positions and probably all of you do telework all this time and in 2 weeks as our numbers continue to grow we will send thousands of our children back to school to congregate in "bubbles"!!

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** CO Okuda <kaaina808@gmail.com> on behalf of CO Okuda  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:05 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

I am a Fourth-Grade teacher at Wailuku Elementary. I am eager to return to a brick-and-mortar classroom though I do have concerns about the safety of my students and myself. Because social distancing is key, I went in a couple of weeks ago, to set up my classroom in order to accommodate for the 3 ft. distance that was in place at the time. My husband took off from work to help me remove the flexible seating and move desks, bookcases, tables, and a heavy cabinet. After 4 1/2 hours of work, a classroom set-up that followed the guidelines was completed. The 3 ft. distance has since been reverted to 6 ft., so I will have to return to make alterations (though I'm not sure if it is possible). Truthfully, I can only do my best to comply with guidelines, but of course, there is no guarantee for safety.

The DOH spoke about bubbles--students and the teacher are in a bubble, so masks are not required in the classroom. I am wearing a mask and a face shield all day, because I am in the vulnerable age group. To me, my facial expressions for student socio-emotional growth is secondary to my health. I hope that students will be required to wear masks as well, as I have gotten ill from students every year even though I take the flu shot annually. I think that the social bubble theory would work only if a bubble did not mingle with other bubbles, which is not the case.

About eating in the classroom--students will probably be talking, and they won't be wearing a mask. I refuse to be in the same room with them at that time. Hopefully, a willing person will be available to supervise the students during this time. I will probably eat in my vehicle.

The number of positive cases on Maui is low, and it would be prudent to eliminate it altogether. At the same time, I understand that we must take action on the health of our economy. Parents need to return to work, and I am willing to do all that I can to help out. We all know what happens when states forged on with rebuilding the economy, and Hawaii is no different. So, while there are tough decisions to make, I hope that the well-being of our teachers and students will not be sacrificial lambs. Instead, I hope that everyone realizes just how important teachers are in every community.

I believe that distance learning can be successful. The outcome from the fourth quarter of 2019-2020 cannot be held as what will happen in the future. Teachers spent their spring break planning and preparing for distance learning. Students were not held accountable, and as a result, attendance was not optimal. Our school voted for Model B, and I think it will work well, unless COVID cases increase.

Please continue to support teachers. Many of us spend our breaks taking courses to get a much needed pay increase. We are Jacks of many trades, and our job does not end when the bell rings.

Colleen Okuda

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Teddi Bassett <tahoesk8mom@rocketmail.com> on behalf of Teddi Bassett  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:08 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Teddi Bassett <tahoesk8mom@rocketmail.com>  
**Date:** July 22, 2020 at 3:01:41 PM HST  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** teddib@hawaii.edu  
**Subject:** Support of delayed opening for schools in Hawaii 2020-2021

Teddi Bassett-DeFord

Please strongly consider delaying schools reopening due to covid19

Teachers staff and students health must be top priority

The classrooms need full ventilation with industrial type fans and open windows

Masks must be MANDATORY

There should be no mask removal during class

Students need minimum amount of time spent together in confined area

Very concerned about safety and risks to teachers and my son

Teachers need full PPE

My son has congenital heart condition and I am high risk due to age. He is a senior at Waianae High School. He wants to look forward to senior year, of course.

It is a difficult time for students and staff.

Due to rising cases on Oahu and specifically the Waianae region it is not a time to set date of August 4 2020 to open school.

Too many cases arising on Oahu

Testing issues

Schools need constant disinfection

PPE for teachers

Low community spread

Lack of time and preparation and funding

Etc

I do not want to see Hawaii as one of the first states to open schools as an “experiment” for the rest of the country.

We know children need school and interaction, but only when it is safe to do so. We are a small island with limited resources. I do not believe the community and hospitals will be able to handle the large amount of covid19 cases that will arise once students are on campus together. I do not believe teachers are safe to return at this time. There should be very small number of cases and community spread to open safely.

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I do not believe Hawaii has scientific data to open school safely on August 4, 2020.

Please do not open school on August 4, 2020

Respectfully submitted.

Teddi Bassett

Sent from my iPad

# Late Testimony

SUSAN PCOLA-DAVIS  
SUBSTITUTE TEACHER  
GRANDMOTHER OF 2

TO: Hawaii Board of Education

FROM: SUSAN A. PCOLA-DAVIS

**TESTIMONY FOR MEETING:** July 23, 2020

Agenda item:

**H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees**

**OPPOSE:** REOPENING OF SCHOOLS BASED ON RECENT SENATE HEARING, HSTA AND LT. GOVERNOR RECOMMENDATIONS OF JULY 21, 2020 AND STAR ADVERTISER EDITORIAL

**CALL FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION IMMEDIATE ACTION:**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION MUST CREATE 2 BACKUP SCHEDULES FOR THE SY 2020-2021 BESIDES OPENING AUGUST 5<sup>TH</sup>.**

**EVIDENCE:**

1. Senate Committee on COVID19
2. HSTA/Lt. Governor Green

1. July 16, 2020

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON COVID 19**

**Senator Favella:**

- August 4<sup>th</sup> is too soon. Push back starting date. Change the SY 2020-2021 Calendar.
- I have one of the 3 largest campuses on the island, Campbell High School. (Others are Farrington and Mililani High Schools)
- "I don't care what you say, I know other things. We are not ready to roll the dice."
- Summer school was successful HOWEVER there were several COVID cases not reported to the public
- Department of Health to convene a panel of experts to determine the trigger points for opening and closing schools. NO REPORTS YET.



2. Tuesday, July 21, 2020

**A. HSTA URGES STATE, BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DELAY RETURN OF STUDENTS TO CAMPUS  
SCHOOLS ARE WOEFULLY UNDERPREPARED TO MINIMIZE RISK OF COVID-19**

**HSTA implores the state of Hawaii and the Board of Education to delay the opening of school buildings to students. The HDOE and DOH need more time to properly create and implement health strategies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and schools need more time to prepare educators for an online environment.**

Health Director Bruce Anderson told lawmakers last Thursday Gov. David Ige asked him “just today” to convene a panel of experts to determine the trigger points for opening and closing schools. **It is unclear whether that has happened with just over a week before educators are supposed to report back to their schools.**

The HDOE also claims students will have access to a 100-percent distance learning option. To date, **nothing has been published by the HDOE on how this option would be accessed or utilized by families.**

**B. LG GREEN RAISES CONCERNS ABOUT STUDENTS RETURNING TO CLASS; TEACHERS NEED A  
COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH PLAN AND DOUBTS EFFECTIVENESS OF 'OHANA BUBBLES'**

**“We owe our teachers a comprehensive healthcare plan,** in writing, before they open themselves up to added risk,” said Lt. Gov. Josh Green, who is an emergency room physician.

We must make sure it’s safe to open schools and some of our teachers would be vulnerable without a comprehensive health plan. I think we should insist on that before we put anyone into harm’s way,” Green added.

**Green also cast doubt on claims by state health and education officials that students will remain in so-called ohana bubbles, minimizing any potential spread of the disease.**

**"Bubbles burst. I’m concerned," Green said. "Young children can’t adhere to social distancing or staying in a bubble and teens will socialize and be difficult to manage."**

Rosenlee, the HSTA president, said, “The health and safety of our keiki and the staff of our public schools must be paramount in any decision-making. We must take every precaution before students are brought back on campus. This is a process we cannot afford to rush.”

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** mc613@bellsouth.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:11 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

[testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov](mailto:testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov)

subject line: Testimony

I am testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

My daughter and my grandchildren work and go to school on the island of Oahu at Hickam Elementary. I am concerned for their safety because the Department of Education has not upheld the agreement with the HSTA in ensuring my family is safe. From my questions and understanding it appears the HI DOE has no plan for what happens on each campus in the event that a student or employee contracts COVID. What is the exact procedure going to be if this happens? This was a big point in the agreement between HSTA and the HI DOE that has not been met. Also, I have been told that teachers are having to come up with their own PPE for the school year as they have not been given sneeze guards, clorox, masks, etc at this point two weeks prior to school starting. I worry for my families safety as a clear outline has not been given, nor PPE. I am also concerned about lunchtime. Hickam is planning to have multiple classes in the lunchroom at one time which "pops" the bubbles or cohorts which the school was saying was going to help protect the students and faculty. I urge you not to send my family into a dangerous situation. Please, take the time to delay and keep them healthy. Their lives could depend on it.

Thank you,

Sent from my iPhone

# Late Testimony

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Linda Sobaje <linda.sobaje@mauihigh.org> on behalf of Linda Sobaje  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:11 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** testimony -delay students return to school on Aug 4.

This is my 10th year teaching for Hawaii DOE. I feel grateful to be employed at this time.

I graduated from the first online cohort for UH Manoa PBDSE over ten years ago. UH Manoa had a tech department that supported the UH teachers and the online students. At Maui High School, where I teach, there is one tech support person, Cory Nomura to serve over 80 teachers, 2000 students, administration, and support staff. Cory is excellent at his job, but he is not a magician.

I also have a degree in Communications. Before becoming a teacher, I worked with Fortune 100 companies creating multi media marketing presentations. I have a good concept of what it takes to create successful content. It takes time & resources, neither of which have been provided to the HI DOE teachers. How are teachers expected to train students when we have not been given tools or training ourselves? This is like having the Chef show up at the same time as the dinner guests!

Most importantly, the need for safety training and learning the protocols for these, should happen first. In order for school to reopen safely, teachers need the time and resources to prepare. I urge you to delay students return to school on Aug 4.

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Thanks!

Linda Sobaje  
Math Teacher  
Maui High School  
[linda.sobaje@mauihigh.org](mailto:linda.sobaje@mauihigh.org)

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Lii Naeole <kaneohelii@gmail.com> on behalf of Lii Naeole  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:11 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** No

I have a granddaughter who will be starting 1st grad and I feel that it is virtually unmanageable to keep young children from social distancing. The effect that COVID has on a young child will affect them their entire life. Rushing this is dangerous and self destructive for children and staff.

Tiffany Naeole

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Amelia Echeverria <amelyperu@yahoo.com> on behalf of Amelia Echeverria  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:11 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** School reopening

Hi,

22 July 2020

Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto  
Superintendent  
Department of Education  
State of Hawaii

Dear Dr. Kishimoto:

My name is Amelia Echeverria and I am a teacher in the state of Hawaii.

I am writing because I am deeply concerned about the State of Hawaii's plan to reopen public schools on 4 August. The current state plan not only does not ensure the safe return of our students to school, but indeed it actively jeopardizes the lives of our students, teachers, parents, and other members of our community. The measures announced by Hawaii DOE do not meet CDC recommendations, and do not adequately consider the risks to our community or the consequences that are likely to result if the state proceeds with the current plan. It is unacceptable.

There is mounting scientific evidence that COVID-19 is mainly transmitted when an infected individual coughs, sneezes, or even simply just breathes or talks. The conditions that facilitate viral transmission are closed, confined, poorly ventilated spaces in which individuals are not wearing masks. (Thus it is not a merely matter of maintaining adequate physical distance.) Many of our classrooms exhibit precisely these qualities that we know, scientifically, to be unsafe. Therefore, it is abundantly clear that the current DOE plan does not sufficiently address the fact that reopening our schools under the current plan will create exactly the conditions that are most conducive to transmitting the virus. It is a recipe for a public health disaster.

While it is encouraging the state and HSTA reached an agreement to maintain six-foot distance between students in the classroom, this is far from adequate to even minimally protect the health and safety of our community. Among the most serious inadequacies in the current reopening plan are:

1. No mandatory mask requirement. This contradicts the latest CDC recommendations, particularly a call from CDC Director Robert Redfield for "universal masking"[\[1\]](#). Especially in closed or poorly ventilated spaces such as many of our classrooms, it is absolutely essential to have a mandatory mask requirement for all teachers and students.
2. The current state plan relies on a fictional construct known as "Ohana Bubbles", which especially in the absence of a universal mask mandate, puts a family's health at the mercy of other families. However, no amount of distancing, disinfecting, or use of PPE will be sufficient to keep groups of people in confined, poorly ventilated spaces safe, because behavior of all those individuals outside the classroom cannot be assumed to have been safe.
3. The current DOE plan is to leave masking optional (at teachers' discretion) is unacceptable. Fundamental matters of scientific fact such as masks should not be left to teacher (or even school administrator) discretion. That would allow too many loopholes that will result in poor or no compliance

that puts their child's lives at risk. It also puts an undue burden on teachers and/or school administrators to decide and enforce mask rules.

4. It is likely that some teachers, foolishly, do not believe in the importance of masks. They of course have the right to believe untrue things, but as responsible public employees they do not have any right whatsoever to inflict that false belief upon others in their care. As an analogy, some teachers may not believe in vaccines, but we do not allow their opinion to change our vaccination requirements. Policy should be based on science, and on life-or-death matters of public health, certain things – like vaccinations, masks, and social distancing – mandatory, with no exceptions.

5. Taken together, the current state plan is a recipe for a public health disaster, and puts the lives of students, parents, and teachers at great risk. It is completely unacceptable. Under the current state plan there is no possibility that I feel comfortable teaching under the proposed classroom rules and conditions.

Therefore, I am calling on you to announce and implement the following measures:

1. A distance-only online class option for all schools;
2. Delaying the opening of schools until at least 4 weeks have passed with no Covid cases in our state;
3. A statewide mandate to require the use of masks at all times when on public school premises. (With reasonable exceptions only in the case of teachers and administrators who are alone in their classrooms and offices.)
4. Allowing no exceptions to the six-foot distancing rule.

I appreciate that the state, like everyone else, is dealing with an extremely challenging, unprecedented, and dire set of circumstances. However, it is absolutely clear that the current state plan to address our shared predicament is fundamentally flawed and is very likely to result in increased cases of Covid in our state, and that some percentage of those individuals will die or suffer permanent injury. It is unacceptable to base state policy on a cost-benefit basis that assumes the sacrifice of a few citizens is the price of returning our children to school.

The health and safety of all our citizens should be your most important priority. Failure to improve the current reopening plan by adding the above additional measures would constitute a severe dereliction of your duty as a public servant to protect the health and safety of the citizens of Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing about improvements and revisions to the state school reopening policy / plans that address the concerns I have expressed.

Best regards,

Amelia Echeverria.  
6158 Makaniolu Place  
HI 96821

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<sup>[1]</sup> <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2768532>

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:12 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Schools Reopening

I would like to remain anonymous please.

Schools are not ready to open just yet. There is a massive backlog of orders because the whole world is scrambling right now. We haven't had enough time to secure enough PPE for our school. We haven't had enough time to buy supplies for our students. We haven't had enough time to implement proper 6ft distancing procedures and pathways to secure the movement of students PER OFFICE, PER BUILDING. We are not ready and would probably require maybe 4-6 more weeks of push back so we can secure our campuses and be properly COVID-19 ready.

Signed,

A concerned school employee that never stopped working because they were deemed essential.

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Lisa Nakamura <lisa.nakamura@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Lisa Nakamura  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:12 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Re: Testimony

One more thing (I know it is after the deadline, but I need to say it)

Thank goodness for the 6ft distancing understanding. This poses another problem. Due to the distancing, we have less students in the classroom. We do not have the personnel to cover the "overflow." Not enough PTTs available. Not able to hire more teachers. We are responsible for 180 days of instruction. We just cannot have anyone in the classroom; teaching and learning needs to take place! What is the plan for increasing staffing at every school? We need to think long term and not just a "band-aid" solution. We are not ready to open on the 4th.

Thank you for your time,  
Lisa Nakamura

On Wed, Jul 22, 2020 at 11:51 AM Lisa Nakamura <[lisa.nakamura@k12.hi.us](mailto:lisa.nakamura@k12.hi.us)> wrote:

My name is Lisa Nakamura and I am a 5th grade teacher at Pauoa Elementary. I am dual certified. I have taught for 23 years. And in all my years of teaching, I have never felt this way. I am testifying on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

I just listened to the Superintendent's message emailed to us on July 21 at 8:20pm and I feel angry and frustrated, and I feel offended. She said that the governor has worked really hard to delay tourism for a month so that we can open our schools; so, teachers, let's work together to open the schools. Did the governor delay tourism only for teachers? He did not. My takeaway from her speech is that if schools don't open, it will be the teachers' fault. We are not babysitters, we are not merely caregivers, we are teachers. We aren't welcoming students back just so that parents can go back to work. So that our economy can get going. We want to teach.

The Superintendent said schools are ready. Schools are safe. Schools have the needed PPE. 15 more nurses to help all schools. Social distancing. This is all great, but I still don't feel safe. Dr. Park has spoken about creating "bubbles" in school. Really? We have no control over what our students do once they leave the classroom and campus. We don't know what students are doing after school. We don't know how safe parents and families are being, or have been during school closure and the summer. How can you say that we will have created a "bubble" that limits the amount of exposure when our students go home every day, are exposed to who knows what, then returns to school in the morning? How is our "bubble" safe? When we say WE are not ready, in this sense, WE are not just the teachers. WE is our society. Look at what is going on in the world, in our country, in our own state. Look at the places where they didn't get a handle on the virus and then opened their schools. "Bubbles" are not virus proof. Social distancing and PPEs will help keep us safe, but this too is not virus proof. Our state is experiencing more positive cases. WE don't have a handle on this virus yet. WE are not ready to open our schools.

We have heard about the online curriculum available to grades 6-12 for families who want full time distance learning. There has been talk about K-5 curriculum being put together. On Monday at the news conference, the Superintendent mentioned that there is online curriculum available for K-5. She didn't give any more details or specifics. I went searching all over the internet for this. Is this true? Where is it? Why haven't we heard about it? We need to provide the option of full distance learning to our Pauoa families. At our school, we are literally scrambling. This wasn't a part of the 3 models that we were supposed to choose from. Where is the department in helping us find the online curriculum that 6-12 has? Why are we scrambling, doing the research by ourselves, searching for solutions, networking amongst ourselves, with no support from the state? Where is the DOE in all of this? How can we be ready in less than 2 weeks? We have been left alone to fend for ourselves and it is so frustrating.

We need to get this right the first time. There is no room for error when lives are at stake. Teachers get it. We want to see our kids. We want to be back. In the end, I know that we are going to do what we have to do for the kids. We are going to find a way to make it work. And that seems to be the "thing" that the state is relying on and assuming from us. Which is so incredibly aggravating and frustrating. We are not ready to open on August 4<sup>th</sup>.

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Keala Keo <kealakeo@gmail.com> on behalf of Keala Keo  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:14 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Keala Keo. I have 4 children attending 2 DOE schools, one campus for elementary and the other for High School and Intermediate. I am writing today to urge you to first, push back the start date for children to attend school due to the constantly changing conditions due to state quarantine. And second to ponder the fact that this will not be a regular school year and as such we cannot expect the regular set standards.

Why should the school year be pushed back? I do not feel like school staff and administrators were given time or supplies to set their classrooms up for social distancing. My questions are- How will the classrooms be cleaned and who will provide it? My children have alcohol and Clorox sensitivity, so most hand sanitizers and disinfectants will make my children break out in hives. Will the state be providing extra funds to schools to clean classrooms more deeply and consistently than previous years? And with what will they be cleaning it with?

When the Superintendent says teachers were trained, what percent of all teachers, counselors, office staff, health aides, PPT, PTT, Special Needs teachers in every school were "trained"? What exactly does trained mean?

If teachers or someone in their home test positive for COVID and they are forced to stay at home, will they be on leave with pay even if they have no sick or vacation days left?

Next, speaking on the fact that this will be a different school year than previously experienced, how can we still continue to expect business as usual? Why will the first 2 weeks of school be testing children on what they know? The last quarter of the year was optional and not graded, not to mention it was last minute. Children absolutely did not get the same information they would have had if they had been in school for the same period of time. Why can't we think out of the box for this school year? Core classes should be what we are asking of children from Elementary to High School this year. Physical Education, Choral Music, Art, Band, etc should not be squeezed into the school day, but taught online/prerecorded with everyone in the school able to access it, especially for high school/intermediate. The school day should allow ample time for frequent hand washings, lunch, the fact that children will no longer be sharing any supplies with other children, a new bell schedule should be made to allow students recess so that classes/grades are staggered and not everyone is out at the same time, but still give children the time they need to stretch and take a break throughout the day. All children, not just those who regularly see counselors need to frequently be reached out to this school year. This has been a stressful, financially difficult, extremely different time than ever before. The emotional well being of the children need to be addressed. Given the fact that the last quarter of last school year didn't happen for most children for various reasons, I don't think it's fair to expect children know x,y,z by first quarter, and so forth to happen this year. We have an opportunity to step back and make sure students emotional needs are being met first, to change things up and think out of the box and engage children differently this year so that teachers and students can feel safe. After these needs are met, I believe academic achievements will come naturally.

Thank you for your time,  
Keala Keo

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Dana Corpuz <dana80222@gmail.com> on behalf of Dana Corpuz  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:14 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** shortage differentials

Aloha,

I'm writing to urge you to reject the proposal to discontinue educator shortage differentials. It's imperative, especially at this time, to maintain qualified teachers in hard-to-staff schools and positions. I am a special education teacher in a school which has had to pick up two new unqualified teachers (no previous teaching or sped teaching experience) to fill in Sped positions for this coming school year. We need to be very careful in servicing our Sped students and families appropriately and diligently or I fear we will soon see increases in due process complaints in the wake of distance learning and changes in COVID education plans. This will only cost the state more money in the long run! Special Education students are already at a disadvantage compounded by the COVID pandemic situation. Therefore, now, more than ever, Special Education needs to hold on to any incentives to recruit and maintain qualified teachers. Please, please, please reject the proposal to discontinue educator shortage differentials.

Mahalo,

Dana Corpuz

Sped Teacher, Campbell-Kapolei Complex

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jason <nosajara@gmail.com> on behalf of Jason  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:14 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

To the Board of Education,

Testimony regarding action item, "H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and condition of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unite 5 Employees."

Thank you for your consideration from a concerned citizen of America, resident of Hawaii, spouse, parent, caretaker of elderly parents.

This is not the common cold or seasonal flu, this is a virus that does not care about race, color, gender, or age. It does not discriminate because of age, socio-economic status, or your health. If you want it you can get it, if you don't want it you can get it. It affects you even after you get it and you won't know about it.

Common sense tells us that we should distance ourselves. Six feet or more, the farther the better. We should distance ourselves when standing, sitting, walking, talking, eating, shopping, waiting in lines, taking the elevator, the escalator, flying in the airplane, or whatever activity we do. In school, we should distance in the classroom, on the walkway, on the playground, on all school grounds.

Nature should not be forgotten, the wind and it's direction could blow the virus wherever it wants. Remember the smoking law, when the wind blows you could smell the smoke of those on coffee breaks who were twenty feet from building entrances. Even as you walk on the sidewalks on your way to your office. In the classroom, open windows, the fan, and air conditioning could circulate the virus and have disastrous results.

Common sense also tells us that masks, face shields, head coverings, protective clothing (like medical/hospital personnel) help prevent the spread of germs. Coughing, sneezing, talking, shouting, yelling, laughing loudly and exaggeratedly spread the virus. A school setting will have some of these and more. An enclosed classroom will be worse. Auwe

If one class has one illness, not just COVID-19, the classroom shuts down. If that class played on the field with another class, that classroom shuts down. If that first class came in contact with anyone else on campus, then they must shutdown. If that student has siblings and contacts them, then they must shutdown, whether they are in the same school or another school. Swell, what have we done, increased the number of possible Covid-19 cases and possible deaths. One death is one too many. Is the current 22 deaths in Hawaii worth all this.

We do not know the whereabouts of the teachers, the students, their parents and siblings, and their families outside of school. Wouldn't that be disastrous to see the effect if just one person got Covid-19?

Who will be responsible? Will the State, the DOE, the BOE, the DOH step up and take full responsibility and pay all expenses?! Is "science" still dictating how the State moves? Sometimes you must succumb to a higher power.

If you had Covid-19, would you distance yourself from loved ones. Would you distance yourselves from those outside your home. Wouldn't you limit your social contacts until you knew it was absolutely safe, despite economics or psychological situations.

Please protect our keikis and makuas, and Hawaii.

Thank you

Jason Hara

Concerned and worried for Hawaii

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** CO Okuda <kaaina808@gmail.com> on behalf of CO Okuda  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:19 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony (edited)

Aloha,

I am a Fourth-Grade teacher at Wailuku Elementary. I am eager to return to a brick-and-mortar classroom though I do have concerns about the safety of my students and myself. Because social distancing is key, I went in a couple of weeks ago to set up my classroom in order to accommodate for the 3 ft. distance that was in place at the time. My husband took off from work to help me remove the flexible seating and move desks, bookcases, tables, and a heavy cabinet. After 4 1/2 hours of work, a classroom set-up that followed the guidelines was completed. The 3 ft. distance has since been reverted to 6 ft., so I will have to return to make alterations (though I'm not sure if it is possible). Truthfully, I can only do my best to comply with guidelines, but of course, there is no guarantee for safety.

The DOH spoke about bubbles--students and the teacher are in a bubble, so masks are not required in the classroom. However, I am wearing a mask and a face shield all day because I am in a vulnerable age group. To me, my facial expressions for student socio-emotional growth is secondary to my health; they will be able to make up for lost time. I hope that students will be required to wear masks as well, as I have gotten ill from students every year even though I take the flu shot annually. I think that the social bubble theory would work only if a bubble did not mingle with other bubbles, which is not the case.

About eating in the classroom--students will probably be talking, and they won't be wearing a mask. I refuse to be in the same room with them at that time. Hopefully, a willing person will be available to supervise students as I will probably eat in my vehicle.

Thankfully, the number of positive cases on Maui is low, and it would be prudent to eliminate cases altogether. At the same time, I understand that we must take action on the health of our economy. Parents need to return to work, and I am willing to do all that I can to help out. But, don't we all know what happens when states forge on with rebuilding the economy? Hawaii is not different. So, while there are tough decisions to make, I hope that our teachers and students will not be sacrificial lambs. Instead, I hope that everyone realizes just how important teachers are in every community.

I believe that distance learning can be successful. The outcome from the fourth quarter of 2019-2020 cannot be held as what will happen in the future. This past spring, teachers spent part of their break planning and preparing for distance learning. Students were not held accountable, and as a result, attendance was not optimal. For this upcoming school year, our school voted for Model B, and I think it will work well unless COVID cases increase.

Please continue to support teachers. Many of us spend our vacation taking courses to get a much needed pay increase. We are Jacks of many trades, and our job does not end when the bell rings.

Mahalo,  
Colleen Okuda

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Christine Espirito <cdespirito@hotmail.com> on behalf of Christine Espirito  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:20 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Not Qualified

I'm very concerned about being exposed to the COVID-19 virus. I feel it's still unsafe for students to return to school especially with the number of affected people in Hawaii still climbing. I feel as a school health aide I am not qualified to know if a student has the virus or not. I will certainly be extremely paranoid of any students with a mild cough and/or runny nose. Does the child get sent home if he/she has at least 2 of the COVID 19 symptoms? I feel inadequate and even unqualified to be potentially exposed to this virus. After all even doctors & registered nurses aren't fully protected even with all the protective gear. In school, I feel we are easy targets to be exposed and feel that the opening of schools should be postponed until there are no cases in this state.

Sent from my iPhone



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Tiffaney Brooke <tifbfit@me.com> on behalf of Tiffaney Brooke  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:22 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov; BOE.Hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov; Chair Person; Vice-Chair; shanty.asher@boe.hawaii.gov; kaimana.barcarse@boe.hawaii.gov; margaret.cox@boe.hawaii.gov; lynn.fallin@boe.hawaii.gov; kili.namauu@boe.hawaii.gov; dwight.takeno@boe.hawaii.gov; bruce.voss@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** School reopening August 4

Aloha,

I'm writing you in regards to my concerns about schools reopening in face-to-face settings August 4th. I am a substitute teacher and mother of 3. I enjoy my work and the flexibility it gives me to be available for my children. I am looking forward to returning to work as soon as it is safe. However, I am not comfortable with the current settings in which we are about to reopen.

First, all three of my children attend three different schools which presents a logistical nightmare for my husband (who is an essential worker) and me. It also complicates the "bubbles" as I see many parents seeking childcare for their children for their off days. Won't that actually expose them to even more people by forcing them to seek additional care for their children? Furthermore, 3 of 5 of our family members are high risk and having three different schools, plus both of the adults working with multiple people expands our "bubbles" beyond a capacity to conduct contact tracing should one of us come up positive for COVID-19.

Second, while I feel fairly comfortable with the policies and protocols put into place by my children's schools the bus policy is of concern to me. If bus drivers cannot refuse service to a child with a child who refuses to wear a mask or is displaying symptoms, how does that protect the rest of the students in the bus and prevent spreading infection?

Third, I am confused as to why we are reopening when cases are higher now than they were when we first closed the schools. I have worked with children for many years and find that it's very difficult for them to maintain healthy personal hygiene. They frequently sneeze, cough, spit, bite their nails, and pick their nose with little to no regard for their environment or germs. I realize the masks will help reduce this behavior, but I also see many challenges ahead in enforcing proper mask wearing ALL DAY. To impose social distancing rules and mask wearing all day seems an insurmountable challenge in which teachers will spend most of their day managing classroom behaviors instead of educating.

Lastly, I have yet to see a comprehensive plan regarding what will happen when someone at the school tests positive. How will that play out? Also, please consider the confusion for students as they transition from in person A/B schedules to distance learning if their school closes due to positive COVID-19 cases or when the community numbers grow, and then back to the A/B rotation.

I would like to make a few suggestions. Instead of age appropriate bubbles, it seems to me ohana bubbles should be just that.... keeping siblings or household members in class groups or schools together and lumping them together based on their community locations to reduce the need for multiple bubbles in one family and allow neighbors to cooperate in mitigating social exposures outside of school. Also, mandated adult-supervision at bus stops so children can be refused service if they're not compliant with wearing a mask and/or exhibiting signs and symptoms. Finally, I would like to encourage distance learning options for all students with the exception of those IEP/504/ High risk students AND those who are not capable of effective distance learning for a number of reasons.

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns. This is a difficult and challenging time for everyone. I look forward to working again and returning my children to school safe and healthy for everyone.

Mahalo nui loa for all your hard work in creating solutions for our teachers, students, and ohanas. We appreciate you! Stay safe and healthy!

Tiffaney Brooke, Bachelors is Science in Exercise & WELLNESS

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Karen Walker <10089242@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Karen Walker  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:24 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Opening schools during pandemic

Honorable Members of the Hawaii Board of Education:

I must be open and honest in my opinion of reopening schools in our state as the numbers of Covid-19 continue to impact the safety and well being of our residents.

I find the decision to reopen as if nothing were impacting our lives completely irresponsible and selfish. It seems as though no actual consideration has been afforded to the safety and well being of the students we love, and those who have dedicated their lives to teaching them. I find it laughable that I am required to submit my testimony electronically because you, the BOE members, do not feel safe having physical contact, yet you are requiring all of us to do the exact thing you yourselves refuse to do.

You are not leaders of the school, nor are you stewards of a safe learning environment for our students, staff or school community. You are quite simply put following Custer to the final battle. This is a no win situation. You have not allowed time for teachers to plan or be trained on any form of non-traditional learning, students are not going to be educated with fidelity, parents/families have been forced to choose between the health and safety of their child staying at home or sending them to an ill prepared school where in class education may become a life treating event.

Thank you for increasing anxiety in all parents, teachers, staff and community members. I certain the incoming tourists will appreciate your efforts to clear the beaches and parks of local students and families who, are mostly happy and healthy individuals. I hope they enjoy the ample opportunity you have provided to spread a disease that has ruined the lives of MILLIONS! Job well done.

If I become infected with Covid-19 at school and unknowingly pass that to my husband, who has "underlying" health issues, I will be sure to send you a thank you card, hospital bill and most likely his obituary notice.

Karen Walker  
Principal Haiku Elementary

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Holly808Books Usborne <holly808books@gmail.com> on behalf of Holly808Books Usborne  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:27 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony- delay the opening of school buildings!

Dear BOE,

I am writing as a concerned parent of two daughters in elementary school on Maui.

I am alarmed that the DOE and Ms. Kishimoto have been telling the public that the schools are ready to open. Parents have not even received the schedule their children will be on and they are to report in less than 2 weeks! There are no safety procedures in place, the DOE has not even come up with a mandatory mask policy. As a parent I can not find N95 masks for my children to offer them the best protection. Teachers, parents and students all want to be back in school and for things to go back to normal, but this is not safe at the moment.

**The current lack of a plan is equivalent to homicidal negligence.** The state is risking the health and life of our students, teachers, school staff, and larger community. The most recent studies show that children may actually spread corona virus more than adults due to their behaviors, and they certainly can catch it. How is the state going to deal with possibly hundreds of students and teachers with long term organ damage? The morbidity of this virus alone could bankrupt our healthcare system.

We need to offer high quality, online education for all of our students. These online classes need to be taught by their local Hawaii teacher. Stop the madness of rotating schedules, loading teachers with online AND face to face learning, and drowning our schools in covid policies and enforcement.

The only real solution is to prepare now for quality, online learning. Please have the DOE and teachers focus on the one thing that is most important- education.

Please delay the opening of schools and instead mandate that all schools invest in online learning.

You have the power to be a leader in this country and to help protect our community and children. We can not risk the long term health and lives of our children when there are alternatives that meet the educational needs of all students.

With Aloha,  
Holly Lee

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Usborne Educational Consultant  
Maui's Online Children's Bookstore

[K4230.myubam.com](http://K4230.myubam.com)

Changing Children's Lives, One Book at a Time.....

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kimberly Hollingsworth <10081517@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kimberly Hollingsworth  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:27 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** cuts to shortage differentials

To Whom may concern

My name is Kim Hollingsworth. I am a teacher at Leihoku Elementary in Waianae on Oahu. I am submitting testimony to show my concern to the cuts to our pay differential.

I was very excited to hear that the teacher salary compression issue was being addressed and that we would be provided with funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions. Fixing the compression issue would place our teachers where they should be for their many years of service and funding the differentials would help to recruit and retain teachers in the hardest to fill areas such as Waianae. I have been a teacher in Waianae for 13 years and have made many accommodations to do so. I love the students that I serve and the parents and community I am fortunate to work with. But, this comes with a cost to my own family as I travel a distance to get to and from my home and school. Much of the money that I earn goes back into my classroom to support the lessons and activities I do in my class to give my students the support and experiences they need to make meaningful connections to the content that I teach. Unfortunately, my salary barely helps me to pay for the cost of living, including paying for childcare and schooling for my own children. My husband works a full time job, but also works a second job just to make sure we have a sustainable income that provides us a comfortable living. Taking away this resource would be very disheartening and would make me consider leaving the profession to find a job that will compensate me for the hard work that I put in each day. I hope that you will consider how this decision will affect the teachers who have been dedicated to this profession and for the future outlook on how teachers will be retained to work in this field.

Sincerely,

Kim Hollingsworth

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** jbh <jldwong@gmail.com> on behalf of jbh  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:31 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

My name is Jarrett Honjiyo and i am a teacher at moanalua middle school. I am very concerned with the reopening of schools. I feel that safety measures are not completely set for all schools. The HDOE needs to have statewide mandates for schools and not just leave it up to the schools. I myself and my wife have health concerns that put us at risk. My wife will be going through medical procedures in September. If she catches covid19, the procedures will stop and she will not get the treatments. I, like many other teachers really want to be in school but we want everyone to be as safe as possible. Please consider a delay to make sure our keiki and teachers are safe. Thank you

Jarrett Honjiyo

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jenny <jwada124@gmail.com> on behalf of Jenny  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:32 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Hawaii Board of Education,

I am providing testimony in regard to Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

My name is Jennifer Wada and I am a Student Services Coordinator at Kaunakakai Elementary School. We simply are not ready to safely welcome our students back to our campus on August 4. The DOE needs to delay having students return to school to allow more time to properly create and implement health strategies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and schools need more time to prepare teachers for distance learning.

The DOE has provided “guidance” to safely open schools, however this guidance does not detail “how” to accomplish this. The many details that will make this work are missing. Some teachers at our school have been meeting remotely on our own unpaid time to think through the steps needed to provide a safe learning environment, but we are missing critical input from some teachers who are not able to participate in these **voluntary** discussions. The school protocols for everything from ohana bubbles, before/after school routines, health room procedures, student groups A/B, social distanced recess & lunch, not to mention new academic/curriculum routines are not even close to being addressed nor completed. Again, we are not ready to safely open! All of these decisions are being asked of us as we are on summer vacation. Would you be happy if your employer asked you to volunteer in this way for something so critical if you were on vacation?

Then there is the issue of professional development (PD). I have heard in the media that PD has been offered and attended by many teachers. I find this very hard to believe as I haven’t been made aware of offerings for PD in distance learning or health and safety strategies. Here again though, these supposed offerings are during our vacation. If the students return on August 4, teachers will be juggling new routines for the 1st half of the day, then attending PD offerings for the remainder of the day. When will we have the opportunity to integrate new learning or prepare for the following day with students?! Again, we are not ready to safely open!

I humbly ask that the members of the Hawaii Board of Education seriously consider delaying the return of students to our school campuses until teachers and school staff are adequately ready to provide a safe learning environment with proper PPE and safety routines in place; and when teachers can integrate the new technologies and techniques learned through professional development, that will soon be provided, to support the blended model of distance learning and face to face learning that so many schools have adopted.

I’ve said it throughout this testimony and will close with this fact...we are not ready to safely open!

Jennifer Wada

Student Services Coordinator

Sent from my iPad



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kent Salcedo <kentsalcedo@gmail.com> on behalf of Kent Salcedo  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:36 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Kent Salcedo - Concerned parent and husband to a kindergarten teacher

Strongly opposed to reopening of schools in person

- I do not feel confident sending my kids back to school in person
- I see my wife going to school everyday voluntarily for the past several weeks to try to accommodate the safety measures. It seems like the plan/lack of plan from the entire chain from Ige and Kishimoto down is constantly changing. The plans are still very unclear and I feel that you are putting both the students and staff in imminent danger. Even for teachers who are putting significantly extra uncompensated time planning and preparing, there still isn't enough time with plans still in flux
- Anecdotally from what I see my wife and her school, and the various news conferences on TV, the schools cannot open safely. There is little guidance, little training, lack of PPE (although some have been ordered, it is inadequate and much is back ordered), lack of consensus, and lack of communication from the schools/state on how these safety measures will actually be executed
- If you force schools open and in person, it will be extremely negligent and the onus will be on the state and BOE

I strongly oppose the reopening of schools in person. I am a parent and I would love for things to be back to normal and to send my kids back, but only if it can be done safely for students and staff.

I implore you to please reconsider reopening for the safety of the community

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Ann Ogilvie <aogilvie@kaiserhs.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Ann Ogilvie  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:41 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** A Distance Learning Request from a DOE teacher of 27 Years

Dear BOE,

My name is Ann Hamilton Ogilvie and I am an English and Acting teacher at Kaiser High School.

I appreciate that many DOE administrators as well as teachers have been working on the issue of distance learning and safety. However, I do not feel we are prepared for the upcoming school year in regards to safety protocol. Given the risks at hand, I believe it is imperative for us to teach purely via distance learning.

I also appreciate the incredibly hard work from my principal Mr. Mew on implementing safety measures so far as he is able under current BOE policy.

However, I believe that we as teachers need more comprehensive training on the technical aspects of distance learning. Other than Google Classroom we do not seem to have an organized system wide platform that we are all well trained on.

I am sixty five years old and thus I am at high risk for contracting COVID-19. Even with the social distancing, disinfecting, and protective wear, I feel less than safe in my classroom. One reason is the reality that students will not be following safety protocol when outside the classroom. Also, even within the classroom it will be a struggle to maintain the social distancing and safety protocols due to the realities of student interaction.

This year will be my 27th year teaching for the DOE. I have gladly dedicated essentially half of my life to teaching Hawaii's students. I hope that the BOE and the DOE therefore makes my safety a priority as well as the safety of the students.

So again, I would appreciate your consideration of keeping the school year safe by mandating that the year is done completely via distance learning. And also we teachers are given more comprehensive training in distant learning in order to maximize effectiveness.

Best,  
Ann Hamilton Ogilvie - English and Acting Teacher Kaiser High School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** darylene echiberi <dechiberi1@gmail.com> on behalf of darylene echiberi  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:42 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

It is true, we are considered essential workers, but as essential workers we were not offered proper training on how to effectively protect oneself from Covid-19.

How do we handle an issue if someone, student or employee has been infected?

Who will be responsible for monitoring or determining who is sick and may need to go home because of a suspected COVID-19 situation?

There are many unresolved issues that have not been discussed.

Thank you

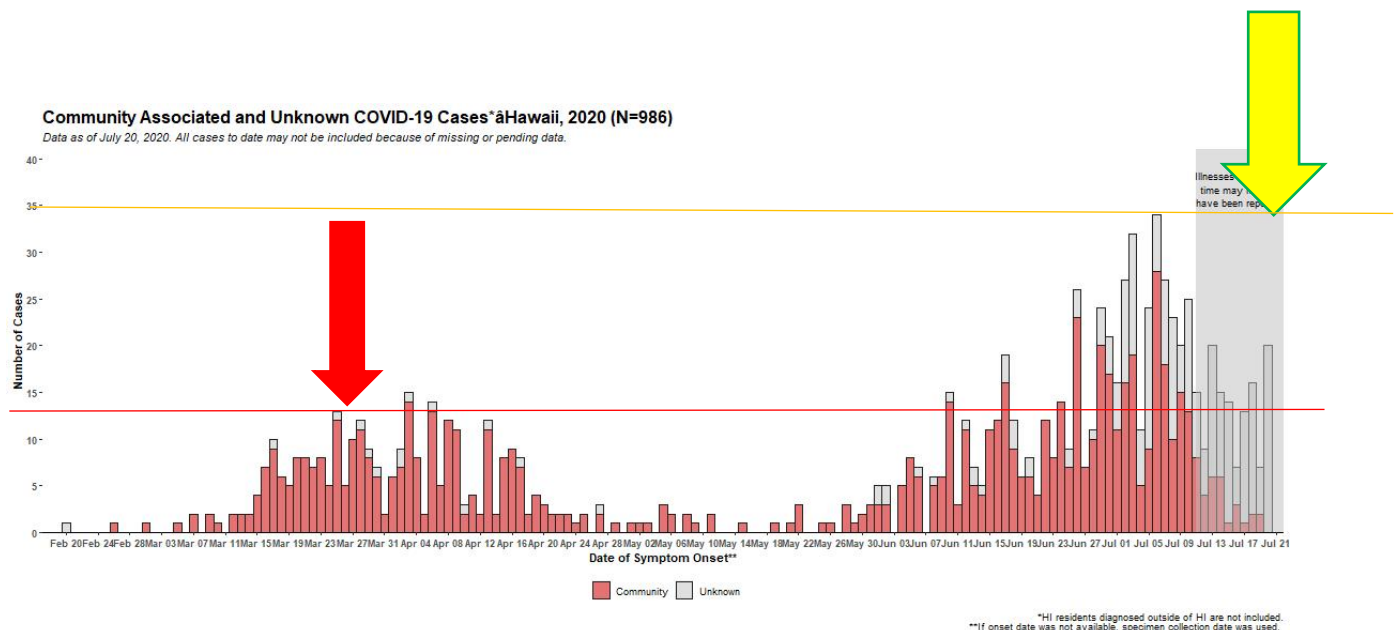
# Late Testimony

My Name is Shay Hirota and I have 2 children attending Kaneohe Elementary, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> child about to attend preschool. I am testifying on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between the State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY2020-2021 Covid-19 Response: 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to Covid-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

I would like to address 3 areas of major concerns, Safety, Support and Communication. Safety is and will always be a paramount with my children. Therefore, the sheer raw numbers and clear incline will be discussed first. Please refer to the data and graph below;

1. Solid red arrow on March 25; Governor issues emergency proclamation stay at home order with a total of 95 Covid-19 cases statewide, 68 on Oahu, including 4 new cases that day.
2. Yellow Arrow green outline on July 21, Governor announces schools will reopen and its is safe with a total of 1,416 Covid-19 cases statewide, 1,100 on Oahu, including 21 new cases that day.
3. Solid red lateral line denotes the highest peak leading into the shutdown.
4. Yellow lateral line denotes the highest peak leading into the opening of school, 2x times higher than the March 25<sup>th</sup> shut down date.

Based on the data and the Governor's Reopening Hawaii Plan, March 25 is categorized as "red (major disruption)" with only distance learning and instructional packets. July 21- Aug 4 would be categorized as "green (minimal distraction)" with face to face instruction, blended learning, and distance learning to reduce numbers. What data shows evidence that a 16x increase in total caseload and a 5x daily increase of Covid-19 patients when comparing March 25 to July 21 denotes that we are in an "Act with Care", or "Recovery" setting for the core assumptions for opening schools?



The Governor's Reopening Hawaii Plan, has 5 phases, ranging from red (major disruption) to blue (new normal). We have cycled through these various phases as a community for the past 6 months and are continually trying to navigate within these trying times. We have had some success and hiccups, but we have rolled it out in a progression with designated temp checks before progressing to the next level of

reopening. Where is that progression for our schools, children and teachers? Instead we are going straight into face-to-face instruction and giving our school 2 weeks to prepare for this. This is not safe, it is reckless. What is the rush? Here are some questions I have;

1. What happens when a newly hired teacher (12 sick days) or an employee who does not have enough leave becomes possibly infected or infected and must quarantine for 14 days? This faculty member may not want to use their entire leave and could come to work solely to preserve those days. Resulting in possible infections of multiple persons. This is a reality and a major concern I have.
2. There is a shortage of substitutes as it is, has there been any Covid training for them when they step into the classroom? With each school left to determine their own parameters and no definite guide lines coming from the Board of Education, How can a substitute who works an entire district be in the same "ohana/classroom bubble?" With teachers out and shortage of substitutes how will the department address those gaps while maintain safety for them and the students.
3. Why has there not been a standardized operating procedures coming from the Board of Education set forth for all schools based on demographics, class size, isolation zones, cleaning procedures, communication timeframe with contact tracing of a confirmed case within the school?
4. What other services is the DOH and BOE providing students who become infected and then returning to school in addressing the social emotional stigma amongst peers?
5. Why does the CDC recommend 6ft of distancing and facemasks yet the schools can reduce those distances based on space constraints when there is nothing else within our community that has allowed us to modify these parameters? Regardless of the direction we are facing.
6. What happens when a family who is on free and reduced lunch going to eat on an alternating schedule? How will the receive their meals if the family is quarantined?

I can continue to go on with a laundry list of questions and data, however, I know there are number of questions that cannot be answered because we don't know. I do know that I will never be okay with any child going into an unclear, unsafe environment, with our numbers astronomically higher then when we first shut down. Children are very intuitive. They feed off their environment. If the teachers feel unsafe, there's a reason, address it, because the children will pick up on it. This is completely counter productive to the Governor's and Superintendent's message for returning to school, social emotional well-being. How can a child thrive when everyone is uneasy? Have the 8/4 be the start of school but from a distance learning, pick up your laptop, have the hot spots, and address the social emotional needs of the children. Discuss what happens if their friends contract Covid, reassure them before going physically into the school with no plan in place. I think we need to address these concerns (via zoom, etc.) and give the students a platform to discuss and talk about it before instead of being face to face with it when the schools reopen. We need to stop being reactive, address the concerns and do not use our kids and teachers as community test pilots with a completely different set of parameters. We need to make this right for our communities.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Tricia Kreidler <palupet@gmail.com> on behalf of Tricia Kreidler  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:43 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in testimony on action item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

My name is Tricia Kreidler and I am a parent and teacher at Aiea Elementary. In preparation for the coming school year I am doing everything in my power to get ready for the opening of school by trying to configure a safe classroom and attending weekly voluntary meetings in hope of guidelines or answers of how the year will start. I know that our school administration is doing everything they can to inform us so that we can plan ahead however, we are receiving so many last minute and or changing guidelines that it feels very rushed.

With our states's daily new cases averaging over 20 everyday and the death count rising, I do not think that we should rush into the new school year. I fear that if we open schools on August 4 we would be putting our students, their families, and my fellow teachers at high risk.

Our schools are not ready to open. We need more time to plan and prepare so that we can all be safe and confident in the classroom!

Mahalo,

Tricia Kreidler

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** andrea kaneakua <andreakaneakua@yahoo.com> on behalf of andrea kaneakua  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:43 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

To whom it may concern:

**I am testifying on Action Item G: Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year.**

My name is Andrea Kaneakua. My son is Rylan-Tyler Rivera-Alesna and he attends Kapaa High School. Rylan was diagnosis with mild intellectual disability and fragile x syndrome. He is 20 yrs and will be attending Kapaa High school until he turns 22yrs old. Even if my son is 20 yrs. old when tested he is on a 2nd grade level. I am a very concern parent of a Special Needs Child. I am sadden to here about the budget cut for our Sped Teachers. Why are you even considering cutting the budget from our Special Ed Teachers? Can you figure something else out and take the money from somewhere else. Our teachers already are not getting paid enough for all what they do!! My son's teacher goes above a beyond for him my child along with all the other students in her class!!

I feel that if you plan to cut these teachers pay all the qualified sped teachers will leave and quit their jobs cause who can survive with a pay cut that big. What concerns me is that the school will be force to hire teachers that is not qualify in special education because they will be desperate and scrambling for someone to just stay in their class to babysit and not have the knowledge or qualification of what a sped teacher does. Where will that leave my child? He came so far already with the help of Ms. Carvalho and Mrs. Rowe at the Kapaa High School. The thought of a teacher that has no qualification teaching my child will be very scary!! Does any of you that attended the meeting and voted on this action have a special needs child of their own? Do you know what kind of teaching they need? Do you know how to calm them down when in there mind they feel like they are not good enough or when they are frustrated? Do you have the patients to stay with a child with disabilities for 7 hours a day? Will you have the heart to care for them like your own? Will you even give them the time of day that they need!!! If none of you have this first hand then I suggest you go to a special ed class everyday for a week or 2 if that is not enough and see how it is. I feel that everyone should have had a special needs child so they know how it feels and have compassion for them and their teachers that work their butts off to care for them. It's easy to say,"take funding from the sped teachers" if your not walking in there shoes.

I pray and hope that you will reconsider and change your decision and take the budget cut from somewhere else where is less needed. I can name a few but will pray that you have a change of heart for our AWESOME special education teachers!!! Please make the right choice for our children with disabilities!!!

Thank you,  
Andrea Kaneakua

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kim Lewis <klewis96819@att.net> on behalf of Kim Lewis  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:49 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Safety Concerns on School Reopening

- What type of PPE will be provided for employees and students?
- Who will screen employees, students and visitors for signs of illness?
- Will staff be properly trained by Aug. 4?
- How will school meals be provided?
- Who will supervise students during meal periods?
- What is the plan when someone at the school tests positive for COVID-19?
- How will physical distancing be enforced?

[Students, school employees and our communities should not be put at risk with a rushed reopening plan that the DOE is pushing forward.](#)



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jade Pham <jadeyimpham@gmail.com> on behalf of Jade Pham  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:50 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Jade Pham and I am going into my fourth year of teaching special education at Kaimuki High, a low-income secondary school in Honolulu. I taught my first classroom at the age of 20 as an emergency-hire while pursuing my Masters of Education. My heart is in teaching but as you know, it is hard to make a living in Hawaii on a teacher's salary.

In January, as a result of the differential pay, I was finally able to move out of my mom's small apartment and rent my own place. I have been able to make progress in a savings plan to buy an affordable home one day. I urge you to reject the DOE's proposal to defer the differentials as this would cause a major impact on many of our lives. Big life decisions were made due to the provision of the differentials, and to take it away after one semester will be devastating for many of us.

With my education, experience, and work ethic, I am aware that I would be a qualified candidate for many other jobs and careers in Hawaii. There is a teacher shortage crisis in our community and while I would hate to be a statistic, it is not new news to say that young teachers cannot afford to teach in Hawaii. My friends always ask me, how do you do it? How can you work so hard and bear with such little incentives? All I can say in response is that I do it for my students. Please hear our stories and resonate with our experiences.

Sincerely,

Jade

—

Jade Yim Pham  
(808) 428-4425  
jadeyimpham@gmail.com

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Phyllis Gurlen <246bollig@gmail.com> on behalf of Phyllis Gurlen  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:50 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

[H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees](#)

School - Waianae Intermediate LeeWard

Weather: The weather in August is extremely hot outside and in the classrooms. In Hawaii, the climate is tropical, with a hot season from June to October. Leeward hot and dry weather on the leeward slopes.

Children and teachers wearing a mask will have anxiety due to the fact that breathing will be difficult, the mask will be hot, and a child or adult will explain I just took it off for a second to catch my breath. Second scenario: I let my friend use my mask!

Third scenario: My mom/dad told me I do not have to wear a mask or wash my hands. It is my right, no one can not tell me what to do at school.

Disinfect objects: Students bring school supplies to school will they be able to disinfect their supplies.

Cough / sneezing Coronaviruses are thought to be spread most often by respiratory droplets. Children have their mask on and they cough or sneeze in the mask several times a day - Is that comfortable for the child or should each child bring more than one mask to school.

FACTS: Many children might even be late to school because they can not find their mask!

They do not care about homework they are stressed out about their Mask!!!

Thankyou

Phyllis Ann Gurlen MS.ed

## TESTIMONY for Board of Education General Business Meeting Thursday, July 23, 2020

Name	Hokulani Garcia	Date	7/22/2020
Organization			
School Name	Mililani High	Child's Age	17
	Mililani High		14
Select One	Open 8/4/2020		
	Defer Open Date	yes	
	100% Online		

### Comments:

Please delay the 8/4/2020 opening of the school year. Teachers, Schools and staff need sufficient time to train and prepare the schools for opening. If we say we want to keep our people and communities safe, then time is needed. The Board it self is holding today's meeting virtually. Per your very own announcement posted on the State of Hawaii Board of Education website, "Due to current circumstances because of Covid-19, the Board of Education ("Board") will be holding a virtual General Business Meeting" These are your words. (Attached for reference) If it is not safe for the Board to hold their meeting in person as they are deferring to virtual means, then how is it safe for us to send our children into a classroom? Children who do not understand the seriousness of this virus, children who do not understand that they may be asymptomatic carriers, children who are ADHD, children who are just young and like to touch everything? Leaders say we should not gather with more than 10 people, they say that we should be at least 6 feet apart. Yet sending our children back to school under current conditions contradicts all of it. One teacher (if they are lucky they have an aid) cannot possibly monitor 20 - 30 children plus ensure proper sanitizing. What good is any of our "protocols" if they are only words? We need to implement them first. We need to ensure that the teachers, custodians and other staff is properly trained and informed to handle the situation. We need to ensure that staff understand these protocols and are competent to execute them. These protocols need to be clear cut across the board for all schools. Yes I agree our children need to be back in school. Their mental health is at state keeping them home. But we need to ensure their safety and not treat them as guinea pigs. I ask do any of the Board Members have children, particularly young children that attend public school? If so, can you honestly say that you are comfortable sending your child back to school with the "protocols" that are currently in place?

Additionally, do we have a plan in place should a student test positive for Covid 19? Do we isolate just that child? Do we quarantine the entire class? If this child's teacher has multiple classes, do we then quarantine the entire school? Answers to these questions are what parents need to build trust that are schools are looking out for the best interest of our children. Again, our children are not test subjects. We should not send them into a fire just to "see" what happens. I urge you to defer the start of the school year. Let's allow these teachers and staff the time they need to be sufficiently trained and properly prepare our schools.

Respectfully,  
Hokulani Garcia

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Desmond Yap <desmond.yap@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Desmond Yap  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:53 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Use Caution and Wisdom

Aloha,

I am a local middle school teacher and live on Maui. I am also a father of four. I recently watched our Hawaii DOE superintendent speak on opening on August 4th.

Will there be hazardous pay that comes with opening the school?

Is this a trial and error? At what cost and how safe are we? Can anything be guaranteed when it comes to safety?

I am giving testimony to postpone school physically opening on Aug. 4 instead begin with distant learning until we can get the Corona virus more under control. I think human health is a higher priority than our economic standstill.

We should figure this out together rather than one side tells the other what to do.

Mahalo nui,

Desmond Yap

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Keri Nakamura <10135051@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Keri Nakamura  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:55 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** MUST SEE - mask vs NO mask  
**Attachments:** Video.mov

Please reconsider opening in aug 4th! I'm a prek special education teacher. Majority of my students won't keep their masks on. Please watch this video!

Sent from my iPhone

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Andrew Jones <jonesbaron23@gmail.com> on behalf of Andrew Jones  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:57 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony in Opposition to a Physical Return to Schools

Re: **H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.**

Aloha, members of the Board of Education.

My name is Andy Jones, and I am a Language Arts teacher at Radford High School. I am writing to ask that you reconsider sending teachers and students back into physical classrooms as is currently planned. A majority of Hawaii educators believe that it is not yet safe to reenter classrooms. This week the U.S. Surgeon General has delivered the same opinion, and a national survey has suggested that a large majority of Americans disapprove of returning to school amid a clear resurgence of COVID-19.

Similar to thousands of other Hawaii teachers, I personally do not feel that returning to my classroom is safe. Even setting aside obvious questions of risk to the health and lives of students, teachers, their families and their communities, the atmosphere of worry that will almost certainly prevail will not be conducive to teaching and learning. Given the general unpreparedness of most public schools for the situation and the multi-tiered problems and challenges of which the situation consists, it seems to me highly doubtful that a physical return to classrooms will be successful and highly likely that the move will quickly be aborted as soon as clusters emerge in various school complexes, which, given the current daily numbers of new infections, seems almost inevitable. In my opinion it would be much more sensible to accept the reality we are facing now rather than three weeks into the school year and to do our best to provide our students with distance learning, however inadequate it may seem in contrast to "the real thing."

I hope that the Board and others involved in these decisions will come to similar conclusions based on similar observations and reasoning and opt for distance learning until national and local experts agree that a return to schools is truly safe.

Sincerely,  
Andy Jones

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Dana Corpuz <dana80222@gmail.com> on behalf of Dana Corpuz  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:04 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** delay of school re-oeping

Aloha,

I am writing to encourage you to delay the re-opening of schools to a reasonable date. This is a extremely high risk situation when considering the number of students and families that would be directly affected. At this time, teachers and administration haven't received adequate direction on how to re-open schools safely. During a typical school day, student's needs are met by various educational groupings or settings and multiple teachers. Careful management and protocols must be attended to in order to uphold social distancing and safety otherwise there is a real and serious potential for COVID outbreak. There are too many unresolved considerations that would put students, teachers and the community at great risk. Additionally, parents haven't had adequate time to prepare for blended learning models which are different for elementary, middle and highschool children (ie. siblings within a single household). It's important to adequately prepare without rushing the process just to meet a deadline or in reaction to outside pressure. This is a major community endeavor and we should handle it as such and be proactive in our approach.

Mahalo,

Dana Corpuz, Campbell-Kapolei Complex

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Cory Lee <coryalee@hotmail.com> on behalf of Cory Lee  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:06 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Cleared for takeoff.....in an airplane still being assembled?

Aloha to whom it may concern:

My name is Cory Lee, and I have two daughters in public elementary school in Upcountry Maui. I have serious concerns about sending them back to school, and I'm aware that 100% online distance learning will likely be an option.

My main concern is I have serious doubts that our public school teachers will be able to provide quality online/virtual instruction to students who are away from campus, while they are simultaneously expected to teach face to face with other students, all while complying with strict health and safety guidelines.

It seems to me that instead of staying safe and consistent, and focusing on providing 100% quality distance learning experiences for all students, schools are forced to offer multiple learning options to parents and families. Teachers will likely be spread so thin that neither of the options offered will be much of a positive learning experience.

They are now expected to essentially be in person educators and health care workers, in addition to virtual / online educators with very little time given to needed specialized training. How can teachers meet the needs of their students in multiple settings while stressing about the health and safety of themselves and the students they are responsible for?

What are the social and emotional implications should a teacher/classmate/bus driver/cafeteria worker/educational assistant etc. be hospitalized or pass away from this extremely contagious virus?

Watching the senate hearing with Superintendent Kishimoto and Dr. Sarah Park was terrifying. To hear there is literally no protocol in place for communicating with the school community if a student or household member tests positive, and no effort to inform families of responsibilities they have to their community (i.e. notifying school personnel of positive coronavirus case in the household so the school can act accordingly) is alarming. It seems irresponsible to those families sending students back to school, the teachers and school staff, and the entire island community should an enormous outbreak from school settings overwhelm our meager health care facilities.

I have heard some teachers nearing retirement age are taking steps to write their last will and testament prior to this school year. Instead of focusing on creating engaging lessons and activities, educators are left to contemplate what life may look like for their families should they pass away because they are being forced to return to campus while schools are unprepared to control a virus that has ravaged the mainland and many other nations.

Multiple school administrators who proudly send their children to public schools here on Maui are keeping their children home this year.....why?.....because they themselves are not confident that the DOE and protocols in place can keep their children safe.



But, I guess the Hawaii B.O.E. is confident enough in the preparations they've made, and the safety protocols in place to keep students and faculty healthy. If even one student or staff member passes from this situation that is avoidable, would the B.O.E. be able to sleep peacefully knowing it was their decision to put Hawaii's kumu's and keiki in a potentially dangerous situation?

I feel focusing on training teachers for online education, and providing technology for students and families who need, would be a much safer, ethical, and responsible decision for the communities of Hawaii.

Hindsight is 20/20, but the DOE is preparing for a 10 month journey while flying blind.

Very respectfully,  
A loving father and husband,

Cory Lee

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Stacey Agmata <staceyagmata@gmail.com> on behalf of Stacey Agmata  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:08 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delay in opening

Mahalo for your work to keep our ohana safe.

Please consider the testimonial from those of us who have children attending school this fall and teachers who are family members working effortlessly while sacrificing their own health to educate our children.

There is too much risk involved by opening schools without necessary guidelines established. Our community depends on you to make the right decision. We humbly ask for a more stringent process for both families and administrators to follow. It needs to be clear- LIVES are at stake. Ask the community for support in this but make the right decision here. It starts with you, our board of education.

With Aloha,  
Stacey

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Denise Grayzell <denisegrayzell1@gmail.com> on behalf of Denise Grayzell  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:10 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** School Reopening

Aloha,

The Board of Education is not serving anyone's needs by opening schools with cases on the rise and with no firm plan on keeping everyone safe. Why the rush?

I am a long term sub in special education and I will not be coming back to my position if schools open on August 4. Making me choose between my health and a paycheck is not a choice. I will be unemployed with no other income but I am not willing to take the chance.

My three grandkids will not be coming back into the classroom and we will withdraw them from school if there is no virtual option. Their health, nor the possibility of them infecting other family members or teachers, is worth it.

Denise Grayzell  
Sub/Long Term Sub  
Central District

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Rachael Callahan <rccallah@gmail.com> on behalf of Rachael Callahan  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:11 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony: we cannot open schools yet

Hello,

My name is Rachael Denessen and I have been a 12th grade teacher at Maui high for six years. As Cory Rosenlee stated: Our schools are woefully underprepared to deliver a distance learning program should a school be shut down by the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) due to the spread of COVID-19,". We are not ready to return to the classroom amid the continuing spikes in cases and what's worse— so many unanswered questions.

Kishimoto has been lying to any camera that will feature her and any paper who will quote her. Schools do not have the required resources to keep staff and students safe. There are no set policies in place should a child or staff member contract the virus.

What are teachers supposed to do if we contract the virus? Will we be forced to use our sick pay to quarantine? Will we be getting hazard pay? Workman's compensation? What happens if we are forced to quarantine multiple times? How are we supposed to know who is sick or not when there are NO screening requirements for kids to come on campus? How are we supposed to track sick students when they're not social distancing or wearing masks on busses? None of these half baked plans make sense or have answers. The pandemic will hit hard and kill students and parents alike if we go into the school year as haphazardly prepared as we are now.

Personally, I am unsure of what to do or how to procede. My son is a year old and is still recovering from having surgery to remove part of his lung. If he is to contract the virus, there is no telling what that will do to him. How do I risk his life by going to work? How do I justify to myself the risk I have of bringing something like that home to my baby? But I have to, because as a teacher, I cannot afford not to go to work. I am being asked to risk my child's life, my life and my family's life in order to "restart" the economy. As usual, we're asked to do this with haphazard policies, no time or supplies, and a saturation of guilt to do it "for the good of the students". I don't understand how asking students and teachers alike to risk their lives and the lives of their family is for the good of the students. Everything we do is for their benefit, always. That is why I must speak up. Opening right now is dangerous, foolhardy, and irresponsible. How many sick and/or dying children and teachers does Kishimoto want staining her hands? This is a gamble with people's lives. With children's lives. This cannot be allowed to happen. Schools can not reopen until there is a responsible and sensical plan that takes into account the rising cases, the fact that our cases are as low as they are because of the intercontinental travel ban and will not stay so if the state reopens, and truly works to keep students and teachers safe.

Mahalo for your time.

Rachael Denessen

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Bernie Toyama <kapuaui@gmail.com> on behalf of Bernie Toyama  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:15 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** We are not ready for schools to be re-open on August 4th

To Whom it may concern,

These are my concerns and questions: for

- What type of PPE will be provided for employees and students?
- Who will screen employees, students and visitors for signs of illness?
- Will staff be properly trained by [Aug. 4](#)?
- How will school meals be provided?
- Who will supervise students during meal periods?
- What is the plan when someone at the school tests positive for COVID-19?
- How will physical distancing be enforced?

Thank you,  
Bernadette Toyama  
Educational Assistant

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kristie Masatsugu <noahsark40@yahoo.com> on behalf of Kristie Masatsugu  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:20 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

To Whom It May Concern,

I am testifying on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

I am a teacher by trade, but more importantly a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mother, an auntie, and a friend. I haven't always wanted to be a teacher. My mom was a teacher and I saw how much work was needed. She would spend her own money and time to plan and prepare so her students could have a wonderful school experience. So, I knew how much time and money I would have to sacrifice if I wanted to provide experiences in the classroom that would excite my students. Even knowing all of this, I felt called into this profession and actually wouldn't know what I would be doing if I wasn't a teacher. I love working with students and know that planning and being prepared is the key. I have been teaching for over 20 years but feel like I am starting all over. I am a new teacher, teaching in such an unprecedented time with so many unknowns. I will have to create new routines and tweak my curriculum pacing, which I don't mind doing, but realistically I am not being given the time to do it. Teachers are planners. We are constantly planning, researching, and learning. We are expected to set up our classroom, create new routines, and be trained on various programs in four days. I do not feel I will be ready to keep my students, their families, as well as myself and my family safe. Our administrators have been working hard trying to create new routines for the school and yet being flexible when things change daily. We know that things are going to change as well but being and feeling prepared with what we know now is the key. The only data we have is from the schools who did summer hub. That does not reflect what will happen when we return to school even if it's only ½ of the school that is on campus at the same time. Even our whole staff has not been on campus at the same time yet. However, what we do know is that the more people we come into contact with, the higher our changes of being exposed become. We don't know what will happen when we return but if given the time, we can plan with our own grade levels new routines, create slideshows that show proper social distancing norms, and tweak our curriculum as needed. Teaching our students and then planning is not ideal. If we are given additional time before our students begin, we can try to anticipate what might happen and therefore create routines to address those situations. Just like planning a lesson, we look at the potential questions and problems a student might run into and prepare for that. That takes time.

I know face to face for all students is the best and ideal. However, what happens, since it's been predicted, when schools are forced to close suddenly and we are back to distance learning without being prepared. It will be a repeat of this past year's fourth quarter. Without proper training and preparation, we cannot be expected to be effective in distance learning. So those who have been infected will have been in vain. We know schools have to open for many reasons. It's not just academics. We are social creatures by nature and being away from school has been difficult for many. We are asking for time to be able to plan and be prepared to the best of our ability so that not only can we teach, but be and feel safe doing it. We have been given two weeks of ½ days but that is really not enough time to plan or get prepared. It's like learning on the job. What routines will I teach my students when I don't even know what they are because I haven't planned them out yet? I can also see I start a routine but later have to change it because I rushed through my planning and preparation. We have seen what happens without planning – again a repeat of this past fourth quarter. Shouldn't we learn from that? Being

prepared will make us feel safer and more confident that we are actually teaching and not just monitoring students' safety.

I am still debating on whether or not to send my daughter to school and it's not because I don't feel her teacher will keep her safe. I just know, just like me he/she wasn't given enough time to prepare. Also, what if my child is asymptomatic and gives it to another student or to her teacher. Then that student gives it an older adult that lives with them. Many of our students live in multigenerational homes and have to rely on their elderly parents. I know how important it is for her to be in school face to face and I am relying on my parents to help me take care of her as well as her academics. But I feel right now that her teacher, her classmates and their families are worth it.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristie Hotema  
Grade 3 Teacher  
Iliahi Elementary

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Vanessa Arzaga <vanessa.arzaga@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Vanessa Arzaga  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:27 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Fwd: Testimony

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Vanessa Arzaga <[vanessa.arzaga@k12.hi.us](mailto:vanessa.arzaga@k12.hi.us)>  
**Date:** Wed, Jul 22, 2020 at 4:25 PM  
**Subject:** Testimony  
**To:** <[BOE@boe.hawaii.gov](mailto:BOE@boe.hawaii.gov)>

H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2-17-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

It's my second year of teaching at the State of Hawaii, I know how it feels of not having enough time or day being in school, I know how the students are engage when it comes to learning, those smiles on their faces when they see their teachers and schoolmates first thing in the morning, these factors excites me to open up schools by creating, exploring and discovering new ideas and thoughts once again to my students and colleagues but on the other hand, my mind made me think if being in school would be safe enough to risk the lives of the many people. I know school is fun but are we ready to substitute the word fun to say sorry in the end? School is not yet ready to reopen when there are still active cases around us. I am also concerned about my family at home by working at a school setting everyday and go home after, so my question is, would it be safe for me to return home after dealing all the people at school?

Thank you for hearing my voice.

Vanessa Arzaga  
Daniel K Inouye Elementary School  
SPED Preschool

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** lanigirl29@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:28 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Action Item H. Board Action

My name is Lindalee Schultz and I have been a substitute teacher for 11 years with the Department of Education on Oahu. I do a lot of long-term substitute teaching jobs lasting two weeks to an entire school year. I love what I do and take my job very seriously as a teacher to those students entrusted in my care.

I am very concerned with our school year starting date of August 4th. As a substitute teacher I have not received any training for this COVID crises nor am I a part of the decision and voting process. I have many questions about classroom, bathroom, recess, and lunch safety. Without substitute teachers getting proper training and not having a say in the decision making, how are we to be "safe" and effective in the classroom this new school year?

As a substitute, I teach in all grades and all classes. I do not feel safe going back to my school, because I have not seen viable procedures to protect me and allow students to go the bathroom, have recess, or go to lunch, stay 6 feet apart, etc.

Delaying the start of the school year would help all teachers, administration, and students have a clear understanding of all potential situations we may come find ourselves in and navigate safely.

Sincerely,

Lindalee Schultz

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Misty Figueira <mistyfig@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Misty Figueira  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:30 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Teacher Funding Differential Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Misty Figueira, and I am a first year 7th grade ELA SPED teacher at Kea'au Middle School. I am testifying on Action Item G: Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year. I writing to urge you to continue the differential funding plan for these areas.

As a student who only attended Keonepoko Elementary and Pāhoa High and Intermediate School prior to college, I cannot stress how important the pay differential is. During my time as a student in the Kea'au, Ka'ū, and Pāhoa complex, I experienced a high turnover of teachers. As students, we noticed this: it felt like teachers did not stay with us for very long. It felt like we were the reason for this... that we were too much for them. Imagine what happens when hundreds of students start to internalize this. How can we expect these students to succeed when this is what they grow up thinking? More importantly: how do we help prevent this?

I have spent the past seven years studying at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and Mānoa with the goal of becoming a teacher. During these years, I proudly told others (educators, friends, colleges, etc) about my plan of becoming a special education teacher in the KKP district, and returning to teach at Pāhoa. I cannot emphasize how many times people have told me not to teach at Pāhoa or in that general district. They would tell me that the students are "rough", that it's too far away, and to try to work in the Hilo-Waiākea district if I was able to. And while I respect those people, it really says something about the community's opinion when they do not realize that everything they are saying is to a student who comes from that "rough" area. Unfortunately, I am met with the same response when I tell people that I am going to be licensed as both a SPED and General Education teacher. In regards to SPED, people say the pay is too low for the amount of work that you do, that it's hard, that it isn't worth it, and so on.

This is the way that positions in these areas are talked about to new, incoming teachers. Cutting the pay differential for these positions will do nothing to help.

Again, I urge you to continue with the plan to provide extra pay to these areas. The pay differential is a key part in ensuring that we are providing an equitable education to the students of Hawai'i. It helps bring qualified teachers into these fields, and gives them an incentive to stay. It helps to change the narrative around these types of jobs. And, ultimately, it ensures that our current students in these areas do not grow up hearing the types of things I did (and still do). While I understand the events that have recently happened that have lead to this possible decision, we must remember who we are serving: students, who are the future of Hawai'i. Please, continue to fund these areas.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Mahalo,  
Misty Figueira

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Samantha <s.fuhrmann@yahoo.com> on behalf of Samantha  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:37 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** School Reopening Testimony

Aloha,

I am a concerned parent and teacher. With the rising number of Covid cases in Hawaii I do not feel comfortable with the opening of school buildings and jeopardizing the health of my family and students. I would like the board to consider the first semester of school to be virtual distance learning only.

Our school staff attended an optional meeting yesterday and we are still waiting for PPE to be delivered and our custodial staff is unable to disinfect between class periods and bathroom uses. Students will also be using classrooms for lunch which adds to the disinfecting issue. There are many issues that still need to be addressed before parents and teachers will feel safe.

I would like you to reconsider opening up the school buildings until Hawaii is in the safe zone.

Mahalo,  
Samantha Fuhrmann- Blyth

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Grant Takiguchi <grant.takiguchi@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Grant Takiguchi  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:37 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha, members of the Board of Education.

My name is Grant Takiguchi, and I am a Mathematics teacher at Radford High School. I am writing to ask that you reconsider sending teachers and students back into physical classrooms as is currently planned. A majority of Hawaii educators believe that it is not yet safe to reenter classrooms. This week the U.S. Surgeon General has delivered the same opinion, and a national survey has suggested that a large majority of Americans disapprove of returning to school amid a clear resurgence of COVID-19.

Similar to thousands of other Hawaii teachers, I personally do not feel that returning to my classroom is safe. Even setting aside obvious questions of risk to the health and lives of students, teachers, their families and their communities, the atmosphere of worry that will almost certainly prevail will not be conducive to teaching and learning. Given the general unpreparedness of most public schools for the situation and the multi-tiered problems and challenges of which the situation consists, it seems to me highly doubtful that a physical return to classrooms will be successful and highly likely that the move will quickly be aborted as soon as clusters emerge in various school complexes, which, given the current daily numbers of new infections, seems almost inevitable. In my opinion it would be much more sensible to accept the reality we are facing now rather than three weeks into the school year and begin focusing immediately on doing our best to provide our students with distance learning, however inadequate it may seem in contrast to "the real thing."

I hope that the Board and others involved in these decisions will come to similar conclusions based on similar observations and reasoning and opt for distance learning until national and local experts agree that a return to schools is truly safe.

Sincerely,  
Grant Takiguchi

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Mariana Solis <solism5@yahoo.com> on behalf of Mariana Solis  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:41 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

Hi,

My name is Mariana Solis Martínez, I teach at James Campbell High School. Due to my health condition, I would like to have it in writing that students will be six feet apart and that students will be required to wear a mask. If those two things are not clearly stated that have to will be met, PLEASE reconsider pushing opening schools.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Joyce Wyrick <anotherwyrick@aol.com> on behalf of Joyce Wyrick  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:45 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** testimony

As the great grand-mother of three children who all attend Hickam Elementary School, I really MUST ASK "are things actually fully in place to ensure the safe return to normal school education??"

I fear for their health and safety as well as the health and safety of every student.

Sincerely,

Joyce Wyrick



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Dean Nakamaru <dnakamaru@gmail.com> on behalf of Dean Nakamaru  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:47 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** School Opening

Hi BOE,

I'm writing to support the delay of schools opening on August 4, 2020.

I'm in favor of a phased in approach.  
Our teachers do not appear to be ready.

Dean Nakamaru

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Catherine Devore <devorecrs@gmail.com> on behalf of Catherine Devore  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:55 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** testimony, item G

My name is Catherine Stoneman. I am a 20 year veteran teacher at Waimea Elementary School in the Hamakua District on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony to oppose agenda item G. Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year.

Please continue to provide the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that this BOE of Hawaii continues to value our hardworking teachers. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki and the future of our state economy. Temporarily discontinuing this compensation for this next school year will continue to impact our profession and communities in these areas significantly.

The differential we received for the second half of this past school year made a tremendous difference in being able live a little easier financially. I know you hear many teachers are living paycheck to paycheck, and many have second jobs. It is still continuing even with the current differential we are receiving because I am one of them. I have student loans and medical bills for my chronically ill husband. It is even harder now with the COVID-19 pandemic where the price of goods are astronomically higher in our rural communities.

Last spring, for the first time since we moved here 20 years ago, I had enough money in my paycheck to catch up with bills, hire skilled painters to finally fix my rusted roof, and not worry about the money I spend weekly for my commute from Puna to Waimea daily. I understand that the DOE believes this will only be a temporary cut, but in my experience working in this state, that has NEVER been the case. The last time we had a pay cut, it lasted nearly eight years. You're asking teachers whose children can't attend school full time to take a cut AND put out more money for childcare so they can work full time, not to mention all the teachers my age (59) or older who are at the edge of retirement to work during a pandemic that is far more dangerous for people our age. Taking this action will only convince teachers that the state doesn't respect them, and they'll leave.

Mahalo for your time and understanding,

Catherine R Stoneman, Hamakua District, Hawaii Island

From: Elizabeth Pa Nakea, Castle High School Special Education Teacher and Attorney at Law

According to Dr. Fauci

## 1. *Re: Delay return of students to campus*

As an uptick in coronavirus cases and deaths hits us and the worsening of pandemic effects continue, we hear on Tuesday, 7/22, President Trump announcing that this devastating pandemic is going to get even more "worse before it gets better."

Teachers will be most at risk when schools reopen. They will be in close contact with dozens, and potentially hundreds, of children for multiple hours in a given day. Yet they seem to be more of an afterthought in the health director's overall concern for health and safety. In testimony before Hawai'i lawmakers last week, Bruce Anderson admitted, "The disease is far more serious for older people. That doesn't necessarily help the teachers, of course, or the faculty who are worried. But for the kids themselves, the risk is relatively low for serious disease."

President Trump and his education secretary, Betsy DeVos, have been, in the words of a Nebraska teacher, Patrick Fielder, "the most toxic thing ever to happen to public education." Not only have they belittled teachers and schools; they have also fought to eliminate civil rights protections in schools; to cut funding to reduce class size, teacher training and support; to make it easier for students to get away with sexual assault and harassment; and to put guns in schools. Mr. Trump and Ms. DeVos have repeatedly pushed to divert billions of dollars from public schools to private programs that studies show don't help students.

And now teachers have new concerns about the administration's slow response to the coronavirus pandemic and the unnerving challenges they face as a result. Before most schools closed, teachers were among the groups most at risk of exposure to the coronavirus. Officials in many school districts just wanted schools to stay open so that parents may continue to work. Teachers aren't babysitters and schools aren't day care.

We have received conflicting information about the coronavirus, and although it is not what anyone wants, it is not an appropriate time to reopen schools. And a list provided on Nancy Bailey's website [here's why](#):

## 1. *Illness and Russian Roulette*

According to the CDC, the risk might seem low for children, but they still get sick, some seriously. **Children and teenagers have died.** Questions still surround the disease. It's not worth the risk. Maybe the situation will improve by January, or next summer. Currently we're experiencing a pandemic and safety is the number one concern. Some children **develop multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C), called Kawasaki disease.** This can lead to life-threatening problems with the heart and other organs in the body. Every day we learn more about this disease. We do not know enough to protect children and teachers for a return to school.

## 2. *How Will the Flu and Covid-19 Tango?*

Maybe Covid-19 alone doesn't affect children as badly as adults, but what if you mix it with the flu? Every year **the flu kills children.** Last January, before Covid-19 became well known, 27 children had died of the flu. What will the dance of these two illnesses look like in the fall?

Further, there is no currently available vaccine for COVID-19. However, many of the symptoms can be treated and getting early care from a healthcare provider can make the disease less dangerous. There are several clinical trials that are being conducted to evaluate potential therapeutics for COVID-19.

### *3. Adults Matter Too!*

A large concern with children is that they can spread the disease to teachers, parents, and grandparents who could be vulnerable. It isn't fair to risk **their health** by reopening schools. Teachers and staff should not have to fear their workplace.

### *4. Lacking Consensus*

Adults can't agree on recommendations surrounding Covid-19, so how can teachers protect children *brought together* in the classroom? Some students will want to wear their masks, others won't. Some students will take the virus seriously, others won't.

### *5. Serious Issues Besides School*

Children from low income families who face hunger, possible abuse, mental health difficulties, and other issues have been hit the hardest during this pandemic. Local communities including religious organizations, social workers, and mental health specialists, along with educators and school officials, are needed to continue to help those struggling.

### *6. Online Connection for All Students!*

School districts should ensure that *all students* have access to remote learning. Students from low-income households should not feel pressured to return to school because they are not online. Black communities have been the hardest hit with this virus.

### *7. Students With Disabilities*

Students with disabilities need more support during this time. It's wrong for school districts to shirk their IDEA responsibilities. Teachers and school districts should come up with unique ways to address student needs. Teachers need to be able to connect with students and their parents online.

### *8. Cost for Safety*

The Council of State Chief School Officers estimate **that schools will need \$245 billion to safely reopen**. Republican Senator Lamar Alexander estimated \$50 billion for K-12 and colleges and universities. Use the money to help teachers teach remotely, ensure that all students have online connection, and plan for schools to reopen *better* later when the virus is contained.

### *9. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos*

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos has been **diverting public school monies to private schools**. Who trusts that money will go to public schools for safety? DeVos should be removed from her role. She has shown her contempt for public education at a time when students and teachers need federal support more than ever.

### *10. Social Distancing*

Social distancing is necessary, but it creates an unnatural environment for children in school. Bringing children together is a large part of what school is about. How will teachers enforce separation and isolation? How will this affect children long-term?

### *11. Exposure to Cleaning Products*

**Disinfectants and strong cleaners will be used to continuously kill the virus on surfaces. Many schools have poor ventilation or classrooms without windows. The fumes from such cleaners could be toxic for students to breathe, and harmful if the solution gets on a student's skin.**

### *12. Masks*

**Masks are important to protect yourself and others. But is it healthy for a child to wear a mask for a long period of time? How will students with disabilities, or those who rely on facial cues, be able to adequately communicate?**

### *13. Lunch and the Cafeteria*

**If you're a Covid-19 carrier you may wear your mask all day only to spread the disease when you take it off to eat lunch.**

### *14. School's Scary!*

**Parents can help contain a child's fears about the virus at home. But a dystopian school environment with scary rules and strict protocols could be a nightmare for a child. How will young learners react? So much of their learning is about play and socialization. What if a child carries the disease home to their grandpa, or believes they do? How will they feel?**

### *15. Mental Health*

**Many schools lack counselors. They lack nurses too! Teachers are not prepared or equipped to be nonstop mental health providers.**

### *16. Immunity*

**What will the effects be of children spending so much time in a sterile environment? Will they still build immunity for other diseases?**

### *17. Handwashing*

**With this disease it's necessary to wash your hands well. How much psychological harm will be done, and time spent, making children repeatedly wash their hands in school? How much time will this take?**

### *18. School Restrooms*

**Much concern and conflicting information exists about the spread of Covid-19 in public restrooms. School bathroom conditions have always been a source of concern. Using the restroom at school should not be dangerous.**

### *19. Teacher Qualifications*

**There are not enough teachers for smaller classes for social distancing. Experienced older teachers do not want to get sick. Will schools hire a glut of teachers without qualifications?**

### *20. Recess and Playgrounds*

**Outside is safer, but recess and outdoor activities mean students will come in contact with each other. How do children play if they can't use balls, jump ropes, and toys? How do they avoid the swing set and other outdoor equipment? Many community playgrounds remain closed. Why would school playgrounds be safer?**

### *21. Accountability*

How legally protected are school districts if a student or teacher catches Covid-19? What protections exist for teachers and schools?

## 22. *Transportation*

Students are close together in school buses even if they're socially distancing. Transporting a small number of students is not cost efficient.

## 23. *School Infrastructure*

Many schools have poor ventilation systems.

## 24. *Teachers*

Either teachers risk their lives in the classroom, or they quit. Is this what the Hawai'i's leadership in Education, the President and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos want? Some teachers are writing their wills. Likely there won't be enough teachers. Nor will anyone want to sub for a teacher who gets sick. No teacher should be fired for refusing to return to work.

*Who is most at risk?* At least 30% of teachers are in the high risk older category, and they along with people with chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease are at more risk of developing severe symptoms. As this is a new virus, we are still learning about how it affects children. We know it is possible for people of any age to be infected with the virus. The virus can be fatal in rare cases, so far mainly among older people with pre-existing medical conditions.

## 25. *Schools Open and Close*

If schools open and someone gets sick they will close again. Students will have the added problem of worrying whether they will get the virus, give it to their family, or wonder if they gave the virus to the individual who got sick in school.

## 26. *Tweens and Teens Spread the Disease*

It's **reported** that **a new study out of South Korea** shows that middle and high school students spread the coronavirus as much as adults. In Israel it was reported that schools and not bars, are the primary spreaders of the virus.

## 27. *Betsy DeVos Says that All Schools Must Reopen*

Betsy DeVos has never been a friend to public schools and teachers. She says all schools must reopen. She gives no thought to the coronavirus and places where the virus is spreading. Few trust her. **Here she is being interviewed by Dana Bash on CNN.**

## 28. *Will Serious Cases of Covid-19 in Children Go Up if Children Return to School?*

Some wonder if the cases of Covid-19 in children are lower **because they have not been in school.** It is very likely that we will see a spike in illness in Hawai'i if children return to the classroom. This is supported by what happened in Israel and South Korea.

## 29. *Teachers are Retiring Early*

Teachers are retiring early because they fear being exposed to the virus. Forcing teachers into early retirement means schools will have fewer teachers. Without real teachers, students will fall behind. It may destroy their ability to attend college and their future careers.

## 30. *Teacher Blame*

There are those who criticize teachers for not wanting to return to school for fear of the virus. These same individuals will likely blame teachers if schools reopen and students get sick. Teachers must remain calmly focused on the safety of their students and themselves.

*Instead of Reopening Now....*

This disease is too bizarre and there are still too many unknowns for us to risk our children's health by placing them in school. It isn't worth it, especially when schools are a shell of what they should be.

While I'm not for technology to replace teachers, **teachers teaching remotely is different**. Funding at this time should go towards ensuring that *all students* have efficient online access to their teachers and schools in the fall. Students are not going to become zombies if they miss school for a little longer. The economy is not going to fail if children miss some school.

**Here are some solutions.**

Religious organizations, local support groups, and school officials and teachers should find ways to assist parents with child daycare if parents are essential workers. Maybe small groups of children can meet in safe surroundings.

School boards, parents, and educators might use this time to reconsider the educational needs of students in their local communities.

This is an unprecedented time. This crisis can be used for good, for us to come together to rethink and bolster the nation's public school system. Children are resilient. They will catch up when they return to better, brighter, and safer schools in the near future.

I will be providing further testimony about the giving and then taking back of differentials for special education teachers and others recently provided to myself and others.



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jessica Brown <jess.brown911@gmail.com> on behalf of Jessica Brown  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:08 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

I am testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

As another school year is slated to begin, I am overcome with dread, anxiety, fear, and frustration. COVID-19 is only partly to blame. The fact that the Department of Education is FORCING teachers to go back to work without some sort of plan in place, without showing concern and attention to the health and safety of teachers (and students), is just baffling. Teachers have not had time to practice safety measures. In fact, many teachers are wondering what safety measures are even in place. Are we just supposed to learn it WITH the students during those two weeks at the start of the year? Shouldn't we already be somewhat informed and knowledgeable about safety measures BEFORE students arrive on campus? Teachers have not been adequately trained in distance or blended learning either. We are insanely underprepared to allow students back on our campuses and minimize the risk of COVID-19.

Sincerely,  
Jessica Brown  
Kohala High School

Sent from my iPhone



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Rachael S <rachael.schultz88@gmail.com> on behalf of Rachael S  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:09 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Good evening,

My name is Rachael Schultz and I am entering into my sixth year of teaching in Hawaii. To be specific, I teach 11th grade English at Maui High School. I am testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees](#). As Cory Rosenlee stated: "Our schools are woefully underprepared to deliver a distance learning program should a school be shut down by the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) due to the spread of COVID-19". We are not ready to return to the classroom amid the continuing spikes in cases and what's worse— so many unanswered questions.

Despite the narrative popular among certain parties, schools do not have the required resources to keep staff and students safe. There are no set policies in place should a child or staff member contract the virus. This lack of clear guidelines and solutions gives many educators, myself included, extreme anxiety.

We are all asking similar questions: What are teachers supposed to do if we contract the virus? Will we be forced to use our sick pay to quarantine? Will we be getting hazard pay? Workman's compensation? What happens if we are forced to quarantine multiple times? How are we supposed to know who is sick or not when there are NO screening requirements for kids to come on campus? How are we supposed to track sick students when they're not social distancing or wearing masks on busses?

These are not unreasonable questions deserving of ridicule or dismissal. Sadly, none of these half baked plans have answers or make sense. The pandemic will hit hard and kill students and parents alike if we go into the school year as haphazardly prepared as we are now. Even our supreme overlord, Betsy Devo's, has acknowledged and accepted there will be a body count. Unlike her, I am bothered by this.

I am an East Coast transplant and live alone. Personally, I am not considered a high risk candidate but I interact with those who are high risk. For example, my honorary nephew is a year old and is still recovering from having surgery to remove part of his lung. If he is to contract the virus, there is no telling what that will do to him. Therefore, in order to protect him, I have already had to minimize face-to-face contact with the closest thing I have to family on this island during this Covid-19 crisis. In a few weeks, I will have to eliminate face-to-face contact altogether with the return to school. But I have to, because as a teacher, I cannot afford not to go to work. I am being asked to risk my life and isolate myself from my sole support network in order to "restart" the economy for little financial recompensation.

Teachers are scared for themselves, their families, and the communities we strive to serve. We worry about the potentially devastating impacts of haphazard policies, lack of time to prepare, and lack of supplies to ensure the welfare of ourselves and our students. Rebuttals such as "we must do this for the good of the students" are designed to guilt teachers into hasty returns and ring false. How is asking students and teachers alike to risk their lives and the lives of their family for the good of the students? Teachers DO care and everything we do is for their benefit, always.

This is why I must speak up. Opening right now is dangerous, foolhardy, and irresponsible. To reopen now is to gamble with people's lives. To gamble with children's lives. This cannot be allowed to happen. Schools can not reopen until there is a responsible and sensible plan that takes into account the rising cases, the fact that our cases are as low as they are because of the intercontinental travel ban and will not stay so if the state reopens, and truly works to keep students and teachers safe.

Mahalo for your time.

Sincerely,  
Rachael Schultz

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Nicci Roy <nicci\_roy@yahoo.com> on behalf of Nicci Roy  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:14 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Differentials Pay

To Whom it May Concern,

I am asking that the board consider to prolong teachers hard to staff differential pay. Now, of all times, taking away our pay doesn't help any cause. Teachers aren't going to be able to afford living on just a teachers salary so some may resort to leaving while others will take on a second job to make ends meet meaning less time for school work and students. As a teacher, the school day doesn't end at 3:30, I stay up at night grading papers or trying to find solutions to help better my students learning. I put my heart into touching lives, but feel unappreciated by our government. During this time of online instruction and trying to communicate with as many families as possible, we had to better our internet at home, which cost me money! I care about our youth and would hate to leave education after giving 19 years! Please consider helping your teachers.

Best Regards,

Nicole Roy  
WMPCS

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** lehua kahaleuahi <lehua\_pumehana@yahoo.com> on behalf of lehua kahaleuahi  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:16 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Hi, I am a RN, I work for Maui health systems and most importantly I am a mother of two. My daughter attends Kamehameha schools and my son will be in the third grade at Haiku Elementary. Although sending kids to school may have its risks, so does taking my kids grocery shopping or to the beach. I have always taught them to not touch their faces, good hand hygiene and the importance of sneezing and coughing in their shirts, why we wear masks and why we social distance. I believe going to school is essential and teachers are essential workers just like me! Our public schools provide a safe place for our children to be, for 6+ hours of the day, two meals, and safe activities to keep their minds occupied. Although I am concerned with my child contracting the virus at school and then bringing it home, I am more afraid for the children that are being left home alone with minimal to no supervision, children sitting on the internet all day and children that do not have food in the refrigerator! The rate of children that have gone missing during this pandemic is terrifying! The predators are out there and taking advantage. I feel it is for the best well being of the children that they go to school! I know we can find a safe way to do this!

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kelly <kellyikemoto@gmail.com> on behalf of Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:17 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

I'm testifying on Action Item G. I'm a certified special education teacher and I would like to express how receiving a differential pay greatly impacted me personally and professionally. Before receiving our differential pay, I had to find a part time job, move my family of four into my parents home where we live in their living room, and my husband also had to get side jobs to make ends meet (just to clarify, my husband has a decent job and we're classified as a middle class income family). I was ready to pack up my family and move up another state where they support special education teachers. I cannot put my family back into the environment where both parents had to work part time jobs leaving no time for quality time. You cannot take away the differential pay. I love the field that I'm working in, but I hate the support that's not being given. For all the years I have worked as a special education teacher, I have always had to taken on the load of other teachers that weren't highly qualified. Taking on IEP responsibilities, meetings, curriculum coordination, getting the more "at risk" students where parents are ready to file due process because the school can't afford to have them with a non qualified teacher. This is NOT an healthy work environment and it puts on a strain myself and my family.

With the differential pay, it has made life and work more enjoyable. I do not have to get a part time job and focus more on my family and profession. Please reconsider. The moment I heard our differential pay would be taken away, my family has already started looking for other jobs in the mainland.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Lori Ignacio <pnk4u5d@aol.com> on behalf of Lori Ignacio  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:22 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

Lori Ignacio, Edward Ignacio, Jasmine Castelo, Jason Castelo  
Reopening of Schools  
OPPOSE

As a grandparent living in a multi generational home with my 3 grandkids that will be in grades 2, 3, & 6 this school year We OPPOSE the opening of schools on Aug. 4, 2020 for several reasons:

If any one of them comes home with COVID19 it will expose my spouse & myself who are in the HIGH RISK GROUP due to our age & my CHRONIC HEALTH & HYPERTENSION, we are extremely worried. I am concerned that they (especially my 2nd & 3rd grade grandkids) won't be able to social distance in & outside of class & will be touching their face masks all day, as they do now. If we need to quarantine the kids, do you think they can stay in a room by themselves for 14 days? The HSTA has stated that there is not enough time to get the school ready for face to face & we agree with them. Please reconsider opening the schools at a later date until we can be CONFIDENT that the schools will be 100% READY & SAFE for everyone! We all want our kids to get back into the classrooms but only if it's SAFE! Thank you for allowing us to give this testimony.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Paula Cullen <pcullen29@yahoo.com> on behalf of Paula Cullen  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:23 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Sharing my thoughts

To the Board of Education:

I'm sorry I did not get this finished in time to be shared with you all today. It was almost done and then I met with a parent of a student I just finished with who is anxious about the school year. That meeting lasted 2 hours, so I missed the noon deadline. However, I felt it important to share my thoughts so here is my testimony:

I am a Special Educator have been for over 30 years. If the differential goes away, I'll still be teaching. For me it has never been about the money. However, I was teaching on the mainland where cost of living is very low and pay for educators is much higher than here in Hawaii.

So, why am I writing about this topic?

While the differential will not change whether or not I continue to teach SpEd it will significantly impact HOW I teach. I have used the money to purchase items not readily available for my students or items that allow for individualized instruction. Let me give you a scenario: Imagine being in a full inclusion classroom and struggling to read. You teacher runs off the second grade Wonders story and worksheet because while you may be in fifth grade you cannot read at that level. She hands it to you, it looks much different than the student sitting next to you. The print is larger and the pictures are primary looking. The student sees on the bottom of the page the grade 2 it's tiny but it's there. The student curls the paper so no one else will see, the student is anxious and feels self-conscious. Not one other student notices or says a word, but to the student the message is clear...I'm different, I'm stupid. So what I do is I purchase materials at the levels of my students and usually spend the weekend reformatting so when that same student gets the paper, it looks almost the same and no grade level on the page. I've had students feel proud of their work and tell me "wow, I didn't know I was smart enough to read that."

Since January 2020, I have spent \$460 just on Teachers Pay Teachers alone. I have spent \$200 from Demme Learning to supplement and support students. This does not include any Amazon extras or whole classroom purchases nor does it include extra trainings I have chosen to do or professional books I've ordered and read to keep me current with both information and teaching strategies for a variety of specific disabilities of those students I teach.

So while I'll continue to teach Special Education with or without the pay differential, it sure made a difference. Providing quality instructional materials that made my students feel fully included and allowing my family to go without me usually 1 day of the weekend to prepare materials and or write Individualized Education Plans was easier to do when you felt compensated for the time and effort.

Respectfully,  
Paula Cullen  
Special Education Teacher  
Kihei Elementary School

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Nunie Lady <nunielady99@gmail.com> on behalf of Nunie Lady  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:25 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Differential

Aloha,

I am a special education teacher on Hawaii Island. I have been working for the Hawaii DOE for 15 years. Over the last 15 years, the turn over rate for special education teachers has been high. Licensed special education teachers are a necessity...in order to meet students needs, create specially designed instruction, collect and analyze data, assess students, plan, schedule and write iep's.

Thank you,  
Ms. T



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kaye La <ikadiegl@gmail.com> on behalf of Kaye La  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:26 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** SCHOOLS ARE NOT READY!

Health Rooms alone ARE NOT READY!

Our health room is very small. With social distancing I can only have 2 students at a time.

I have no where to isolate a possible infected student.

If parents aren't able to pick up student immediately or if I can't get a hold of parents, where would I place that student then? Do I close and lock the health room? This puts my APRN and I in danger.

No other waiting room for students with minor illnesses.

Administration is talking about cutting my health room in half to build wall for the APRN but that would also cut her space in half.

If student with symptoms comes to school, he/she has now contaminated and infected the classroom and classmates, and now the health room. Who and how would we work if we'd need to be quarantined for 2 weeks? Subs are hesitant to work because of the same concerns.

With this hybrid or distance learning schedule, what happens on days my child is not in school and I have no babysitter? I can't be calling in sick 3 times a week.

# Late Testimony

SUSAN PCOLA-DAVIS  
SUBSTITUTE TEACHER  
GRANDMOTHER OF 2

TO: Hawaii Board of Education

FROM: SUSAN A. PCOLA-DAVIS

**SECOND TESTIMONY FOR MEETING:** July 23, 2020

Agenda item:

**H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees**

**ACTION:**

**THE BOARD OF EDUCATION WILL NEED THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEFINE VIRTUAL LEARNING AND DISTANCE LEARNING. CURRENTLY PARENT GUIDES FROM DIFFERENT SCHOOLS MIX AND MATCH THE TWO TERMS. SOME SCHOOLS ARE OFFERING DISTANCE LEARNING WITHOUT SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT = HOMESCHOOLING.**

**Attached Exhibit A: FULL DISTANCE LEARNING**

**1. Parent Guide: Types of Learning**

**Instructional Model. A hybrid, rotation model designed to meet the needs of our learners, adhere to health and safety guidelines, and consider the unique conditions to ensure equitable access to quality education. This model consists of the following.**

PROBLEM IDENTIFIED	
<b>DISTANCE LEARNING <u>DOES NOT</u> EQUAL VIRTUAL LEARNING</b>	<b>A SCHOOL CHOOSES AN ONLINE PLATFORM LIKE ACELLUS.</b>
<b>VIRTUAL LEARNING DEFINITION:</b> Virtual learning is a learning experience that is enhanced through utilizing computers and/or the internet both outside and inside the facilities of the educational organization. The instruction most commonly takes place in an online environment. The teaching activities are carried out online whereby the teacher and learners are physically separated (in terms of place, time, or both).	<b>DISTANCE LEARNING DEFINITION:</b> A method of study where teachers and students do not meet in a classroom but use the Internet, e-mail, mail, etc., to have classes. <b>NO TEACHER; FULL DISTANCE EDUCATOR IS THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN MANAGING THE SCHOOLING OF THE CHILD.</b>

**See exhibit A:**

**Q: Will there be a KES teacher overseeing my child's progress or assisting my child when they need help?**

**A: No. As a parent you become the Full Distance Educator at home.** You will be assisting and monitoring your child. It is important to review the school, student, and parent expectations before you commit to FDL.

DIFFERENT INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS	
<b><u>SYNCHRONOUS</u></b> : FACE TO FACE OR VIRTUAL LEARNING	<b><u>ASYNCHRONOUS</u></b> : Independent Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Occurring at the same, assigned times according to the schedule determined by the teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outside of scheduled class times, no scheduled time frames</li> </ul>
Teachers will provide instruction via:	Teachers will provide instructional materials for;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Face to Face = At school; per bell schedule</b></li> <li>- <b>Virtual = at home via Google Meet; per bell schedule</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Independent learning = at home via Google Classroom and See Saw, may be completed at different times.</b></li> </ul>
<b>TARDY = Entering a Google Meet session later than ten (10) minutes after class has begun.</b> <b>ABSENT = Leaving the session</b>	

EXHIBIT A:

### FULL DISTANCE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS SY 2020-2021

**Parameters:**

- 1) Face to face instruction is always the best option of learning.
- 2) There will be an "opt in" form to fill out and commitment is done by the semester.
- 3) Any full distance will require a strong lead person at home acting as a "Full Distance Educator."

	SCHOOL/TEACHER	PARENT	STUDENT
<b>Daily Routines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide recommended daily structure and instructional blocks</li> <li>Schedule in person virtual check ins with students</li> <li>Offer Full Distance Educator trainings for parents (coffee hours to assist with full distance model)</li> <li>Take daily attendance and provide student check ins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish routines/expectations - become a Full Distance Educator (different role than a parent) during school</li> <li>Define the physical space for your child's study</li> <li>Establish times for quiet and reflection</li> <li>Encourage physical activity and/or exercise</li> <li>Monitor communications from your children's teachers</li> <li>Begin and end each day with a check-in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a space and dedicated time for learning</li> <li>Set up a daily routine (ie. hygiene, personal space for learning)</li> <li>Sleep early (as a regular school day) and be learning during school hours</li> <li>Follow all teacher learning expectations daily and listen to your Full Distance Educator</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share and monitor academic progress of students</li> <li>Communicate regularly with families and students</li> <li>Use Seesaw as primary form of communication across campus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate with school on lunch pick up</li> <li>Remain in contact with teacher/school as needed</li> <li>Become proficient with Seesaw and check daily</li> <li>Contact teacher/school during work hours with questions or concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate with your teacher and examine feedback</li> <li>Responsible to seek help when needed (school personnel)</li> <li>Student will complete attendance/check in form each morning</li> <li>Share your growth with your Full Distance Educator daily</li> </ul>
<b>Behavior / Conduct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Full Distance Educator on behavior expectations</li> <li>Continue to provide Social, Emotional learning that supports positive behaviors</li> <li>Remain professional in all circumstances regardless of platform and structure</li> <li>Provide Social Emotional Learning tools to help with developing the whole child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act as a Full Distance Educator for your child</li> <li>Remain mindful of your child's stress or worries</li> <li>Keep your children social, but set rules around their social media interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate the four core values and choose love pillars</li> <li>Comply with HDOE's Acceptable Use Policy, including expectations for online etiquette.</li> <li>Follow the school rules ie. Chapter 19 regulations</li> <li>Ensure the background that will show up behind you is appropriate for school.</li> <li>Enter each school day groomed and with the mindset of being on campus in appropriate attire: pants, shorts, tops, not pajamas.</li> <li>Be prepared with the appropriate supplies: computer, earphones, textbooks, notebooks, calculator, writing implements.</li> </ul>
<b>Curriculum Instruction and Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide devices for families that need technical support</li> <li>Provide materials via Seesaw and/or paper packets</li> <li>Plan appropriate standard based curriculum for all subjects, with a heavy focus on ELA and math standards</li> <li>Give opportunities for students to connect virtually with teachers and classmates</li> <li>Provide feedback and guidance around key standards and assess student progress during the school year</li> <li>Provide support and guidance via email/communication systems for student questions and needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring your child to school if required to take an assessment on school campus, schedule and support this process (or request for online if possible)</li> <li>Take an active role in helping your children process their learning.</li> <li>Monitor how much time your child is spending online.</li> <li>Be aware of the scope and sequence of what is provided and help your child stay on a regular schedule and complete all assigned tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be available and ready during school time for all scheduled meetings with class/teacher</li> <li>Demonstrate learning with completion of assignments</li> <li>Engage with the classroom and use tools (like headphones) to focus on instructional videos, etc.</li> <li>Have a Growth Mindset everyday when you are "in school" at home</li> <li>Be self motivated to keep learning and growing even at home</li> </ul>

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Franchelle Ruiz <franchelleruiz@gmail.com> on behalf of Franchelle Ruiz  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:45 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

To Whom It May Concern,

I am testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

I am both a parent of a student at Ho'okele Elementary School of Kapolei, Hawaii as well as a Paraprofessional Tutor at the same setting. With school starting soon, I have heard very little of safety measures, implementations for the students, protocols or even safety protocols for staff. It alarms me with the current pandemic that we are putting our community at risk by allowing school in person to occur. Albeit, there is a hybrid schedule, 6 feet between bodies; this does not seem to be enough to gather in the masses while a virus with many unknown symptoms and long-term effects are still unknown. I am disappointed in the fact that our school has not offered a 100 percent distance learning module. In special circumstances, there should be special accommodations put into place.

As a person who is of high risk to exposure, I am not comfortable with my child going back into the educational arena and I have already informed my employer that I may not be coming back to work this year, especially with little being known of how we as staff and students will be protected.

I am really hoping for a better solution to what has already been offered.

Franchelle Ruiz

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Lynne LeClaire <lleclaire@kapunahala.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Lynne LeClaire  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:52 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Safe Plan for opening schools

To the Board of Education,

I am a 2nd grade teacher at Kapunahala Elementary School in Kaneohe. I recently watched the Senate meeting that occurred on July 17, 2020, which aired live on Olelo. I hope that all of you were able to listen to the discussion between Dr. Park, Mrs. Kishimoto and the Senate panel. It was clear that Mrs. Kishimoto and her DOE consultants needed to do a better job filling in the gaps for the safe reopening of all the DOE schools. AOther issues brought up were the need for childcare needs for teachers and plans to replace teachers should they take leave. Mrs. Kishimoto, lacked clarity and a connection with the community's needs. At my school, there are teachers who are taking LWOP and retiring earlier than they had expected due the conflicting need for their personal childcare and underlying health issues they have personally. As teachers returning, we are not convinced that the DOE has done their best to open our schools with care and thorough communication with all subgroups involved.

Our school administrators need more time to plan, inform and train their staff for this critical stage of reopening our schools. Currently, we are ill equipped, lacking training and professional knowledge for our new school year which will require many new procedures. Teachers haven't been able to plan their lessons given the lack of information and training, and therefore are not ready for the opening of their classrooms. Surely there is not sufficient time to accomplish this during the first 2 weeks of school as Mrs. Kishimoto stated was the time for this to take place.

At the meeting, Mrs. Kishimoto said that addressing the push back of opening schools would need to be brought to the BOE. I would like to urge this matter to be further investigated. It would be a safer practice to wait until after Labor Day to open our schools. This would grant the DOE the neccessary time to be better aligned and ready to advise, inform and train each school to have the skills and provide PPE to safely open schools properly.

Please revisit the date that Hawaii's public schools should open. If you did not watch & listen to the meeting that took place last Friday, I would urge that you do in order to be informed of how unprepared schools are to open on Aug 5th. Please provide us with time to ensure a safer reopening on Sept. 8 to do the task given to us in the best prepared way that we are able.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,  
Lynne LeClaire

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** lindajury4@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:52 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** DOE is not ready to reopen

Aloha my name is Linda Jury and I am a teacher as well as a parent. I am writing in response to the conference that was held a few days ago. I am not at all confident in the plans that have been shared in reopening of schools. As a parent, I am worried about the safety of my children given the fact that the department has waited so long to share their plans, and furthermore there are a lot of holes in the plans that I cannot help but question. In 2 short weeks, we are supposed to hand our children over to schools that may not be ready. As a teacher, I can say that I don't even know all the details in our reopening plans. I am disappointed that we are expected to show up to work next week, and then suddenly be thrown into this situation with very little time to prepare! I urge the department to consider opening schools at a later time when ALL the stakeholders can be a part of the planning and preparations are air tight!

With humbleness,  
Linda Jury

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Megan <nalani004@yahoo.com> on behalf of Megan  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:53 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony for safe school opening

Hi I am a concerned parent regarding the lack of supplies and resources that these kids need to have a safe school environment. I am a nurse who works with COVID patients and I know what this virus can do. We especially know that kids are not the best at washing their hands and can pick up germs easily. Kids are very likely to bring home this virus to their elders and parents. Please please provide the necessary supplies and resources for a safe school opening. Our kupuna and community is counting on this or else we may be Facing a huge problem for our communities. Thank you!  
-Meg Kamaau



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Pooie95 <pooie95@yahoo.com> on behalf of Pooie95  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:57 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Do not start school

I have a son that was scheduled to start college his freshman year this year. He chose to take online classes at a community college to protect me from Covid. My husband requested that he work from home to protect me from Covid. He was granted that from his company. I am a teacher here in Hawaii, and I have a very compromised immune system. My family has made sacrifices to help maintain my health. I believe that school should start later not just for my health but for everyone's health. I don't believe you're ready as a state or nation to have a successful social distancing teaching environment. I believe you're rushing into this school year without a solid plan .

I worry that I'm going to get sick and then I'm going to get other people sick and it's constantly on my mind.

Another concern, it is that students aren't required to wear a mask at school... it's optional. There are no consequences of the students don't wear a mask outside the class and they are not required to wear a mask inside the classroom. This is such an unsafe practice. It is proven wearing a face mask helps prevent Covid.

Again, I really reiterate, going to school at this time is unsafe for teachers, students, and the families associated with them. Please reconsider this unsafe decision to go back to school.

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Adrel Vicente <adrelv@gmail.com> on behalf of Adrel Vicente  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 5:58 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Dear Board of Education,

I am testifying on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees. I am against opening schools to students on August 4, 2020.

My name is Adrel Vicente, and I am a certified teacher and counselor. I am currently the Freshman Academy counselor at Waiakea High School in Hilo. We are not ready to open schools on August 4, 2020, and we are still developing our safety protocols, distance learning protocols, and so many other procedures. Like teachers, counselors are only 10-month employees, so I have been volunteering my time this summer in attending virtual learning training, answering parent e-mails. I would like to clarify that these trainings were provided by my school, and not our superintendent. We need more time to, not only ensure the safety of my students, myself, and colleagues, but also need time to develop a quality distance learning program and procedures to ensure our students are learning and not given work that does not meet high educational standards.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mr. Adrel Vicente,

Freshman Academy Counselor, Waiakea High School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Christy Peralta <xokealoha@gmail.com> on behalf of Christy Peralta  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:02 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delay start

Aloha,

I am a parent and kindergarten teacher who just got asked to teach online for 2 grade levels!

Before that I was already concerned as a parent for my children to go back to school being that I knew that there's so much that still needs to be done before we can even start to make our learning communities safe for not only employees but students and their families as well.

My son was hospitalized for respiratory problems last year (4 times) and he's working on building a stronger immune system and lungs. My mother in law who babysits him while we work watches him, and she also cares for her elderly mother who is a breast cancer survivor. On the other hand, I HAVE MILD TO SEVERE ASTHMA.

Every meeting for the reopening of school is overwhelming for teachers because we are so unsure of what we're doing and some guidelines aren't being met. Parents have no choice because they have to go back to work.

Then there are students who need us because they have no one to care for them at home. Then of course they need "school" as a sense of day care while their parents or single parents try to make a living here (with one income only some times). But they also have no other choice but to send them to school, EVEN if they are so terrified to send their child to school because they have no one to watch their kids. So we need to be sure that we are ready and all plans are in place (which we are not).

Also, budget cuts would add more stress to teachers who are struggling to even make ends meet here in Hawaii (local teacher as well). Teachers are so under paid already, and we do way more than just teaching our students academics. If there's only one source of income in a house hold due to unemployment, then that would make it even harder for a family, teachers would slowly break down and suffer mental stress which then affects their overall health Which would mean teacher burn out. And if teachers began to get diagnosed with COVID, there's no plan on what would happen to the class or instruction.

Please, We need more time. We aren't ready like the governor said we are. We are not a day care program. We are preparing our children for the future, not failure. We also need to be sure we can provide effective and equality instruction and rushing into it is not the right way to go.

Aloha,  
Christy Peralta  
Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Eileen Rodrigues <keonabear@icloud.com> on behalf of Eileen Rodrigues  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:05 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Opening of Schools

There is no DOH guidelines and No training yet!

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** k o <ozeanminded@gmail.com> on behalf of k o  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:11 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Teacher Shortage Differentials

Aloha,

Please remember that the differential pay system was put into place to fund shortage areas. These areas do require specialized, certified, highly-qualified, caring, and dedicated teachers. The differentials have supported teachers in these areas in a variety of ways: student loans, rent, classroom supplies, etc... Moreover, now the differential pay can be used to purchase masks to be used in the classrooms they are teaching.

Please continue to implement the differentials before these areas are no longer filled with specialized, certified, highly-qualified, caring, and dedicated teachers.

Mahalo.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Melissa Lehua Novikoff <melissa@halaukumana.org> on behalf of Melissa Lehua Novikoff  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:11 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delaying student start date

Aloha mai e to whom this may concern,

It seems most fitting to our current state, the spike in COVID-19 cases, lack of military participation in data collection on COVID-19, other countries sincerity to ban our travel that to delay school openings especially after a large majority of parents voted in favor of on-line education is the best decision. It seems as if the decision to open the school is rash and done without real consideration of the current state of our world. The state did not see a lot of cases during our closure but we did not see no cases for four weeks either. Safety should be our priority over convenience, pressure, and economy. It has been proven in many other states that opening up did not turn out as planned and infected numbers increase rapidly after opening. I've heard stories of people with COVID-19 affected in the community and the reports were troubling especially considering that this can cycle back into our community. This is concerning considering our keiki. It is easy for them to continuously get sick. We have not taken the proper precautions here in the islands to prepare for more contact such as plastic screens on individual desks and adequate sanitation supplies. China is doing far better than the United States and Hawaii in their prevention methods. The way we are going about considering opening our schools is not equipped properly and honestly quite a joke. I love that we are in the garden isle but this is a pandemic that has killed half a million people world wide. We should not be treating this as a casual manner. Our state has done well by keeping people out and staying out of contact. Those that are skeptics must acknowledge that this is the reason why we have not had more severe repercussions through our practice of proper social distancing techniques. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Melissa Novikoff

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Patrick Limos <limos.patrick@gmail.com> on behalf of Patrick Limos  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:13 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

I am writing this in concern for my two friends who are both teachers in the Ewa Beach area. I am submitting this testimony against opening public schools amidst a pandemic which I believe, as well as local experts including LG Josh Green, will accelerate the spread of COVID in the state and compromise the health and lives of our students, teachers, and school staff.

My friends are important to me, and I have to put my foot down when they're being forced into a situation that puts them, their families, and friends in harms way.

Additionally, I have heard from several parents that the proposed workarounds to keep our schools safe (such as staggering student attendance) were confusing and not accommodating.

Our schools are underfunded even in normal times, and this lack of resources will prove to be even more trying to keep classes sanitized and personnel safe.

Pandemics are temporary inconveniences, but negative health outcomes due to the outbreak can lead to permanent and life-altering consequences. Please, I implore the decision makers to think of the lives that will be detrimentally impacted by opening schools before the pandemic has passed or proper and scientifically sound precautions are put in place.

Mahalo for your attention,  
Patrick Limos

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kerri Ayabe <kerri.56@hotmail.com> on behalf of Kerri Ayabe  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:25 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I am testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

Please delay the reopening of schools. I do not feel safe to have my child return back to school. She just took the ACT exam at Mililani High School on Saturday. She said the desks were NOT set up 6 feet about all around! They may have been 4-6' apart between desks horizontally but not front or back. I don't think schools are ready to reopen because they do not have safety protocols in place.

The health and safety of our children and school staff should be priority & not just getting kids back to school so parents can go to work!



## Testimony BOE

**From:** Tracie Kuniyuki <sitka@hawaii.rr.com> on behalf of Tracie Kuniyuki  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:30 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I am testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

My name is Tracie Kuniyuki. I am a 10 month employee with the Department of Education. I have been an elementary school teacher here in Hawaii since 1988. I have been on staff at Mountain View School on Hawaii Island for 25 years. Today I voluntarily went in to school for FIVE hours to provide my mana'o to create procedures and routines for our keiki, staff and faculty so our families would have this information BEFORE their child(ren) entered our campus. Our principal regularly consulted the MOU, CDC COVID19 documents, and generic DOH documents as the discussion progressed. We discussed health and safety protocol, specifically

1. Classroom Set-Up and Classroom Procedures
2. Cleaning and Sanitizing
3. Employee Screening Protocol and Procedures
4. Student and Screening Protocol and Procedures
5. Walking flow map of the school

**Our entire faculty should be involved on these decisions. Two other six hour meetings were held last week to deconstruct the MOU and begin discussions. Time is needed to invent this wheel.** The Department of Health needs to provide written guidance specifically tailored to public schools. Besides that, DOH should produce kid friendly posters on effective mask use and hand washing.

In addition, I briefly conferred with my two of my grade colleagues on curriculum and how we could serve our second graders in face to face sessions, online instruction, and serving the fully online students. The third teacher was not in attendance so decisions could **not** be made. I need time with my fellow educators to discuss abbreviating the curriculum, which platform and digital tools we'll use, how to share the division of subjects so we can deliver unified, rich learning. More time is needed with my colleagues BEFORE students come to school.

Superintendent Kishimoto said in her July 22 video to teachers that all schools have the equipment needed to begin the year. Untrue, I learned that our school does not have the necessary PPE for the staff and faculty. We were asked if we thought that every classroom had at least one bottle of hand sanitizer. The school ordered additional items but it is unknown when the items will arrive. The vice-principal and a teacher were conferring on how to build see through partitions when teachers pull multiple students together for small group instruction. Time is needed for deliveries to be made and for the superintendent make good on her words.

At our local hospitals, airports, other nations, temperatures are taken prior to admittance. The DOE and DOH have provided no such direction to the bus companies who bring the children to school.

As a side note, I passed by the shoreline areas on Banyan Drive last week. There were dozens of families under tarps, grilling, partying in close proximity--all without masks. Hawaii Island has been lucky. This luck will run out if schools are forced to open without guidance, direction, and time to develop the procedures and protocol.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** carri rambin <konacarri@gmail.com> on behalf of carri rambin  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:31 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Training, what training

I have been an SLP in HI DOE for 20 years. Let me say that I wholeheartedly want to be back with my students face to face! Telepractice works for a small percentage of my caseload.

As a school-based SLP we are required to interface with over 50 students a week. Our jobs require close contact, ability to see the entire face and have our faces be seen by our students to provide necessary cuing and to analyze student error speech production, and in many cases we must maintain close contact to have students develop communication skills by using alternative means of communicating (coming to and placing a picture in the hand in exchange for a reinforcer item). I work with students across all grade levels and multiple schools. There is no way to not burst the Ohana bubbles!

We have been provided with a single flimsy face shield, a box of gloves, approximately 12 disposable masks, a plexiglass shield for the table that would only work for some activities, and 1 small bottle of cleaner which will last all of a week at best. No paper towels have been supplied to use with said cleaner. There has been no training whatsoever up to this point. Is the DOE ready? It certainly doesn't appear so based on my experience up to this point.

Ready to see my students but concerned for everyone's safety.

Aloha,

HI SLP

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kerri Ayabe <kerri.ayabe@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kerri Ayabe  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:33 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I am testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

Please delay the reopening of schools. I do not feel safe to return back to work at this time. As a teacher at Helemano Elementary, I do not feel trained or prepared to head back yet. There are so many questions & concerns about reopening safely. I understand that parents need childcare so they can return back to work but we are educators & not babysitters. We should be allowed to teach through distance learning until it is safe to return to the classrooms.

The health and safety of our children and our school staff should be of most importance!

Thank you.

Kerri Ayabe

Grade 1 Teacher

Helemano Elementary School



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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Emma Borg <emma.borg@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Emma Borg  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:36 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Special Education Teacher Shortage Differentials

Aloha!

My name is Emma Galske and I am a ELA special education teacher at Chiefess Kamakahalei Middle School. This school year will be my 5th year teaching as a special education teacher on Kauai. Although the job is challenging, I have loved every second of it and continue to grow and learn as an educator from both my students and colleagues. It is because of my love for my school and the island, that I am sending this email to discuss the potential discontinuance of the special education teacher shortage differential.

I moved to Kauai two months after graduating from Marist College excited to take on a 6th grade ELA co-teaching position as the special education teacher. Teaching special education has always been a goal of mine and I am currently enrolled in the masters program at Purdue University to pursue that passion. When I first got on island, the living expenses within the state, as well as other expenses such as gas and groceries, were a big change for me. Luckily, I moved here with a friend of mine who also accepted a position as a special education teacher on the island. Thus, we were able to rent a place together and share a car. Despite those fortunate circumstances, money was tricky. We could not even secure a place to live before officially moving out here and had to live in an Airbnb for the first few weeks until we finally found a place that we could afford to rent. Although I now live in an apartment with my husband, we face the struggle of building our savings with the hopes of one day growing our family and buying a home. We know that we won't be able to stay here forever despite loving my job and island life, because it's just not enough to build up a savings.

Special education positions are difficult and incredibly demanding. Because of the huge shortage of teachers within the field, the current special education teachers end up taking on a lot more than would be normally expected. Although I love my job, I'm feeling like I'm starting to burn out. That's a scary feeling for someone so new to the field. The differential is absolutely crucial to encouraging either current teachers to pursue special education, or enticing teachers from the mainland to come teach on the beautiful islands of Hawaii despite the high living expenses.

We need to ensure that special education students are getting the quality educators they deserve. With the shortage, positions have unfortunately been filled by long term subs or people who do not have experience within the field of special education. We need to do better for our students, and in order to do that, we need to do better for our teachers. The differentials make an incredible impact on special educators and other hard to staff positions, and I strongly believe it will continue to have positive long term affects on staffing those positions adequately in the future.

Thank you for taking the time to read through my testimonial. I appreciate all the hard work everyone in the state, especially the department of education, is doing as the pandemic continues to be a factor. Thank you for your dedication to student and staff safety and well being.

Sincerely,

**Emma Galske**

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**Mrs. Emma Galske**  
**6th Grade ELA Co-Teacher**

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Malevine Salanoa <malevine.salanoa@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Malevine Salanoa  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:38 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** School Reopenings

Aloha,

My name is Malevine Salanoa. I am a Special Education teacher at Radford High School for the medically fragile students in a Fully Self-Contained Classroom Setting. With that being said, I am submitting this testimony because of my students vulnerability and high risk status to illness. I'm very concerned about the re-opening of school on August 4th. I have not received any kind of guidance or training in keeping my students, educational assistances, myself, and other support staff who work closely with students in my classroom safe. My students require diaper changing and feeding multiple times each day. With the current situation in facing this COVID19 virus, how will our staff and students be protected during changing and feeding? Will PPE be provided? Will PPE be enough to protect us all? What is the protocol when someone in my class is sick or tests positive for the virus? My students will not keep a face mask on...how will we keep this from impacting other students and staff in the classroom. There are so many unanswered questions. I believe teachers should have at least a month to be properly trained and prepared for students to return to campus. On another note I have 6 grade school children at home who will be only attending school 2-3 times a week. How will I care for them when I need to be at work everyday? The questions get a lot more deep and the answers are nowhere to be found. I urge the BOE to please give teachers the time to be adequately trained and prepare for our students return to campus. Mahalo for your consideration. It is our utmost priority to keep our students safe.

Best Regards,  
Malevine Salanoa  
Radford High School  
Special Education Teacher

--

Malevine Salanoa  
Resource Teacher  
Radford High School  
4361 Salt Lake Blvd.  
Honolulu, HI 96818  
(808)421-4200 x 275

*"It is not happiness that makes us grateful. It's gratefulness that makes us happy." -D. S-R.*

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Faith Saito <tutusaito@hotmail.com> on behalf of Faith Saito  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:44 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

Please do NOT reopen until you have the proper PPE in place! Our daughter is a teacher at Mililani Waena and she is battling Auto Immune disease! Also, as her parents and Kupunas we are seriously concerned regarding COVID 19 which is going to get worse. Our daughter is also our life line to shopping, etc. You will be putting not only her, but her extended families in danger as her mother-in-law is 90 yrs. young!!!! Your thought and consideration in this matter is greatly appreciated. I pray for a better solution!

Blessings,  
Faith Saito - parent of a "teacher"

[www.faithsaito.norwex.biz](http://www.faithsaito.norwex.biz)  
(808)383-7789



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Joana Nakandakari <jn.sayuri@gmail.com> on behalf of Joana Nakandakari  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:44 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I am testifying on action item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): (2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for bargaining unit 5 employees.

I am an educator in the honolulu district. I am fully in support of our union (HSTA) in pushing back the date of reopening schools. Not only are there not detailed written guidance from the DOH, but everyone including principals and teachers obviously do not feel confident in this time frame. This all feels so rushed and every teacher that I have spoken to feels uncomfortable and unsafe returning. I personally feel very unsafe returning, especially because so many of the questions that I think of do not have clear cut answers.

I understand that reopening our schools will help reopen other areas and businesses, but at what risk? It seems the governor, BOE, and the superintendent keep speaking about the children and how they need their education and have less of a rate of contracting this disease, what about the TEACHERS?! HSTA is the only union or organization that puts our health in the forefront. Of course we do not want to get our kids sick, but many teachers are older and have compromised immune systems. We take care of elderly relatives, this all seems too hasty that it will crumble and we will shut down anyway. Please consider and think of the teachers and the children that do have compromised immunities.

These ohana bubbles the superintendent keeps speaking of still puts us at a huge risk. All of these children have families and honestly anyone that their family gets exposed to we now are exposed to. It worries me and I just fear that this will spread rapidly if we do not take the time to think things through.

Bottom line, right now in the way things are presented to us , everything that I have read I DO NOT FEEL SAFE. In our contract with HSTA it states we would not have to work in an unsafe environment. If we can contract a disease that potentially can send us to the hospital, I consider this an unsafe environment.

There were also things that were stated that PPE orders are backlogged and many schools have ordered them but they are not in school yet. At the very least teachers and students need to be protected from spreading germs, and if we are not ready, then how can we open?

Please start thinking about the HUGE possibility that rushing to open can possibly kill more people and get much more people sick. PLEASE consider pushing back the reopening date until there is more comfort and confidence with the people who will be working in the conditions you are writing for us. We deserve better... while you work in your offices we are all frightened to return to ours.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Sarah Carlson <slcarlsonemail@gmail.com> on behalf of Sarah Carlson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:48 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Special Education teacher frustrated by Hawaii's broken promises

I beg the BOE to not turn back on their pledge to honor my value with a pay differential. I have been working hard throughout the pandemic in an ESY classroom because my salary is not enough to cover my rent and bills without working. Even though I am fearful about Covid-19 and my loved ones, I continue working with a population of children that do not have the capacity to wear masks, practice social distancing, or keep their hands clean for more than a minute.

I have also been busy preparing my lessons for distance learners with the tools they need such as videos for learning how to turn-on the text-to-speech features on Chromebooks for hard to read words, locating articles about Hawaii to engage them with relevant material and putting together a plethora of graphic organizers that I can upload to their Google Classroom. I am also sincerely invested in student awareness of Hawaiian culture and value. I have been attempting to incorporate Hawaiiana in my Biology resource classes made for synchronous and asynchronous learners with such challenges as limited focus, or lack of motivation for learning in advance of school opening because I know that I need to reassess my students when they return to school for regression and then attack that too. This is no small task. I guarantee you are getting your money's worth.

Sincerely, I fear that if the BOE does break this promise to pay for the investment in quality professionals in this area, the future for students with exceptional needs will sink even lower than it already is and those that were borderline of needing extra services will surely need them because they will not be supported properly from the onset without enough special educators.

I am drowning in student debt (approx. \$50k) and have visited the food bank more than a few times since moving back to Hawaii to teach last year. I have a strong desire and motivation to instill in students with challenges in learning that they have value and are intelligent. The reason I chose to teach in Hawaii is because I took Hawaiian studies at UH Manoa years ago and my Kumu, Jon Osorio, instilled in me that Hawaii has been disadvantaged far too many times; that we need to all step-up and take care of Hawaii for the future.

If you care about the keiki that will be the future of Hawaii then please remember how important it is to help students with special needs find value in themselves for self-determination and academic knowledge so that they can become fully functioning adults who pay taxes rather than drain the system. It's pay now or pay more later - at all of our expense!

Sincerely,  
Sarah Carlson  
Maui High School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Lindsay Kawano <lnnkawano@gmail.com> on behalf of Lindsay Kawano  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:50 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony: Hawaii schools are not ready to reopen

To the Board of Education,

I am testifying on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees. I am a teacher at a middle school and I am currently teaching summer school classes to 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade students. Our classes only have 8 students in the room at a time, we are trying our best to enforce the 6-foot rule and mask requirement, and we are cutting time out of the day to clean the surfaces in the classroom when we are done with our lessons. However, from this short experience, I can say with 100% certainty that the measures we are taking and the plans that the DOE has for reopening our schools will not work.

Despite my reminders, my students take off their masks or blatantly refuse to wear their masks in the classroom. I have lost valuable instructional time trying to explain the importance of masks to my students, yet I find myself asking my students to put their masks on every day of summer school. I have incentivized mask-wearing by giving them "class contributor" points that they can redeem to earn a snack, but this is not a sustainable practice that I can financially support when the school year starts. I have restructured summer school lessons to include the science behind mask-wearing, the moral obligations humans have to protect one another, and I have even done lessons in which students create their own bills that they would want to become laws to protect students during the pandemic. Despite all of these efforts, I still have to remind students to wear their masks. I have had to correct students' behavior when they play with their masks, wear them on the top of their heads, or sling it at each other by the elastic straps as a game. I have considered giving more serious behavioral consequences for misuse of masks, but I believe doing so would demoralize students and they are already in the midst of a very uncertain and potentially traumatic event in their childhood. It would also not be fair to punish a student with behavior consequences if they simply forgot to put their mask on.

Masks aside, the 6-foot social distancing rules are almost impossible to enforce. Anyone who has met a middle schooler knows that they should not and will not sit still for longer than an hour or two. Students get out of their seats for class activities, to talk to their peers during break time, to sharpen pencils, to throw away their trash, to pick out a book from the class library, and sometimes they just need to stretch their legs and get their growing bodies moving. This is a normal part of life and students should not be glued to their seats for the entire school day. In all this movement, kids break the social distancing rules. Kids touch each others' desks, forget to put their masks up when talking to peers, and they cough and sneeze without remembering to cover their mouths.

As teachers, we can only do so much to ensure that our students are safe and that they are contributing just as much as we are to slow the spread of COVID-19. We can teach them the science, politics, and history of this pandemic, but we cannot keep them from being human.

Schools closed when cases were much less severe than they are now, so why would it suddenly be a good time to reopen in just a couple weeks? That being said, the state should consider a phased reopening approach for schools in consideration of the status of the pandemic. Should schools reopen at the current set start date, I know from my summer school experience, that we are setting our students and school faculties up for dire health consequences. Knowing that the state will continue to be federally funded for student attendance,

whether that be in person or online, I see no reason to rush the reopening of schools during this unprecedented time.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,  
Lindsay Kawano, M.Ed  
Wheeler Middle School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kuuipo Maielua <kmaielua7219@yahoo.com> on behalf of Kuuipo Maielua  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:55 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Keep Our Kids Safe

To whom it may concern

I'm writing to you in concerns of my child returning to school this year,I'm afraid of the risk that puts all of our children at.Its not safe at this time for be sending our children's back to school if cases are still raising each and eveyday.If teachers dont feel safe how are they going to keep our children safe.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



Testimony of Sylvia M. Hussey, Ed.D.  
Ka Pouhana, Chief Executive Officer

Hawai'i State Board of Education  
General Business Meeting

AGENDA ITEM VI.H: BOARD ACTION ON MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN STATE OF HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION AND HAWAII STATE  
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 RESPONSE): 2017-2021  
CONTRACTUAL MODIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS OF WORK RELATED TO  
COVID-19 RESPONSE FOR BARGAINING UNIT 5 EMPLOYEES

July 23, 2020

1:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

The Administration of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) respectfully urges your careful consideration of the requests by the Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) and many others, to **delay the reopening of our public schools until safety protocols, guidance, and alternatives have been more clearly developed and communicated to the educators, families, and students of our Department of Education (DOE) school system.**

As an initial matter, OHA notes that the **COVID-19 pandemic and the potential spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in our schools and in the community is a matter of significant concern to Native Hawaiians.** 2018 school year data indicate that Native Hawaiian students make up 24% of the student body in our DOE school system, and 25% of the total students in our overall public school system;<sup>i</sup> accordingly, any COVID-19 outbreak in our public schools is likely to expose a significant proportion of Native Hawaiian students to the disease. Native Hawaiians are also more likely to live in crowded, multigenerational households,<sup>ii</sup> and any exposed or infected students may be less able to be isolated from other family members, including kūpuna or other vulnerable individuals; exposed or infected family members may likewise have difficulties isolating themselves from students.<sup>iii</sup> Notably, Native Hawaiians in general are more likely to suffer from co-morbidities known to increase the risk of serious illness resulting from COVID-19,<sup>iv</sup> and family members with such pre-existing medical conditions may also be particularly vulnerable, should members of their household be exposed or infected at school. More widespread outbreaks in the community, resulting in whole or in part from school reopenings, may also impact our islands' overall healthcare capacity, and the ability of many such Native Hawaiians and others to access needed medical services. **Accordingly, the Native Hawaiian community has a heightened interest in ensuring that our DOE schools are able to prevent or mitigate the spread of COVID-19 to the greatest extent possible.**

OHA does appreciate that many DOE schools have in fact adopted school reopening plans that reflect, to varying degrees, guidelines from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other guidance;<sup>v</sup> nonetheless, concerns raised by the HSTA and others indicate that there may still be a lack of sufficiently clear safety protocols, guidance, and

alternatives to mitigate the potential for outbreaks and the impacts of COVID-19 exposure or spread in our DOE schools. Of note are concerns regarding an **apparent lack of clarity or consistency on facemask protocols, including for younger grades and during recess; lack of clarity regarding military family members exempt from the 14 day quarantine; lack of clarity regarding procedures after exposure or a positive COVID-19 test result, such as notification of families and requirements for the testing or isolation of siblings and other household members; the need for more trainings and resources to accommodate distance learning for vulnerable students, or students living with vulnerable individuals; and the need for more time to explore and assess experiences from other jurisdictions as well as alternative approaches, such as outdoor instruction areas, that may further mitigate the risk of COVID-19 infection.**<sup>vi</sup> There may also be a need to assess the degree to which schools have been able to meaningfully inform families, including those with linguistic barriers and economic challenges, regarding the importance of fulfilling their roles in preventing the potential exposure, introduction, or spread of students and faculty to COVID-19, such as with regards to ensuring that students are able to practice appropriate face mask usage, hand washing, and social distancing,<sup>vii</sup> and that students are kept home when they present with any indication of illness, even and especially mild symptoms that could indicate a high risk of virus transmission.<sup>viii</sup> **Accordingly, in light of the continuing concerns and questions raised by the HSTA and others, OHA does believe it prudent for the Board to consider delaying the August 4, 2020 school reopening date so that these concerns can be more fully addressed, and that safety protocols, guidelines, and alternative approaches to minimize the potential for a COVID-19 outbreak can be more fully developed and communicated to all employees, families, and students in our public school system.**

As an entity deeply invested in the well-being of Native Hawaiian children, OHA does recognize the education of our keiki as among our highest priorities. Accordingly, OHA does not necessarily oppose school reopenings as an important and necessary action to further the educational and developmental needs of public school students. **However, delaying the planned reopening to provide further time to ensure that safety protocols, guidelines, and alternatives are more fully developed and communicated may be critical to ensuring that students are able to maximize their educational experience, and avoid the significant negative repercussions of unnecessary exposure to or infection by SARS-CoV-2 – which in itself could be significantly disruptive to the educational and developmental experiences of students.** More time to train teachers and identify or develop resources to ensure greater access to distance learning will also ensure a better educational experience for students who learn from home. Additional time may also allow for the incorporation of “lessons learned” from other jurisdictions, and other epidemics, for public school reopenings, in furtherance of educational goals. Therefore, OHA does believe that allowing for additional time before schools reopen may only serve to further the educational and development interests of Native Hawaiian and other keiki in our public school system.

As a Native Hawaiian-serving organization, OHA further appreciates that reopening schools is intended to allow more parents to return to work, which may in turn reduce the significant and particular impacts economic the pandemic has had and will have on the Native Hawaiian community.<sup>ix</sup> Accordingly, OHA again does not oppose school reopenings. **However, providing schools with additional time to develop clearer and more fully**



**developed safety protocols, guidelines, and alternatives can help reduce employment disruptions from the avoidable exposure or infection of students returning to school, who must then be isolated and presumably kept at home with their parents for the requisite quarantine period.** Allowing more time for protocols and guidelines to be communicated to parents and the broader community will also let parents, employers, and policymakers know what to expect in terms of such potential employment disruptions, and to plan accordingly. **Moreover, any increase in COVID-19 infection rates due to avoidable outbreaks in our school system may have an overall dampening effect on local consumer activity and the local economy, quelling any benefit that may arise from the ability of parents to return to work.** Therefore, OHA also believes that allowing for additional time before schools reopen may only increase the economic benefits of such reopening, and minimize the risk of negative economic impacts that may reduce or negate any such benefits.

**Accordingly, OHA respectfully urges the Board to carefully consider the requests from the HSTA and others to delay reopening schools until safety protocols, guidance, and alternatives are more clearly developed and communicated, to minimize any avoidable risks posed to the Native Hawaiian community, to ensure the best educational and developmental experiences for our keiki and haumana, and to minimize the potential for unintended economic disruption.**

Mahalo nui for your consideration of this request.

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<sup>i</sup> Hawai'i State Department of Education Office of Strategy, Innovation and Performance, Assessment and Accountability Branch, OHA\_RequestOEC15-16\_16-17\_17-18rpt (2019) (unpublished data).

<sup>ii</sup> 24.8% of Native Hawaiian households, compared to 9.6% of state households include more than two generations or an unrelated individual. SMS, HAWAII HOUSING PLANNING STUDY 34 (2016), available at [https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hhfdc/files/2017/03/State\\_HHPS2016\\_Report\\_031317\\_final.pdf](https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hhfdc/files/2017/03/State_HHPS2016_Report_031317_final.pdf).

<sup>iii</sup> See, e.g., Chelsea Davis, *Concern grows over school reopening after infection at summer program*, HAWAII NEWS NOW, July 14, 2020 available at (2019)

<sup>iv</sup> Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Issue Brief: COVID-19 and Native Hawaiian Communities: Native Hawaiians Over-Represented in COVID-19 At-Risk Populations (2019). available at [https://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gfl4-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/Issue-Brief.-Covid-19\\_corrected.pdf](https://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gfl4-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/Issue-Brief.-Covid-19_corrected.pdf).

<sup>v</sup> See Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Interim Guidance for Administrators of US K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs (updated April 20, 2020), available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html>.

<sup>vi</sup> Jennifer Couzin-Frankel, et. al, *School openings across globe suggest ways to keep coronavirus at bay, despite outbreaks*, SCIENCE, July 7, 2020 available at <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/07/school-openings-across-globe-suggest-ways-keep-coronavirus-bay-despite-outbreaks>; Alexandra M. Stern, et. al., *Closing of schools – lessons from 1918-19 US Flu Pandemic*, 28 HEALTH AFFAIRS w1066 (Sept. 2009), available at <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/pdf/10.1377/hlthaff.28.6.w1066> (“positive outcomes shared by these cities appear to be the result of good coordination among local, state, and, when applicable, federal levels of government; effective local leadership; robust volunteerism especially from teachers and nurses; and other social, economic, and cultural factors”).

<sup>vii</sup> This may include additional measures such as refraining from shouting or sneezing at or near others, or similar higher-risk activities, especially where schools allow for face masks to be removed during recess sessions. See, e.g. Mayor Kirk Caldwell (@MayorKirkHNL), Twitter (July 17, 2020, 2:38 p.m.), <https://twitter.com/mayorkirkhnl/status/1284286430282256385?s=10>.



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<sup>viii</sup> See Amanda Capritto, *Can people who are asymptomatic spread coronavirus? What we know now: People can have COVID-19 without knowing it – and that’s a huge threat to public health*, CNET, July 22, 2020 available at <https://www.cnet.com/health/can-asymptomatic-people-spread-coronavirus/>

(“Studies have shown that people can be contagious in the first several days of having the virus, before they show symptoms. One study actually estimated that more than 40% of novel coronavirus cases were transmitted in the presymptomatic phase. And, in a study that analyzed samples from sailors on the USS Theodore Roosevelt, about 20% of infected people reported that they never developed symptoms.”).

<sup>ix</sup> Office of Hawaiian Affairs, *supra* note iv (“Native Hawaiians are at greater risk of suffering financial hardship from the negative economic conditions that are likely to result from the spread of COVID.”).

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** +18083868948@tmomail.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:58 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

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No vaccine no School..no proper training administer for all workers for covid19 preparations..Are all students ready? Escorting sick students to the health room..Problem!..Students fighting..problem! Students that are disruptive...social distancing..How are we going to tend to there needs and psychological issues...Im a security attendant with concerns..taking the virus home to my family is what scares me the most.

The T-Mobile logo, featuring a magenta 'T' followed by a magenta dot, the word 'Mobile' in magenta, and another magenta dot.

This message was sent to you by a T-Mobile wireless phone.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Billy Pilgrim <bilypilgrim72@gmail.com> on behalf of Billy Pilgrim  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 7:13 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** SPED Differentials

Aloha,

While these may be trying times for all of us, this is not the time to cut differential pay. As a SPED teacher I know the extra work required, especially during last quarter, as well as the upcoming requirement once school begins to conduct an IEP meeting with each and every one of my cases to assess the impacts from closure. I also have to manage my cases as usual, prepare for the upcoming school year and develop lesson plans. The very real risk you take by taking such an action is the loss of more teachers. This is not the time to panic or search for answers on the backs of our most vulnerable students.

Respectfully,  
Brian Stockes  
SPED Teacher  
Waialua High & Intermediate School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jamie Kunisaki <missjamiekay.58@gmail.com> on behalf of Jamie Kunisaki  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 7:13 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** face mask

Aloha,

Are clear face masks an acceptable replacement to a CLOTH face mask, which CDC recommends as the best protection/prevention.

See example of clear face mask below.

This is regarding Teachers grades Pre-K to 1st Grade - is it acceptable/safe to wear the clear mask during the entire school day.

Or should Teachers wear a CLOTH Face Mask at all times when in classroom?



Kindest Regards,

Jamie Kunisaki

Sent from my iPhone

# Late Testimony

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

I am a Science teacher at Radford High School. I am writing to ask that you please reconsider sending students and teachers back into the classrooms as per current plans. Earlier this week the U.S. Surgeon General expressed his concern for schools resuming face to face interactions as well as a national survey that shows a large majority of Americans disapprove of children returning to school during the resurgence of COVID-19. The majority of educators do not feel it is yet safe to return to classrooms. The current COVID pandemic has certainly placed us in an unfamiliar situation which makes it difficult to prepare and predict how to handle the situation. I certainly value education and teaching my students. However, I do not believe this should take precedent over the health and wellbeing of the students, faculty, and the community.

I feel the school district is unprepared to handle the current situation. There is a lack of clear guidance and support to ensure the safety and well-being of the students and faculty. The proposed hybrid schedule still leaves too many students in the classroom to provide the recommended 6 feet apart of social distancing. There is no clear policy to have students wear a face mask which will be very difficult for the individual teacher to enforce. There is no plan to provide hand hygiene. There is no plan for adequate Personal Protective Equipment. There is no plan to perform contact tracing should someone get infected. With the constant movement of students around the campus the virus will spread quickly to the entire student body.

Thus far Hawaii has been very fortunate that the number of cases have been as low as they are. However, if we open the schools we inevitably will have a dramatic rise in community spread. The well-being and safety of the students and faculty and community should come first. At this time the only safe option is to continue a well-structured program with 100% distant learning.

Sincerely,  
Reyna Miles

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Denee Murakami <deneemurakami@me.com> on behalf of Denee Murakami  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 7:25 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Opening Schools

I am a second grade teacher and am very fearful about starting school so soon. Our state is so focused on the economy and are willing to put teachers, students and their families at risk. The "ohana bubbles" plan is an attempt to contain COVID cases, but will not prevent them. Students are resilient and can continue their education when schools are truly a safe place to be. How can anyone justify the loss of lives that could result from opening our schools prematurely. Please do not open schools until we can all be safe.

Sincerely,  
Denee Murakami

Sent from my iPhone



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kayla Martin <booboocamyjayla@yahoo.com> on behalf of Kayla Martin  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 7:30 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** August 4, 2020 return date for public school

Aloha,

I have a daughter entering the 5th grade this year. She is on a 504 plan and needs accommodations to keep on track in the classroom. She is eager to go back to school! She wants and needs to socialize. She NEEDS her teacher! But I CANNOT send her back to school with a clear conscience. I do not feel SAFE, given the current unanswered questions from the DOE. There are too many "what if's" and "unknowns." Many of our teachers are afraid and stressed because they are being thrown into the fire. Ask yourself, how can a teacher properly prepare for a brand new school year, with brand new students, an entirely different staggered schedule, and obtain the proper training protocol for a very contagious, life threatening virus in less than 4 days? These are our teachers, they are just as human as the rest of us! Please reconsider the August 4, 2020 start date, and give our teachers the adequate amount of time and training to prepare for our keiki!

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter!

Aloha,

Donese Martin

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Avniel Naidu <avniel.naidu@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Avniel Naidu  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 7:41 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** We are not prepared

To whom it may concern,

I would like to submit my testimony on behalf of the other teachers here in Hawaii. we are not prepared to go back to school in less than two weeks. It was difficult to go online at the beginning of the Covid pandemic. We didn't have any training over the summer and they are expecting us to have a completely new curriculum and a new format to present the information to our students. We have not received any training about these programs and there are so many different things that the students are not prepared. For example, if they want to go and do online classes at home there is no direction for them. We as teachers are expected to be trained to deal with covid and totally change the way we deliver instruction. We are burdened with teaching 2 separate classes, 1 online and one in person. When are we supposed to plan for that. Using my own personal time? On top of all that the safety of everyone is at risk. Do you honestly think kids are going to stay in a bubble and learn sitting in the same spot for 7 hours. That sounds like a nightmare. With the recent spike we are not prepared to go back. I don't want to use our keiki as the test dummies for the DOH. That is ridiculous. The director of the DOH even said that there is gonna be a big spike of cases when school starts again. He knows that this is not gonna be the right decision but he's getting pressured to open from who knows who. if we care so much about our keiki why are we opening first. We should see how other groups reopening goes then our keiki should be last. PLEASE RECONSIDER OPENING SCHOOLS. WE ARE NOT READY.

Mahalo,  
Avniel Naidu

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

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**From:** Cuong Do <cuongd@gmail.com> on behalf of Cuong Do  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 7:46 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony - please open up school

Good evening,

I hope you receive this in time. But wanted to submit my testimony to open up public school. My child attends Nuuanu Elementary School and have been home since the pandemic hit Hawaii.

She's been very sad she hasn't been able to see her friends. We're fortunate my company is allowing us to work from home, but know this won't last forever.

It'll cause emotional and economic hardship if school remained close or go with a distant learning plan. Distant learning may work for older kids that are middle school or higher, but not for young children. Distant learning will require parents to supervise kids which some can't afford to do, less they're willing to go unemployed.

I sincerely hope the DOE open public school as planned for face to face classroom of some sort...Please!

Thank you,  
Cuong Do

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Roland Laliberte <hilotime@yahoo.com> on behalf of Roland Laliberte  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 7:47 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I am writing in regard to:

H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees

My name is Roland Laliberte. I am a parent of a student at Hilo High School. After watching the news briefing with Governor Age, Dr. Park, and Dr. Kishimoto I feel the DOH and the DOE are unprepared to reopen August 4th. The DOH needs to provide criteria on when to close schools in the eventuality that the number of cases increase. The DOE needs time to properly train teachers to provide distance learning. Do not get stuck on a specific date. Open schools once you have met your objectives as you set yourselves in your plan. Judging by the news briefing, you are in danger of overpromising and under delivering on a safe learning environment. And we know that learning can only occur when people feel safe.

Roland Laliberte

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Brenda Tome <brendatome@yahoo.com> on behalf of Brenda Tome  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 7:49 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Concerns

What do we do if someone looks sick? Are we able to take everyone's temperature that reports to work. Sign in sheets are located in my office and I'm afraid that I will be exposed to a lot of employees.  
Classroom cleaners/custodians have not been trained or briefed on how schools is to be cleaned.  
Offices are not given enough protection. What we do have has been donated by community or purchased through the schools that have less funds this year.

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Renee Adams <adamsrk@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Renee Adams  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 7:51 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony for July 23 General Board Meeting, Items D, H

Name Renee K Adams

School worksite Samuel Enoka Kalama Intermediate

Aloha hou e nā lālā i aloha nui i ka ho‘onaauau i nā keiki ‘o Hawai‘i nei,

‘O Renee Adams ko‘u inoa, he kumu wau ma Samuel Enoka Kalama Intermediate ma ka mokupuni ‘o Pi‘ilani.

Today I am addressing these agenda items.

### VI. Action Items

[D. Board Action on metrics to monitor and evaluate the Department of Education's comprehensive plan for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 School Year, including student access to devices and connectivity; personal protective equipment and sanitation supply needs; student attendance; and student academic status and progress](#)

[H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees](#) **OPPOSE**

At the July 9, 2020 general meeting, the Board deferred action on the MOU (Item H). Today, I am asking that you do NOT approve the MOU and to take a critical look at the metrics being offered by the DOE to justify its plan.

Over the last two weeks, the Covid-19 case numbers and fatalities have increased due to widespread community transmission. While these numbers might seem low by your standards, in reality they are “low” because 180,000 students are not in school - yet. They are NOT low when you consider each human being represented by the data. If every human life matters to you, zero is the acceptable number of cases and fatalities.

- At the 7/16/2020 Senate Special Committee on Covid-19 hearing.  
<<http://olelo.granicus.com/player/clip/77674?>> Dr. Bruce Anderson said, (44:53) “The opening of our schools is very important in developmental progression and so forth... but in the hierarchy of things, starting up of schools is important but it has to be under appropriate conditions.”

- He goes on to say, (46:41) “What they are finding out is there are long-term effects associated with the disease with children, “ and that, (47:10) “I’d be willing to bet that we’re going to get cases showing up very quickly in the classroom.”

At this same hearing, Dr. Park says, (13:18) “the only way to completely obviate risks for our kids, our teachers, for anyone, is you stay home. And I think everyone understands that’s not an option. We can’t shelter in place forever. But I will tell you that is the only way you will never be infected.

- We are not asking to shelter in place forever.
- We are not asking that school remain closed.
- We are asking not to be forced back into face to face (f2f) settings yet because
  1. our schools are not ready, and
  2. Distance Learning provides a safe alternative
  3. Preparing for distance learning is something all schools need to do. To start with this model and bring students on to campus when it is safe is the most practical way to do this. It allows teachers to focus on designing learning instead of preparing our physical classrooms while we design instruction.
    - a. Knowing this, as Dr. Kishimoto has stated, thousands of teachers have started preparing to teach online to return to school safely during our summer break. This is how we have shown our commitment to the lives of our children and all the members of our school communities.
    - b. This is how we have shown our commitment to opening schools.
    - c. It addresses the need for teachers and students to be able to distance learn at any given time.
  4. I disagree with Superintendent Kishimoto that training students for online classes should start face-to-face (f2f). If you teach someone to fish, should you start in the classroom and then send them out to the ocean by themselves? This tech orientation can be built into the online platform, and many older students (6-12) use Google Classroom, Google Meet and other tools. In fact, we can team teach these concepts across the grade levels and schools using technology, and have those learning resources available for new students as they enter.

Why are we in this quagmire? Governor, Department of Health, and leadership of the HIDOE have ignored the expertise of teachers. NOT ONCE have they consulted with teachers. We were given opportunities to attend voluntary faculty meetings, after which we voted to see if there was consensus for the one schedule proposed by the principal. Regardless of the result, the principal decided the plan for the school.

In fact, the DOE has demonstrated a blatant disregard for teachers by its actions, calling upon the incomplete data from parent surveys to support its actions. Dr. Kishimoto delivered a special update to the DOE on July 21st, in which she states, (0:29) “I can assure you that all schools are outfitted for reopening” and (0:41): “all schools have what they need to reopen schools safely.”

The fact is, she never once asked teachers any more than, “Do I have access? a computer?, “Whose is it?” In fact, this is why we are here today, as members of the public; we had no voice in our schools.

On what information does she base this completely unrealistic forecast? As long as we are required to physically be on campus, we are NOT ready to go back to school safely. I have images taken at summer school of unsupervised students with no masks and no social distancing, unsupervised before school. During class time, they were distanced and wearing masks, 9 per room.

- Kalama Intermediate's Acting Principal imposed a new schedule on Monday that divides each class into three groups, so each student meets with a teacher once every six to eight school days. The Acting Principal's rationale for this is that it would be too difficult to send in all the exemptions needed to not have 6 feet social distancing with the first Plan B that had two groups. Does this give you an idea of how confusing and inconsistent these plans have become in order to be compliant. Now, based on this new schedule, I will see a student f2f a total of three times in August, which negates any benefit of f2f scheduling without mitigating any of the real safety concerns. Middle and high school students will be in the very situation described by Dr. Park (14:29), having [“defeated the whole purpose of the measures.”](#)
- In the larger communities on Maui, the combination of masks and social distancing that leaders are requiring has broken down. Social media reveals many, many gatherings with no masks or social distancing, even among my family, friends and colleagues. On Maui today there were 4 new cases. By tomorrow it would not surprise me to see that number spike.
- Please remember that neighbor islands have limited medical facilities. On Maui, there is only Maui Memorial Hospital, which in early June was operating at capacity, with no covid cases.

Finally, I have heard DOE, DOH, and even BOE members talking about finding a balance. This is NOT about balancing options; this is NOT about finding compromise. Human lives can never be compromised to serve the economy - not even ONE life.

It was clearly stated that tourism is not being started because THEY are not ready to start safely, whether the issue is testing or anything else. Now leaders are saying they delayed tourism in order to allow the schools to start.

Do not add to the guilt of school communities by implying we are obligated to do this in order for the economy to restart.

Further, the DOE needs to examine where canned curriculum such as Acellus online courses are being offered, especially with no teacher. This flies in the face of teaching and learning; one size does not fit all; and teachers need to design learning and support that responds to student voice, supports social justice and the Hā Framework, and authentic outcomes.

- Please reject the MOU as no longer valid. Direct the DOE to start the school year with quality distance learning, K12, as the only option until we can safely start returning to campuses.
- Please do not rubber stamp this MOU. You need to take a stand on this, just as teachers were forced to take a stand at our schools - even though our voice did not count (no consensus reached at our school).



Otherwise, I hold each of you who approves this MOU personally responsible for anyone in our school communities who is harmed by going back before it is safe, because you have the power to speak.

E ola nā keiki o Hawai‘i nei!

Mahalo, me ke aloha nui,

Renee Adams

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kam\_Hwy <klapinid808@gmail.com> on behalf of Kam\_Hwy  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 7:59 PM  
**To:** Testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Kamryn L.- Testimony

I'm attending Mililani High School and I will be a sophomore in the upcoming school year. I'm sending this email to testify against what has been happening for the past month or so and I want things to change for the better. My deepest concern about this whole pandemic is how decisions are being made relating to opening stores, restaurants, schools and how it will affect me and many others on the island.

For me personally, I think that the opening of many businesses on the island is not safe for those who have a compromised immune system, the elderly and for those who come into contact with them. I live with my parents and my great aunt. My dad is an essential worker and the rest of us stay home. My great aunt is an elderly which means that my family has to be careful when it comes to going out in public and the people that we come into contact with. I know that there are things that must be done such as getting groceries and my dad going to work to provide for the family, but I find it very concerning how so many businesses and places are starting to open up in the middle of a pandemic where the cases are increasing everyday. Not only is it dangerous for my family but my friends' family are also in danger. A few of my friends live with people who are the most vulnerable to the virus so they need to be careful. They can't be so cautious when everyone is going outside and opening places; this creates areas for the virus to move from person to person easily (e.g. stores, restaurants, parks, beaches). I know that places need to be opened up for the economy but the consequences lead to our people becoming more vulnerable to getting the virus.

With the schools opening up in the upcoming month, it makes me worried. Not only are cases increasing everyday, but this means that the adults are putting children and teenagers vulnerable to getting the virus. Children and teenagers have no choice but to go to school because it's required. Children think that the adults know better so they obey. Some schools like my school, Mililani High School, have a system where we are separated into two groups (A-K and L-Z) and are on an off-and-on campus system. One group will go on campus while the other group has distance learning for a whole school week, then the two groups alternate on and off campus. My school also gives the option to parents and students to do 100% distance learning. This seems like a reasonable method in our current situation, but I want to testify for the schools who don't have a system like my school or for those who don't have an option to do 100% distance learning. I heard that the middle school I attended, Mililani Middle School, is going to start the same time as the other public schools, get rid of their track system and try to fit ALL of the students onto their campus. There are at least 1,000 students who attend that school and it will be insane to fit that many students onto their campus. Parents have no choice but to let their children go and have a high risk of getting the virus. Not only are the students unsafe but the teachers and the staff members are just as vulnerable as well. If one student, teacher or staff member is tested positive, it will go very downhill from there.

Many people my age, parents and adults are very concerned about the decisions being made during this pandemic. I wanted to voice my opinion about how this pandemic is affecting my family and how things need to change. I do believe that having 100% distance learning is very crucial during these times and closing things down until the cases have gone down again. I do know that having 100% distance learning can be difficult for the students and teachers but we should all first start with this before any other decision is made. This should ensure that the cases will go down and that children, teens, staff members and their families are safe during these challenging times.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Chante Kalai <kauionalani03@gmail.com> on behalf of Chante Kalai  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:01 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

To whom it may concern.

I am a mother who has two children. My eldest will be going to 3rd grade while this year my youngest enters kindergarten.

My baby sister passed away this past year, so I have taken the role of guardianship over her two eldest, one going into 4th grade and the other 2nd..

With 4children enrolled into Kealakehe Elem. You can imagine the worries/ stress one may be dealing with.. My fiance and I both work and living here in Kailua Kona it is necessary. With resources, after school programs, sports and the support of both our work/job we are able to make ends meet. Having the cut back of the sources we use to be able to make our hours at work have been very challenging.. Homeschooling my children is not in my favor for many reasons. So we chose to do the blended schedule. I wanna just say thank you, it is not easy to make decisions especially at this time.. I am very cautious and aware of the seriousness of this matter. I feel that the time between closing down the school early was great. It helped to prepare my children for this "new norm" and than slowly transitioning them into it. Mahalo for your time..

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jay Bumanglag <jay.bumanglag@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Jay Bumanglag  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:01 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

BOE,

I am testifying on Action item G: Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year.

The retraction of differentials will absolutely devastate our dwindling supply of qualified teachers for our most vulnerable students, especially those who are hard to staff areas and in the special education setting.

Jay Bumanglag  
Pahoa High and Inter.

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jlyn Espinosa <jlynespinosa@gmail.com> on behalf of Jlyn Espinosa  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:04 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delaying the opening of schools

Aloha,

I have to admit, with all the talk about the reopening of schools I am getting nervous. I feel we are not ready for this. My Daughter's school has not even had a meeting to inform us of what they're doing to make the kid's safer at school. There's lots of unanswered questions. I normally drop her off early, will I be able to do that? She normally goes to A+ but I haven't heard anything from them as well. My Husband and I are both furloughed from work so we're at home fir now but will have to send our Daughter to school with the unknowing. I don't think anybody is ready. Please postpone the opening of schools. If they do need to start right now, maybe online would be the safer answer.

Thank you for your time,

Jlyn Espinosa

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Shinichi Yamamoto <shingoku57@yahoo.com> on behalf of Shinichi Yamamoto  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:16 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** testimony to delay school opening ad cuts to shortage differentials

Aloha,

My name is Shinichi Yamamoto, a social studies teacher at Waipahu Intermediate School. I am writing, today, to inform of considering to delay the opening of schools. It is crucial we are ready to teach the students while in a pandemic. Although Hawaii is relatively low in covid19 numbers, it still does not take away the fact that we have not been trained in teaching students in the modified classroom. Although class numbers will be reduced to 15 max at a time, how are we to teach with the traditional group work strategies. It is easier with a more manageable size classroom, but turn and talk is going to be very difficult w/ 6f distancing. Until we get the proper training on this, as well as protocols if and when we do have a covid19 outbreak. Until that is achieved, it would be best to delay school opening (although we are already getting letters from my children's schools about rotation schedules). That is another issue, how in this situation can the economy recover when parents will be concerned with their children at home? This is another area that needs to be thoroughly thought out.

Another issue I would like to bring up is funding of shortage differentials. Teaching already is burdened with being responsible of so many youth, who is the future of our society. That alone would require a boost to teacher salaries. But under the circumstances, with the already low salary we have, how are we to live in one of the prime spots that is called "paradise". Paradise already is burdening us with large amounts of money for rent/mortgage, groceries, or what is lumped as "cost of living". Many of times, before I became an educator, did I share with tourists from the mainland that paradise comes with a cost. In order to cut down the teacher shortage, now is not the time to pull funding for shortage differentials.

Please consider the points I have listed above.

Sincerely,  
Shinichi Yamamoto  
Waipahu Intermediate School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Taylor <ccsoccermom@gmail.com> on behalf of Taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:17 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

I'm stunned that I am being asked over and over again to beg for funds to drive over 50 miles a day to teach. On this island, there is not a public transportation system that supplies service to the rural area where I teach each day. Further, the students I serve live in poverty-we are 100% free meals service school. This means, myself and many of my colleagues supply school supplies, slippers, and additional food for our students out of our own money. Additionally, the students we serve are very low in their ELA and math skills, so many hours outside of my contract hours are spent tutoring students. (The school does not have funds to pay for tutoring).

When the BOE graciously agreed to fund the differential pay upfront, it was a relief to know that someone was in a position to show teachers appreciation and understanding for the sacrifices we make to better the lives of community members' children. Please be aware that the \$7,500 is paid from Jan to Jan, not school year to school year. Also please be aware that the taxes in HI are extremely high. This means that after taxes the amount coming is between \$300-\$400 a month. While I am grateful for the amount, this does not cover my monthly gas bill, which is over \$500 (gas on this island is \$3.50/gallon). This helps with gas necessary to drive over 50 miles each day (250 miles/week 1,000 miles/month) maintaining my vehicle, reimbursing me for my out of pocket expenses to supply my students with the items they need to be successful at learning.

Teachers are scarce in Hawaii, I am beginning to understand why. We are promised a lot of resources to better the lives of our students, but we are the first being targeted at taking away funds that are critical to my self care: feeding, clothing, educating, and caring for myself and my own family. Taking away these funds along with the 20% paycut will force Hawaii to lose 3/4 of their teaching force.

Here is what you are asking us to live on by taking away the differential and the 20% paycut:

\$1400 take home each month

Monthly expenses:

\$1000 Rent

\$500 gas

\$400 grocery (bare minimum items)

\$100 car insurance

\$200 student loan

Total Expenses: \$2,200

Monthly income- expenses= 1400-2200= NEGATIVE \$800

I am sure there are more expenses for other teachers for example childcare.

There needs to be someone fighting for us the way we fight for our students' right to a good and equitable education. Do you want good teachers for your Keiki?

I urge each member to consider what is the true cost to our students, community, and state if teachers are continued to be the target of where funds can be cut.

Sincerely,  
Elementary Educator  
Hawaii Island

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jessica Peterson <jdombrowski15@gmail.com> on behalf of Jessica Peterson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:21 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

I'm testifying on action item: [\*\*H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.\*\*](#)

I'm a public school teacher here on Oahu and have been teaching for 9 years in a Kindergarten classroom. I thought the summer would be plenty of time for our state to come up with and execute a plan for school opening up in August.. but it clearly was not. There are many questions left unanswered on how we can SAFELY open school for our students. I have received NO training , nor was I offered training like Kishimoto has stated. We aren't prepared to go back and we aren't prepared to teach online 100%. We have not been taken seriously or put as a top priority. Our schools are not ready to open fully or partially. We need more time so that we can receive appropriate training and guidance to open up. There are going to be a lot of scared, upset and frustrated teachers and parents. Why are we rushing to open up schools and put teachers and students at risk ? Why are we keeping it a secret that parents can choose 100% virtual learning ? It is disheartening and disrespectful to teachers professionally. There was already a teacher shortage and now that shortage will be increasing.



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** RRB <rachelrbell@yahoo.ca> on behalf of RRB  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:24 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I am testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

I work with prek students and I am feeling like it will be ok at first to be able to distance the kids and keep everyone distanced and safe and to keep things disinfected because my principal has suggested an am and pm program with two separate A and B group. However, my concern is that in preschools in DOE schools in Hawaii there are no regulations concerning **ratios** generally. In other grades students have to be 5 or whatever age for the grade they are entering by July 31st, to begin their grade. But in Preschool, as they turn age 3, they enter preschool. This is a concern to me every year, especially in Waikoloa where I work because it seems more and more students come each year. There is **no limit** to how many students come to my very small classroom (that has no individual bathroom). When I ask about this I am told "we can't control intake". So even amongst this new pandemic situation with a supposed 6 feet between students we won't be able to control how many students come in?? That makes me feel panicked! Two years ago when school opened there were 7 students in Prek and by the end of the year we had 21. This year **we are starting with 20....** while trying to socially distance (and getting paid less without the differentials). It is upsetting. I feel overwhelmed, not ready, and that my biggest concern (no cap on numbers throughout the school year) is perpetually ignored. I feel like this issue in preschool is a district level issue. It is not the school's fault that there is a loophole between the time kids leave early intervention and become the responsibility of the DOE. But how **HOW** are we supposed to stay safe and socially distance in preschools?

# Late Testimony

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kawai Moku <kawai.moku@yahoo.com> on behalf of Kawai Moku  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:41 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

I apologize for this late last minute testimony I am about to share due to I was at work and unable to submit my testimony by noon today.

My name is Kawai Moku and my son Kaleo attends Ke Kula Kaiapuni O Waimanalo ma Blanche Pope. When we 1st found out that Blanche Pope was going to be adding a Hawaiian Immersion School we we're soooo happy because our last keiki would be able to learn our Culture/Hawaiian language. Let me tell you within this past year Kumu Keoni Chang has been the most wonderful amazingness Kumu I have ever met. My Kaleo learned soooo much from him and I would like for him to continue his 'Olelo Hawai'i at Blanche Pope.

My Kaleo would always come home with the biggest smile and teach us 'Olelo Hawai'i. My son enjoys his Kumu along with all his classmates. I ask that you pls. continue to support all Hawaiian Immersion Schools so that our next generation can carry on our Culture/Hawaiian language. We must teach the Keiki of Hawai'i 'Olelo Hawai'i for this is their Aina.

Mahalo,

Kawai Moku  
808-393-3132

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Lily Gong <lilycggong@gmail.com> on behalf of Lily Gong  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:45 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Dear Board of Education members,

I am testifying on the Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 Contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

My name is Lily Gong and I am a SPED teacher at Fern Elementary. As a SPED teacher, I know how hard it is to teach my students remotely. I want to go back to school and teach my students in person in the classroom. I miss my students so much since March. I have been voluntarily training myself on technology tools, reading students' IEPs, collaborating with my grade level and inclusion teachers to plan, and making datasheets. I watched many Youtube tutorials, observed some summer learning lessons, asked questions, and just went to teacher-led PDs for distance learning. But I still feel I am not prepared for the new school year.

For example, I have asked around if there is any guidance for our PPTs who are supposed to work with SPED students closely in this new norm. Nobody can answer me. I don't know if I still should tell the PPTs to sit next to the students while everyone is told to keep social distancing. But I also don't know how to help the students because they do need someone help them right next to them. When the school starts, the PPTs will ask the teachers what they should do and I don't know what to say. I don't want to put them at risk. Has DOE developed guidance for this?

I have also heard that there are some teachers asking if parents would sue the teachers if their kids get the virus from going to school. I know there are many sports, dance studios, or camps that requiring parents to sign a waiver before the programs start. Do we have a liability release for our schools and teachers?

Another question both teachers and parents are asking is about the bathroom. Although the elementary students are in their class bubbles, they still might get the virus with other students because they share the same bathrooms. There are not enough people cleaning the bathroom after each use. Or will there be other ways to protect our students?

If you cannot answer the above questions, that means we are not ready to re-open the schools. I am a parent too but I also feel uncomfortable sending my kids back to school if there are still so many questions unanswered. I want to go back to campus. My children are eager to go back to the schools too. However, I want to keep my students and my own kids in good health.

Please allow more time for the Department to prepare so we can minimize the risk for our Keiki and staff.

Thank you  
Lily Gong

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Chad Yoshimoto <chadyoshimoto@gmail.com> on behalf of Chad Yoshimoto  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:50 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** news@hawaii.newsnow.com  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

Good evening

This testimony is in regards to the Current Order of kids returning to school at the beginning of August. My name is Chad Yoshimoto, the father of 2 children, General Manager for a small Oahu business and most of all A CONCERNED PARENT. My son, being a freshman at Waipahu High School and my daughter a first grader at August Ahrens Elementary.

It is absolutely TOO SOON for kids to be physically returning to school with the current Covid19 crisis going on in the State of Hawaii. I am glad that you've now made it a requirement for all students to have masks/facial coverings. However, there are loopholes in your current plan and I would like to take this time to humbly point them out.

1). Kids being dropped off and entering school. There should be ONE entrance for ALL students reporting to school. Prior to being allowed in, the student needs to have their temperature checked and ensured that they have the proper mask/face covering. If they test HOT - they need to be sent to a holding area where the parent NEEDS to pick them up. The HOT student needs to REMAIN in the holding area till the parent returns. I have heard SO MANY stories from teacher and parent-friends that "the parent dropped off the kid sick anyway cause they had to go to work". THAT is the most selfish thing in the world and they are now PLAYING WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S LIVES if their child is ill with Covid19. HOT students or students without face coverings need to NOT BE ALLOWED INSIDE SCHOOLS. Oh and what about when parents go to pick up their kids from school? That's another potential problem right there too yes?

2). I heard of the possibility of teachers being rotated into classes to minimize the potential spread of the virus. Why even take the risk right now? What is SO important that could cause a potentially infected student, to infect a teacher that travels to multiple classes and infect other students??? Social interaction for students? KIDS CAN WAIT TO BE SOCIAL - KIDS DON'T WANT TO GET SICK. You're placing not only the teachers but the students as well in a BAD LEARNING ENVIRONMENT from the beginning! What type of retention by the students are you realistically expecting to occur in this learning environment? WHAT IS THE RUSH??? The virus is definitely on the upswing on Oahu, multiple US cities are pushing back school-start dates and Hawaii is gearing up to send their kids back to school? So what happens when a teacher or student gets covid? WHAT's the specific process? You end up quarantining the potentially infected teachers and students at home - TO DO DISTANCED LEARNING ANYWAY - BUT YOU ARE FAILING TO REALIZE THAT YOU NOW POSSIBLY INFECT THEIR FAMILIES TOO. NOW THE MOM AND DAD AND BROTHERS AND SISTERS NEED TO STAY HOME TOO - OR WORSE, GET INFECTED AND POSSIBLY DIE? To start school in August? And if they don't die - they can't work right!? So now that family is WITHOUT INCOME, POSSIBLY INFECTED, COULD POTENTIALLY DIE, STRESSING OUT AND IT'S ALL TO WANTING TO START SCHOOL AT THE BEGINNING OF AUGUST?

3). The decision makers that we see on the news all the time trying to sell us on "how we need to get back to school now" are failing to put themselves IN OUR SHOES. Tell you what - if my kid has to get quarantined, can I send them to their house for 14days so that they can see FIRSTHAND of what they've created?

We don't NEED to get back to school yet. We NEED to get a handle on this contagious virus by cracking down hard on people that don't wear masks. We need to do better contact tracing. We need to do better at arresting 14day quarantine violators. We need to better equip our teachers with protocols and SUPPORT in their classrooms (when the time is right) to help enforce proper anti-covid behaviors. We NEED to do so much more FIRST, before we reopen schools and see FAMILIES that are going to be DEVASTATED because people that are so out of touch with the common

families decides “nah - we gotta get back to school already” .... You have to absolutely have horse-blinders on to NOT see past the school’s 4-walls so to speak. Your bad decision making is going to create widespread havoc and infections.. Then what happens when by the end of August, we see 50 new cases, 100 new cases, 300 new cases... What happens to restarting tourism??? It’s a domino effect - why do you not see that?

PUT YOURSELVES IN OUR SHOES FOR ONCE PLEASE... You are potentially going to allow Covid to EXPLODE in every community by allowing kids back to school too early. That’s the facts! Oops - I also forgot about the teachers that are either RETIRING EARLY or QUITTING because they don’t feel safe... Weren’t we already SHORT ON QUALIFIED TEACHERS IN THE FIRST PLACE??

Thank you for your time and patience.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Sandy <sandy\_scsc@yahoo.com> on behalf of Sandy  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:55 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

My name is Sandy Mahealani Anderson, a parent of children that attend Puohala Elementary School, and I testifying on Action Item G: [Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year.](#) This action goes against an agreement set in place for well deserved, specialized teachers that have additional skills and provide services to children that are mandated by the government with less than adequate compensation, during a crucial time. It would be unethical to go back on an agreement that provides our teachers with the compensation they deserve for providing additional support and possessing skills and qualification that supersede that of a general education teacher; therefore, justifiable and appropriately compensating them.

**Mahalo**

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Tyson Agbayani <tyson.agbayani@gmail.com> on behalf of Tyson Agbayani  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:57 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delay the Return of Teachers and Students (From an Educator)

Aloha,

My name is Tyson Agbayani and I am a 4th grade teacher at Kalihi Kai Elementary. While I can't wait to get back into the classroom and meet my new students this school year, I am not confident that it is safe nor do I feel comfortable in doing so.

Let me start off by saying that I truly understand that these are unprecedented times and that there isn't and will never be a full proof plan for reopening our schools. I feel for the students and not returning back to face-to-face instruction with my class last year was devastating. My testimony covers my two main concerns (not all my concerns) that I have in returning back to school in less than two weeks:

### 1. Quality of Education

I truly believe that all students deserve quality instruction and opportunities to grow both socially and academically. With the opening of our schools in less than two weeks, I am not confident in myself as an educator to provide the students with the education they deserve in both facets. I am not saying I am not capable as an educator, my concern is the constant changes with individual school plans and the DOH guidelines. It is nearly impossible to plan or fully prepare with the constant changes, we're not ready.

Planning time is necessary to provide our students with the quality education they deserve, and we're rushing back with no real purpose other than to say "we're open, let's see what happens." With limited time to plan, we will be open, but we are doing more of a disservice to the students with the lack of planning. We need more time.

### 2. Safety

We are very lucky to live in Hawaii where we haven't been bombarded with COVID cases like on the mainland. But to think that I could give the virus (that is making the rounds) to a student who could in turn give it to their family, leaves me feeling uneasy. I would be devastated if I were ever the reason why someone lost a family member, and I can't help but feel like educators, students, and school staff are the guinea pigs.

**As a new parent of twins, who are currently six days old and are in the NICU, everyday is a challenge. Everyday I step in the classroom this school year I risk exposing my children to a virus that could potentially end their lives, and/or the other infants that are fighting to live in the NICU. This is the reality, and this shakes me to the core. At the end of the day it isn't just about my family, it's every child's family and other educator's families. We don't deserve to be put in a situation that is not safe. We need a real plan and we need time.**

I want to teach, and I love to teach. I miss my students and I can't wait to meet my new students. But now is not the time.

Tyson Agbayani

# Late Testimony

Honorable Members of the Board of Education;

I am testifying in support of the continuation of shortage differentials. My name is Sandra Hashida, and I am a special education teacher who has been teaching for 19 years. I teach at Kipapa Elementary School and live in Mililani.

I understand it. The economy is in peril because of the coronavirus. With the return of tourism being pushed back further and further, it is not expected to rebound anytime soon.

I also understand the reason special education teachers are hard to find and even harder to keep. I know the countless weekends, holidays, breaks and family time I have spent working on preparing eligibility documents and IEPs so that I can meet the federally imposed timelines. I know the frustration watching other teachers leave for the day while I stay to conduct IEP meetings at times that accommodate my students' working parents. I know how special education teachers are often treated as inferior to general education teachers even though I am dual certified to teach in both elementary and secondary schools for both general education and special education classes, whereas most of my general education counterparts are only certified to teach in elementary classrooms.

I know how I regularly met with my special education students during the school closures. Special education teachers like myself worked on their students' IEP goals to limit the impact of the school closure. We collected data to complete federally mandated progress reports while general education teachers provided enrichment activities and weren't required to submit grades for report cards..

Now during the summer break, on my own time, I am taking on professional development classes to improve my online instruction. I am anxiously waiting for my school to solidify its teaching schedule so I can figure out when I will be teaching my students who are in two different grade levels. Will it be online, in person or a combination of the two? I am trying to figure out how I will be able to teach while also conducting assessments and observations.

Special education teachers need to start the year off with an IEP meeting for each of my our students to determine if compensatory services are needed to offset the impact of the school closure. The observations and assessments are needed for that. Later in the year, we will still need to have the regularly IEP meetings. Imagine the time and paperwork that accompanies all this.

I don't know how long the state can continue to get away with having special education classrooms that are not being taught by special education teachers. How long will current special education teachers continue to give when the job continues to take, take, take? The differentials made it seem that all the sacrifices are appreciated.. They were a great way to get new special education teachers into the DOE and current teachers to stay in the profession. To suspend the differentials, especially during this pandemic, would be counterproductive.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sandra Hashida



# Late Testimony

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kana Naipo <kanaslife@icloud.com> on behalf of Kana Naipo  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:16 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Kana  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha BOE,

My name is Kana Naipo and I teach History, Digital Media, and Yearbook at James B. Castle High School. I am writing this testimony in opposition of the opening of public schools in Hawaii. It would be in the best interest of all stakeholders surrounding our students and staff a place of safety and wellbeing free from COVID-19. If you the BOE can with 100% certainty insure the safety of my students and I including our families. Then by all means, open up the schools. But if for any reason I or my family contract COVID due to my place of work then we will have a huge problem and I will seek litigation.

Here's a suggestion. Let's open the first quarter of the school year "virtually" until the virus subsides. This will give all stakeholders time to adjust and prepare for any other future pandemics or island disasters. Let's face the FACTS.....we are not ready! You the DOE, Sup., BOE can not insure the safety of our schools! You do not have a plan if and when COVID enters our schools. Furthermore those making decision on our behalf are not in the classroom risking infection but rather standing safely in front of a camera talking nonsense or sitting in their disinfected offices, paid by tax payers or working within the comforts of their homes. Stop this foolishness now. Let's do what's best for everyone involved.

Ka holoi 'ana i ko'u mau lima  
Mahalo,

Kana Naipo  
Castle High School  
Media, Yearbook, History Teacher

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Elizabeth Hueu <ehueu22@gmail.com> on behalf of Elizabeth Hueu  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:16 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Opening August 4

Aloha Board of Education Members,

I retired from the DOE as an elementary school teacher in 2014. I'm so glad that I did. Here are my thoughts for your consideration.

- 1) Every school year, no matter how many times I wiped the desks with Clorox wipes and had the children use hand sanitizer (since it's next to impossible to have 27 children washing their hands at the sink), and how many outdoor activities I conducted in the first weeks of school, I always caught whatever cold virus my students had been exposed to over the summer, but which I had not. I understand masks help, but I also predict children will be touching their masks constantly.
- 2) I am no longer in a school, but I have not seen published one plan regarding testing of children who arrive at the classroom door with symptoms. Where I taught, parents who needed to work put their children on the school bus to have them fed, clothed, and cared for by the school, no matter what their health condition was. Until some specific guidance is provided for health aides and teachers, I am very concerned that schools will become the ideal environment for community spread.
- 3) Teachers' classroom management varies greatly. I visited many classrooms in my school, and as a former complex area resource teacher, I visited many classrooms across the complex area. One teacher may be very disciplined, and I would have absolutely no hesitation sending my child to her or his classroom; however, a probationary teacher may not have established his or her routines until the first quarter of school is done. This is not to suggest that only beginning teachers lack classroom management. Controlling dust, lice, bedbugs can be a challenge for some. Antihistamines for allergies, solutions to remove lice, laundering bedding and everything else are easy remedies for common schoolhouse issues. The vaccine for COVID is still on its way.
- 4) All of the issues of virtual learning, inequities, food services, social well-being, students' mental well-being are being tackled by 13,000 different school districts.

I say let's not be the first this time. Hawaii DOE had always wanted to be in the forefront of innovation, standards based-learning, academic assessment. Let's learn from others what the safest and most beneficial way of opening, taking into consideration all stakeholders in the school community. These are exceptional days. Perhaps now is the time to make an exception to the number of mandatory school days in a school year. Please postpone the opening of the schools.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Hueu

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Autumn Hook <autumnhook1@gmail.com> on behalf of Autumn Hook  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:20 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

I am writing you today as a concerned parent. My son is starting 2nd grade and goes to Kahala Elementary School. It is very concerning that schools are supposed to open but most of the teachers and staff aren't even ready. I called just a few days ago to get the list of school supplies from my sons school and they don't even have it yet. I was told they are still working on it. If something so simple as this is not even done, I can't even imagine the inside of the classrooms. I understand the argument for it being ok to open schools in the middle of a pandemic while our numbers are surging is that COVID-19 doesn't "seem to be" affecting young children so much. That to me does not feel safe. Us parents want to keep our children and the grandparents that watch our children on a daily basis safe. Say my son was to pick up the virus at school and bringing it home to his grandmother and grandfather that watch him for the afternoon while I'm at work. Are you saying that it's not dangerous for them to be around my son? It absolutely is! However, they are such great grandparents that they are willing to risk their lives in order to help me out. And what about the teachers?? Do their lives not matter either? I think that rushing to open schools before they are ready is an absurd thing to do. We all look to our government leaders to protect us and keep our children from harms way. Opening the schools while our cases are surging does not seem like a wise decision. My request is that we postpone the opening of public schools for the first quarter while COVID-19 cases are so high.

Thank you for your time.

Concerned parent,  
Autumn Hook

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Hannah Pang <2021pangh@kalanihs.org> on behalf of Hannah Pang  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:23 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony Against School From Reopening on August 4th

Dear BOE,

Hello, my name is Hannah Pang and I am a senior at Kalani High school. I am here to testify against school reopening on August 4th.

Moving forward means adjusting to these unpredicted times therefore, we must move forward together as a whole students, teachers, and parents with extreme precaution, making the safety of everyone our priority.

As the cases in Oahu have grown from single to double digits these last few weeks from the reopening of stores and businesses, it has proven that safety regulations might not always be successful in COVID-19 prevention. This disease is too foreign for us to be sure that we are doing everything we can to prevent it. For now our safest option is to stay home as much as we can and when we do go out, it is for short periods of time.

The reason I do not agree with school reopening is because the cases are growing rapidly everyday, and going in with large groups of people isn't safe. All it takes is one person with COVID-19 to spread throughout a school. With that being said, I stand by my previous statement that going out SHOULD be MINIMAL. Even though schools plan on having a hybrid schedule, we have to remember that these are large groups of students in the same small area for long periods of time coming in everyday with the teachers. It's even more unsafe for teachers because they will be there everyday even if students are there every other day.

I think a good plan is to wait a month or two before going back to school physically, in that time at home we can learn online via zoom and google classroom. While we learn virtually the BOE, DOE, and HSTA can come up with plans for the schools reopening. Some ideas for the plan is: wearing masks are mandatory (every class should have extra masks available for those who do not have), a mandatory temperature check (including the teachers and staff) before going into a classroom, in the beginning of each class everyone should have to wash their hands for 20 seconds before sitting down, and lastly, all students should have to use disinfectant wipes to clean their chairs/tables before entering/leaving class.

My main concern is the sanitation of the school. Being able to sanitize the whole class thoroughly is going to take lots of effort and consistency. So, if the BOE, DOE, and HSTA could please pitch in ideas to keep classrooms and campuses clean that would be greatly appreciated by everyone.

As tragic as it is to not experience my senior year like normal, the health and safety of everyone is the number one priority. I wanted the class of 2021 to be able to experience a prom since our junior prom was cancelled, but the chances of prom are bleak. However, if missing my prom means many other people can be prevented from getting COVID-19, than I rather miss out and know that I helped prevent new cases.

I think I can speak on behalf of the students and teachers that we would like to receive education in the safest way.

Thank you for your time, I really hope you take in everyone's concern into consideration while moving forward.

Sincerely,  
Hannah Pang

## Testimony BOE

**From:** ahuntemer@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:24 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony regarding the opening of schools to students Aug 4th

Dear Board Members,

There are so many unanswered questions regarding procedures, protocols and programs for this school year. Our principal has done a good job of putting together our opening plan but at the very least, we need some clarification, otherwise chaos will ensue.

### **Distance Learning Option Unclear**

It would appear that parents were not made fully aware of the 100% distance learning option. Many parents opted to withdraw and homeschool their children. How long do they have to commit to this option before allowed to change back to the school's model? This new platform is different to Google Classroom and other programs that students are familiar with. If we close schools, we will have two distance learning systems running concurrently. If students switch options, they will be switching to a completely different platform.

### **Special Education Students**

How are Special Education students going to be served on the optional distance learning platform if it is supposedly "self contained"? Indeed how are Special Education students going to be served in-person while following CDC guidelines of 6ft physical distance?

### **Masks and Distancing**

What are we going to do about students who refuse to comply with the COVID guidelines set forth by CDC, Dept. of Health, Dept. of Education and teachers? To what extent can we tolerate that they potentially and perhaps intentionally expose others? How are we going to "police" interactions between students to keep them safe and teach at the same time? Best practice learning environments encourage student groups. Best practice teaching strategies include ongoing formative assessment of work during class. Best practices for classroom management includes teacher proximity. How are these important factors in teaching and learning to be implemented in a physically distanced in-person setting? I have personal experience of them working pretty effectively in online environments.

### **Training**

What Department mandated resources are available for staff, students and parents delineating the practical aspects of the above issues? I have yet to see any detailed Department sanctioned wide training for staff, students and parents on COVID. We have videos to watch on blood borne pathogens and child abuse but nothing on COVID - yet. We all need to be on the same page regarding the basic science and ground rules of staying safe during this global pandemic.

### **Teacher Shortage and Subs**

The issue of teacher shortages has been discussed. Differentials must be continued unless we want to see the collapse of important, legally required aspects of educational system, such as Special Education services. When there is a case who will be quarantined? Will subs be willing to come to our schools? Are they trained in the online systems?

Nobody expects all the answers but we do need more of them.  
We need your concrete and expert communication in these matters and we need it very quickly.  
Thank you.

Angela Huntemer MEd  
Special Education Teacher  
Kaaawa Elementary School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Noah Myers <noah.myers@campbell.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Noah Myers  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:29 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY regarding opening schools

I am not in support of opening schools for in-person classes. Rather, schools should remain in distance learning until the safety can be guaranteed 100% for teachers, students, and staff.

I'm a teacher at Campbell High, and proud to be. However, I find myself weighing some pretty heavy risks. What's more important: my job or my life? There's no way with the safeguards available training delivered (or lack thereof) that teachers, staff, and students can be guaranteed 100% safety from the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic. Until there is a vaccine or something drastically different that guarantees our safety, schools should remain in distance learning.

Thank you for listening, and I hope that you make the right decision that ensures the safety of all involved in the public school system, as well as the community (that kind of means you, too).

Sincerely,  
Noah Myers  
Computer Science Lead Teacher  
James Campbell High School

# Late Testimony

To: TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov.

From: Elizabeth Pa Nakea, Castle High School Special Education Teacher

Date: July 22, 2020

Re: INSINCERE GIVING OF DIFFERENTIALS PLACES HAWAI'I TEACHERS IN JEOPARDY

*"The value of teachers isn't bought and sold on Wall Street, but it's finally being recognized by those of us forced to take on their role. ...Educators are vital to the overall economic wellbeing of the country. "*  
Andre Perry

*"Been homeschooling a 6-year-old and 8-year-old for one hour and 11 minutes. Teachers deserve to make a billion dollars a year. Or a week." Shonda Rhimes*

*"At the end of the first day of my kids being out of school after our attempts at 'homeschooling' ... my conclusion ... teachers are superheroes. The end." Amy McGrath*

Teachers are severely underpaid and deserve a raise. This moment should help us understand why hundreds of thousands of teachers in multiple states hit picket lines over the last few years to demand higher pay and better working conditions. The mass foray into homeschooling shows exactly how valuable school workers and public education are to an economy, and yet how unappreciated.

Rather than take away the differentials paid to teachers, when school bells ring again, make sure Hawai'i restructures its economy in ways that pay all teachers what they are worth. Commitments have been made based on the differential received and taking them back would leave teachers unable to pay these commitments. As it is, teachers earn 11.1% less than other workers with comparable education and experience, according to the nonprofit Economic Policy Institute. In a 2020 study on teacher compensation, Stanford University researcher Eric A. Hanushek found that entry salaries for teachers in 2016, in real dollars, had not changed since 2000, and average salaries for all teachers declined slightly over that period. And, as the cost of living has soared, teachers' pay hasn't kept up. As a result, too many teachers cannot afford to live here in Hawai'i on their teacher salary.

The value society places on us can be found in the salaries we receive. Sexism that undervalues work done mostly by women is a drag on the market. Women are overrepresented in the lowest-paying jobs, and even women in high-paying professions are paid less than their male counterparts, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The percentage of public school teachers who are women increased from 75% in 2000 to 77% in 2016, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

This March, Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Kamala Harris of California announced a plan to increase teacher salaries, which have not kept pace with the cost of living. Teachers' pay is also out of line with that of other professionals. Harris' proposal would raise teachers' salaries over the next decade to help close gaps between what teachers earn and the cost of living. What's clear is that Harris' proposal brings much-needed attention to the problem of teacher pay. Something must be done.

The purchasing power of teachers' annual earnings varies greatly across the United States. In 2017, the median state for teacher pay was Delaware, where P-12 teachers earned an average annual wage of



\$56,540 (adjusted for statewide cost of living). Teacher salaries that year were the lowest in Hawaii, with an average adjusted salary of \$44,887. Rhode Island teachers had the highest adjusted earnings—\$69,911.

Harris' plan calls for each state to establish goals for teachers' base pay. Teachers who work in high-need schools, often attended by a disproportionate number of students of color, would receive a greater raise, aiding teacher recruitment, and retention efforts. Harris' plan is novel and by far the boldest effort to address diminishing teacher pay, a hot-button issue that in the last two years has motivated teachers across the country to go on strike.

Teacher salary levels are also used to determine retirement, health, and other benefits that states and districts are still on the hook to pay for. Teachers need raises, and we must use creative efforts to get them, rather than cut recently awarded differentials. There are many areas of waste in the State budget, and teacher pay is not it.

As “women’s work,” teaching has always been underpaid. But think how much more vulnerable most teachers would be without labor union representation. This is a moment to rethink the attacks on unionism that have underpinned much of the school reform movement of the last two decades. Quarantines and social distancing measures have put the economy in a downward spiral and exposed how vulnerable nonunionized workers are in our increasingly gig-based economy. Fortunately, most of our teachers are protected by union contracts, even if they’re grossly underpaid. Because they generally have good benefits, retirement packages, and representation through unions, educators have a greater capacity to deal with the economic slowdown than Uber drivers and part-time employees. Most K-12 teachers are still getting paychecks throughout the shutdown.

But this doesn’t apply to all the workers our education system depends on. According to the Department of Education in 2016, “Child care workers make less than hairdressers and janitors.” Many part-time and contractual employees including bus drivers and cafeteria workers, who are critical to a well-functioning education system and economy, are also underpaid.

All labor has dignity, and that dignity must be reflected in pay. The \$30 billion state fiscal stabilization fund that Congress passed in response to the coronavirus crisis should help our schools and colleges deal with the pandemic’s costs. But when the number of COVID-19 cases subsides, we should not go back to normal. We must pay teachers more.

Educators deserved raises even before the pandemic. Millions of parents with kids out of school right now are experiencing firsthand the fact that there are no real substitutes for trained, certified teachers.

Increasing compensation provides the best leverage available to improve student achievement, the analysis said. Drawing the best people to schools and keeping them there is effective, but that means they have to be paid more. We may not know what a superhero’s salary is supposed to be, but every teacher deserves a whole lot more than we’re currently paying them.

Adapted from the work of education advocate Andre Perry.

## Written Testimony of Andrew Corcoran Hawaii Board of Education Meeting, July 23, 2020

While current focus is on preparations for the 2021 school year, it remains important to evaluate the effectiveness of the summer program. The Board made this clear in passing Chairperson Payne's resolution amended to include [weekly, detailed reports to the Board on the implementation process and metric outcomes of summer school](#) with priority for summer instruction to groups of students most affected by the switch to distance learning. Without access to the weekly reports, I do not know what metrics are being used. In addition, I am very surprised there is no item on the agenda for the July 23, 2020 meeting on summer school outcomes. With that in mind, I outline below suggestions for metrics to evaluate the overall success of the 2020 summer program. These metrics reflect my views as an interested citizen and a lifelong educator.

This testimony is structured around the undated HDOE flier "Summer 2020 Learning Opportunities and Resources". (See Attachment A) The reports should include aggregated data for the entire DOE for each category (Statewide Credit Acceleration, Statewide Credit Recovery, Official Summer School, E-School, Continuity of Learning Websites, and School-Based Opportunities) as well as disaggregated data for each site or complex. (See Attachment B)

### Overview

A major impediment to reviewing the success of the 2020 summer program is an apparent lack of specific goals. This testimony is based entirely on information on the above-mentioned flier. There may be additional information on goals for the summer programs that the BOE and Superintendent have access to. I hope so. Examples of helpful goals include the following. (Note: these are examples, not recommendations)

- 90% of the class of 2020 in need of credit recovery will successfully recover credits to graduate
- 80% of the class of 2021 in need of credit recovery will successfully recover credits
- 5,000 students will take advantage of the free credit recovery opportunities
- Summer programs will enroll 90% of the students interested in participating
- 80% of students who start in a summer program will finish it

In addition to goals of that sort, teachers, students and families should have an opportunity to provide feedback to address such areas as the following.

- How did teachers address credit recovery and did the teachers feel it was successful?
- How was communication between family and school (from the perspective of both)?
- What teaching strategies and assessment tools did teachers find were most effective in this environment?

To be clear, providing up to 6,000 students the opportunity to take courses is not a goal, it is a process put into place in order to achieve the credit recovery goal.

## **Summer Program Opportunities (Attachment A)**

### **Statewide Credit Acceleration**

Data in on this section should include changes in resource allocation affecting credit acceleration given the board priority for “students most affected.” It is reasonable to expect increased needs among those priority students could result in a decrease in resources available for credit acceleration.

### **Statewide Credit Recovery**

Based on Chairperson Payne’s resolution, approved as amended, this section should be considered the primary focus of the summer program. All information in aggregate and sorted by grade and site. Essential metrics include the following.

- Tables comparing areas such as: Number of students by grade level who need to recover credits; Number of family initiated inquiries concerning credit recovery, Number of school initiated contacts concerning credit recovery<sup>1</sup>, Number of students who signed up for credit recovery; Number of students who successfully completed credit recovery; Number of students still in need of credit recovery.
- Analysis includes a focus on credit recovery students in the class of 2020. Did all earn their diplomas?
- Comparison between the 6,000 slots made available and the number who took advantage of that availability.
- Site by site comparison and analysis is particularly important here to identify successful programs and possible best practices.

### **Official Summer School**

This program is anticipated to serve 4,000 which appears to include the 1,195 students in E-School. That would leave 2,875 additional students (1.6% of total HDOE enrollment) expected in the summer school for 19 official summer school sites or about 150 students per site. Enrollment data including courses offered should be provided

Since these were all virtual programs, information on nature and quality of the individual courses can provide valuable insight into teacher preparation for virtual learning. Teachers were required to “shift on a dime” in March, a remarkably difficult thing to do. The summer teachers had more opportunity to plan and develop methods for interacting with students and assessing their progress. A carefully designed random phone survey or participants would provide invaluable information. An online survey sent out to parents is an alternative but not as valuable<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> I am aware the flier placed the responsibility on the families to initiate contact. However, since schools know which students need credit recovery and counselors/teachers are committed to student success, it seems some counsellors or teachers would try to contact students or parents to encourage participation in this program.

<sup>2</sup> Students could be surveyed at the end of class, after grades or credit are awarded.

## **E-School**

Based on the description of E-School on the HDOE flier, this should be the flagship of the summer programs. The same random phone survey should be conducted for E-School participants so that comparisons can be made between established Virtual classes and newly developed ones.<sup>3</sup>

Given the uncertainty that exists with COVID-19, plans should be in place to scale up E-School. In essence, it is very possible that the majority of classes will resemble an E-School class at some time during the school year.

## **Continuity of Learning Websites**

Information on usage would be useful. After looking at the sites listed, it is not clear A) if they actually offered programs in the summer and B) whether HDOE can access usage rates. It would be useful to see how these opportunities can be evaluated rather than just listed.

## **School-Based Opportunities**

It is not clear whether these opportunities are already included in Statewide Credit Acceleration, Statewide Credit Recovery, or Official Summer School. The description seems to fit for each of those programs. Given the description, it could also refer to non-credit enrichment activities (extended learning, summer bridge, transition programs, mobile-learning labs). A clear listing of areas including what was offered, enrollment, completion rates and any assessment of student learning would be helpful.

## **Summary**


Provide a narrative analysis that identifies areas of strength in the summer programs and areas of weakness, with a discussion of causes for both.

## **For Future Consideration**

As a minimum, programs identified as “high priority” by the BOE should include stated goals that include desired student outcomes. An evaluation of those “high priority” programs would include how those goals were met.

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<sup>3</sup> I assume E-School has been accredited and evaluated so it can be used as a baseline for successful distance learning methods.



HAWAI'I STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# SUMMER 2020

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES & RESOURCES

Teachers, principals, and school support staff are doing heroic work to offer stability for students and families during the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic by providing meals, home learning resources, and online instruction. For Summer 2020 the focus will be providing students opportunities to redo or retake courses, accelerate or advance in coursework, and access a technology-rich learning environment with physical and virtual components.


### Statewide Credit Acceleration

**Available to:** All grades.

This program provides students the opportunity to take courses for acceleration or course replacement via a self-paced, adaptive online program customized to the learner. The program uses core technologies that enhance teaching and learning to tailor course content to each student's learning needs.

**Time period:** Through June 2021.

### Statewide Credit Recovery



**Available to:** Grades 6-12.

This program provides students the opportunity to redo or retake required units or credits via a self-paced, adaptive online program using video-based lessons customized for the learner. This opportunity is being offered for *free* to students currently in grades 6-12 (expanded from juniors and seniors initially).

Thirty-eight schools plan to offer this program. Schools have until June 15 to register students. The Department will provide up to 6,000 students the opportunity to take up to six courses each.

**Time period:** June 1 to July 19.

Families should reach out to their school to inquire about credit recovery offerings.

### Official Summer School


**Available to:** All grades.

Summer school will be delivered virtually for the health and safety of students and staff. The Department will offer 19 official summer school sites including E-School, and anticipates serving an estimated 4,000 students statewide.

The list of sites can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/HIDOEsummer2020>

**Time period:** June 2 to July 17.

### E-School



**Available to:** Grades 9-12.


The E-School program offers a variety of rigorous courses in language arts, math, social studies, health, and fine arts. Students are guided through their courses by state-certified teachers. Teachers evaluate student work and provide constructive feedback. Students interact and collaborate with each other through blogs, discussion forums, virtual classrooms, and other communication tools offered in the course management system.

E-School has grown to serve 1,195 students enrolled in 14 different course offerings. Registration ended April 30.

**Time period:** June 4 to July 17.

Information about the HDOE E-School program can be found at <http://eschool.hidoe.us/>.

### School-Based Opportunities



**Available to:** All grades.

This programs provides learning opportunities for remediation, intervention and enrichment. Models will vary by school to best address student needs. Potential activities include extended learning opportunities, summer bridge and transition programs, problem-based learning, experiential-based learning, and mobile micro-learning labs.

The Department will facilitate equitable access to learning opportunities to provide students with a technology-rich learning environment during the summer program. This includes possibilities like community-based learning hubs and mobile learning hubs for students with unstable housing.

**Time period:** June 1 to July 19.

Check school websites and emails, and the HDOE website for opportunities.

### Continuity of Learning Websites

**Available to:** All grades.

The Department created websites to support the continuity of learning during the COVID-19 closures. The website for teachers and administrators provides instructional strategies and content-area resources for distance learning. The website for students and parents offers enrichment activities such as at-home learning choice boards.

<https://bit.ly/HIDOEVirtualLearningParentResource>  
<https://bit.ly/HIDOEVirtualLearningTeachers>

## **Attachment B Why disaggregating data by site/complex is important**

*The following hypothetical situation is intended to make a point. It is not a recommendation for goal setting.*

Consider a school district that consists of 3 schools, schools X, Y, and Z. Each school has 33 students who need credit recovery for a total of 99 students in need throughout the district. The district sets a goal of at least 50% of the students being successful in their efforts at credit recovery over the summer.

At the end of summer the board receives a report that 50 of the 99 students were successful in their credit recovery efforts. The board is satisfied that the goal was reached.

A closer look at the data, however, shows an interesting pattern.

School	# successfully completed credit recovery
X	30
Y	15
Z	5
District total	50

While the district met the established goal, this additional information warrants a closer look at the reasons for the different success rates at each school.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Morioka\_Ohana <moriokaohana@gmail.com> on behalf of Morioka\_Ohana  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:59 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY - School reopening

To Whom It May Concern:

I just became aware of the fact that parents could send an email with their feelings regarding Hawaii public schools being slated to reopen on Aug 4, 2020. As a parent of 2 children in the public school system (1 in Elementary, 1 in High School), I do NOT feel that the schools can in any way be 100% prepared to welcome students back by Aug 4th. In this time of so much uncertainty regarding the contagiousness, effects on organs other than the lungs, etc for this novel coronavirus, I can't see why we would want to reopen schools in a physical sense. I have a lot of friends & family members that work within the education system, and not one of them feels that they have been adequately trained nor equipped to deal with welcoming kids back to school physically during this time.

While we on Kauai are currently at 0 active cases, the cluster we had recently shows that there are asymptomatic people living amongst us. Two of the kids in the recent cluster attended in person summer classes at Wilcox Elementary, and they were totally asymptomatic; their teacher had NO IDEA! Our Kapaa HS & Elementary schools are saying that the sanitizer is back-ordered; I've heard from staff at both schools that they don't have adequate cleaning supplies, that there are classrooms where kids can't be placed 6 feet apart, even broken into A and B groups, because the classrooms just aren't large enough.

I have been offered the opportunity for my HS aged child to do 100% distance learning; great in theory, but it is all asynchronous, no lessons or teacher support other than providing material/worksheets via Google Classroom, with assignments due by 2:30 pm daily. How would that work when both my spouse & I work? By the time we come home from working all day in our masks, her work would have had to be turned in, so she's left to flounder and try her best? I can't even imagine how frustrating that would be for kids! And our Elementary aged child; there is no option other than sending her to school on her Group B days, and hoping for the best. Can I count on her to wear her mask all day, keep 6-ft away from everyone at school all day long? Probably not. How long till she brings something home, forcing us to have to quarantine? What happens to our business that we have worked so hard to run at that point? We'll have to shut that down, and all our employees & their families would have to quarantine as well.

The potential for exponential COVID-19 spread due to school reopening is too great. I get that you're under pressure to reopen schools, so parents can get back to work, but it will only be a matter of time before the kids get infected, infect their parents, who bring it to work, thereby infecting co-workers, customers, delivery people, you name it. Yes there is testing; yes there is contact tracing, but do we have the capability to test all school employees, kids, their families, and their family's contacts? I doubt it. Do we have enough contact tracers to jump on cases and track them quickly enough to stop widespread infection? Probably not. It seems so extremely foolish to be reopening schools, exposing thousands of kids and teachers to COVID-19, when there are currently more cases than when schools were forced to shut down in March. How many kids, teachers, staff will have to get sick, and possibly even die just because of the political pressure to

reopen the schools? I realize everyone wants to get back to normal but we don't know when that will happen, and I don't feel our educators and children should have to be the guinea pigs in the meanwhile.

Take some time. Train teachers to teach remotely. Offer educators the option of actually teaching their classes remotely, rather than making them work double by having to teach in person, and somehow teach kids who are distance learning. Our teachers already have more than enough work to do in a regular year& ..I don't see how they can teach in person, 2-3 days per week, and have to follow up with the kids who distance learn to make sure they're able to keep up. Until there are more answers than questions, I don't see how the DOE can even think about opening schools to physical learning.

Please feel free to contact me via email or at 808-634-5788 if you want to discuss. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours truly,

Julie Morioka

Sent from Mail for Windows 10



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** amy67pearl@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:59 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony Against the Re-Opening of DOE Schools, July 22, 2020

### Testimony Against Re-Opening of Hawaii DOE Schools

July 22, 2020

The disease is not well understood, it is continually evolving, as is our understanding, but much information is accepted at this point; the following was reported in *Scientific American* by Christine Aschwanden, June 23, 2020:

An infected person may be capable of spreading the disease for up to six days before they show symptoms. (Center for Disease Control, 2020) This means any undiagnosed person, student or teacher could unwittingly infect others, and in the event of a super-spreader, "80% of cases may be caused by 20% of the population" infect many dozens of others, all the while undetected by the school or the family.

Although our school has meticulously planned that our students would only come to school once in a 14 day period, I am concerned that an infected student can be overlooked or be unreported, and an unpredictable number of others could become infected.

We know as teachers that student behavior is, at times, capricious and unmanageable. Although we will do our best to monitor their behavior in the classroom, we cannot keep them socially distanced in every area of the campus.

Those students who naturally follow the rules may be unfairly compromised by those who are non-compliant, and the results could be disastrous for the students and their families.

I respectfully submit that re-opening our public schools at this time is not safe.

Thank you,

Amy Conners

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Crystal Motomura <crystal.motomura@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Crystal Motomura  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:59 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

To the Hawaii State Board of Education,

This written testimony is in regards to the action item: H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between the state of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response).

I am writing to you today because I am very concerned for the safety of our students, families, and teachers. These past few months have given us all time to think what next steps could be done and although I cannot say I have all the answers, I know the current plan for reopening is not the clarified and final plan many of us were hoping for.

When it comes to the health and safety of our school, plans for reopening these matters should not be open for interpretation or leave you with an overwhelming amount of questions. Where are the protocols for requesting and receiving approvals for an exception to wearing face coverings at school? Why are so many families left wondering if there are options for 100% distance learning? And why isn't a detailed action plan being shared on what happens when a student and/or teacher contracts covid? If left unanswered you are leaving families, administration, and teachers to work against one another at a time when we must all work together.

Communities are left with the misconception that teachers don't want to go back to work because of selfish and self-serving reasons. But, the reality is without a clear and detailed plan you are asking teachers to do the one thing we all know we shouldn't do. You are asking us to put our students and families at risk. Teaching is completely and always has been a service profession. We serve others for the greater good of our communities. And without systems to ensure everyone's health and safety we do our communities and ourselves a great dis-service. With that I urge to reconsider reopening until more planning can be done.

Sincerely,  
Crystal Motomura  
Second Grade Teacher  
Kea`au Elementary School

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jemeil Deliz Alicea <jemeil.deliz\_alicea@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Jemeil Deliz Alicea  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:01 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I am testifying as a Educator, CTE Teacher, Parent, on Action Item

**H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.**

Aloha my name is Jemeil David Deliz Alicea, I recently transferred as an Tenured General Education, CTE Teacher from Nānākuli High and Intermediate School to Farrington High School, and my child attends Kapālama Elementary School going on his Third Grade. My wife is also a Math AP Statistics Teacher at Moanalua High School. I am a US Army Veteran and currently a US Army Reservist with over fifteen years Human Resources experience.

We are concerned how rapidly the current State of Hawaii Department of Education plans approaches without a set and stone solutions, many unaddressed loopholes, health and safety risks for our entire school community and population to engage in either as our workplace and where our only child will return to school. Our learning environment must be conducive and safe. There is no excuse for placing our future workforce unnecessary risk.

We cannot accept returning our Students (and only child) August 4 to school. Risk management, a crucial decision process tool in theory and document that is not so completely addressing all considerations and courses of action. The social distancing in the classroom less than the recommended six feet is high risk for all in the classroom. Class size definitely needs to drastically be less even this course of action is risky or opt for Distant Learning until COVID-19 is eradicated.

Furthermore, how can I contradict my CTE teaching standards In the classroom and Health Academy. After all we are a leading NCAC High standard recognized institution within our very own Public Education Institution.

Our future health professionals are being trained in a unsafe environment not conducive to learning and below the very own standards we teach in a Career Technical Education perspective. As a CTE Teacher this August 4 plan makes it harder to teach our students the high standards that needs to take place in the workforce.

Lastly, the plan needs to Address all concerns for our Keiki, parents, school population, partners, Hawaii DOE Leadership and community. We need to have a growth mindset setting aside delays. Better have time than none at all. Our Hawai'i Youth depend on us to make a healthy and safe learning environment and where high standards are taken place seriously.

Mahalo,

v/r

Mr. Jemeil David Deliz Alicea

CTE Health Services Teacher  
Gov. Wallace Rider Farrington High School  
FHS Health Academy  
1564 N King St, Honolulu, HI 96817

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Debbie Johnson <ddebj123@icloud.com> on behalf of Debbie Johnson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:01 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Safety/Training/Covid Procedures

I work at Eleele elementary school as a educational assistant in a pre-k special needs classroom. I have not received any training for the Covid pandemic procedures as of yet. I was not informed of any procedures or protocols for the school re-opening as of yet. I was not informed of any plan for our class procedures regarding safety measures due to the covid pandemic as of yet.

I work with the most vulnerable students with disabilities and the youngest age in the school at just 3-4 yrs old. Most students will likely be exempt from wearing a mask either due to medical reasons or the age factor and inability to keep one on. In addition, these students need care for daily functions which require close contact and social distancing will not be possible when you have to tube feed, bottle feed, hand feed, diaper change, wipe noses and mouths, change students clothing when needed . Assist with writing, speech, and many other needs and functions.

How will I be protected in the situation that required close contact and where students are unable to wear a mask or social distance ? In hospitals the care takers wear N95 masks because they need to have close contact with persons unmasked. Will a cloth mask and shield really protect me in this vulnerable

setting ? and how will the other students be protected against each other ? These students require close contact and care for daily functions. In addition, these students need other professionals to enter the room and provide services such as speech, P.T, OT, and also substitutes when teacher or aid is out. So much people in the class bubble. How will we all keep safe from the virus ? Do we matter ? Do the students matter ? Or are we expendable ? A trial case ?

We will probably be the only class that has students unable to wear masks or other protection. We need to have serious priorities to address this class in the safest way for all in the class !! All our lives matter !

The students are age 3-4 who realistically will not always social distance nor would it be safe for adult educators to social distance from students with special needs who need help with daily functions.

In addition, how will we prevent heat stroke or heat exhaustion if we must wear a mask all day in a hot classroom that is average 87-90deg with humidity of 85% and no ceiling fans or air conditioning ? The masks and shield and gloves will add extra heat to a persons temperature. How will we prevent heat stroke in our most vulnerable students and staff ?

If someone in the class is known to be positive for covid will the whole class shut down and have to quarantine ? Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Aloha ,  
Debbie Johnson

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Maryann M <malabey35@gmail.com> on behalf of Maryann M  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:07 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

If we need to work in the public sector during this pandemic we need to be educated on the virus and safeguards need to be in place to prevent the spread. Since we work with groups of children aren't the risks greater? We all go home to husbands, parents, elders, babies/children, pets and family members. We don't want risks.

Mahalo!

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jeni <jeni@hawaii.rr.com> on behalf of Jeni  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:07 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Jennifer Makekau. I have three children attending Ho'okele Elementary ages 6yrs/1st, 9yrs/3rd and 10yrs/5th. I have one child attending Kapolei Middle age 11/7th. Also two children attending Kapolei High ages 13yrs/9th and 16yrs/12th. Everyday the concern for my children's health and safety are on my mind. I feels school's are not ready to resume classes. To many risk factors involved. Right now I'm not convinced that schools can provide a safe and healthy environment for my children. For now, 100% distance learning is the best option for my children. Opening plans for schools are rushed. Please don't risk our children's health and safety.

Mahalo

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Wendy Tomita <wendytomita@yahoo.com> on behalf of Wendy Tomita  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:07 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Fw: Schools are not ready

It's me again.

This time I am writing on behalf of our school and fellow teachers. Fortunately, I didn't have to work this summer. Instead I was able to try to learn new things to help me this year

I participated in some of the online 1 hour sessions provided by fellow teachers and companies and best of all, YOUTUBE. My classroom for Group A is ready, but my second room for Group B is not. This room was used for summer school and still has belongings of two tother teachers in there. They are part time teachers, they don't need to report until later. They did try to help me out yesterday by removing some of their things, however the room is still filled with art clay projects that were either created by students in the 3rd quarter or summer school. I would think from last school year, since summer school as mainly to help students that needed extra help with reading and math.

I am hoping to go back into my second room tomorrow to finish setting up, bulletin boards, desks, dusting etc. Today I inquired about math consumables. The books have been ordered, but have not yet arrived. So do I create online work for my students or make copies of an older book for my class? I'm not sure, but just in case I should start.

Another thing, if we are to stream our lessons the our second room, we need the equipment. Fortunately, we had funds to purchase some new equipment, but that has not arrived yet, either. So what shall we do? Make a plan B? We don't even know who our resource teacher will be this year to help allow teachers to have time to plan as a grade level while the students are being taught by another teacher,

I've never taken the time to participate in testimonies during my 30 years of teaching, however this year I feel it is important. Perhaps, we should have some of the decision makers join us in the schools. It's not fair for Dr. K to say the schools are ready, when only as of yesterday, we found out how we are going to help educated the DL students that will not be returning to our school.

Schools are not physically ready!

Teachers are not ready!

Our curriculum is not ready!

Our second classroom is not ready!

**MORE TIME IS NEEDED TO HLEP TEACHERS AND STAFF GET OUR SCHOOL READY FOR THE STUDENTS!**

Thank you very much for this opportunity to share how I feel. Pardon my typo mistakes, my eyesight is getting worst.  
Wendy, Grade 3 teacher

,  
  
----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Wendy Tomita <wendytomita@yahoo.com>  
**To:** "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2020, 06:50:16 PM HST  
**Subject:** Schools are not ready

I am a elementary classroom teacher. This is my 30th year with the DOE and have started to wonder if retirement would be something to consider, this year, next or the year after. Although, the past 2 years have been very exciting to teach my former Kindergarteners in Third Grade, I am not looking



forward to this year. My parents are getting older and have since stopped driving, therefore forcing my sister in law to take on an extra weekly task outside of our immediate family responsibilities.

I have been actively preparing myself for this school year since the closure of SY 2020. During the summer, I wrote up 1 grant for my class. I participated in another grant/workshop/PD in June, which forced me to wake up at 5 am to attend 6 am distance learning workshop that included teachers from other states for two weeks.

As soon as my classroom was cleaned and waxed, I was there to set up my tables at 6 foot distances apart...that was just last week or 7 days ago. Yesterday, I finally was able to enter my second classroom to set up and prepare for my other half of my class.

As of yesterday, I found out that our school will not be doing K-2 face to face and Grades 3-5 blended, but also DL for about 25 students that families do not feel safe attending school in August. We don't even know what that means and how teachers will be impacted.

Since March, my husband and his co workers have been planning for SY 2020-21 for a private school, knowing that DL would probably be needed for the coming Fall/Spring Semester. They have been actively planning via video from about 7:30 am - 6 pm daily. This is not an easy job! Their teachers received some training last week.

I'm writing to you because our school opened up our campus to do summer school for group of students, group 1 mornings and group 2 after lunch, that needed extra help. They have been very busy.

I understand why the state wants to open up the state, however is really worth it at this time. Yes, the state is giving teachers 9 1/2 days from 12:30 pm - 3 or 3:30 or 4 to plan and fix the problems that we encounter at the start of school. This is not enough time. We want training or time to learn how to be a distance learning teacher or the teacher in the other room. My suggestion would be to have teachers work August 4-14 in school to help prepare for SY 2020-21. Get training on whatever DL program state or schools (students) will be using, if we need to help implement along with our classroom responsibilities (in two rooms). Have more planning time with admin. at school, rather than just sending out surveys to get input.

While the HSTA has continued to work in good faith with the state, HIDOE, and public charter schools throughout the summer, I would like to know the answers to these questions:

- When will the State of Hawaii's Department of Health provide written guidance on the reopening of school buildings, which the HIDOE agreed to in our MOU?
- What options are available to families seeking 100-percent distance learning options for their children? And will classroom teachers have to provide that 100-percent distance learning instruction in addition to the model they're currently expected to teach?
- What are the clear protocols for requesting and receiving approvals for an exception to wearing face coverings at schools? HSTA believes everyone must be required to wear face coverings at schools, especially within six feet of each other.

- What happens to the students and adults on a school campus if a student, teacher, other school employee, and or one of their household members test positive for COVID-19?
- What standard practices and additional personal protective equipment (PPE) methods should be followed by employees who need to get within six feet of others, especially students who are medically fragile and/or very young?
- How will schools determine that newly enrolled students, especially those from military households, followed 14 days of proper self-isolation upon arrival in Hawaii?
- When a school needs to shut down due to a COVID-19 infection, how will schools move to a 100-percent distance learning environment, and when will teachers be trained?

Teachers will be most at risk when schools reopen. They will be in close contact with dozens, and potentially hundreds, of children for multiple hours in a given day. Yet they seem to be more of an afterthought in the health director's overall concern for health and safety. In testimony before lawmakers last week, Anderson admitted, "The disease is far more serious for older people. That doesn't necessarily help the teachers, of course, or the faculty who are worried. But for the kids themselves the risk is relatively low for serious disease."

Aren't teachers just as important as children? Haven't we sacrificed a lot all these years. We have teachers with health conditions too. Getting a sub is not easy either, they or their family have health issues too.

Mahalo,

Wendy Tomita

## Testimony BOE

**From:** Barb <barbarav1999@yahoo.com> on behalf of Barb  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:16 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

My name is Barbara J V R.

I do not have children BUT I know a bad thing when I see it. Especially knowing that our teachers have not been given the necessary tools to provide a safe & cautious environment for our Keiki.

I'M a flight attendant and know that CoVid has put a huge spin in all avenues of life here in the islands. I'm talking from experience as we still have yet to open up all of our flying destinations. Is Hawaii ready to open up all schools??

My question is: Have ALL TEACHERS been given the necessary tools to move forward without putting themselves or their students in jeopardy?? PPE?? It's not cheap to set up a classroom with plexiglass, hand sanitizers, individual disposable masks, air purifiers & making sure the chairs/desk are properly placed in order to comply with social distancing guidelines. And have ALL STUDENTS THROUGHOUT THE ISLAND been given rules & regulations on how classroom environments will be conducted??

Have parents familiarized themselves with the ins and outs of new protocol and necessary directions should there be a breakout?? Is there a Plan B in place should the first week not work?? Do you really want to open up so soon only to have to close down so quickly??

Why not start small?? Why not provide our teachers with the tools first?? Why expect them to come up with a plan & their own funding to get their classrooms in order?? Do they have that kind of money?? Why not help them set up the classrooms FIRST??? Why not give them more time?? What's gonna be done about the students with special needs?? What about the younger students who just don't understand what it means to be socially distant?? So many uncertainties to play with our Keiki's lives.

THIS CAN NOT BE TAKEN LIGHTLY.

So I am writing this to urge BOE to think again before opening schools up too early.  
The health & safety of our Keiki and teachers should be considered, please!!!

[https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A\\_hsta.us6.list-2Dmanage.com\\_track\\_click-3Fu-3D31be4c2dbdddb0d80b4b4036a-26id-3D8bca9b8f47-26e-3D7a0338aad9&d=DwMFaQ&c=euGZstcaTDIlvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A\\_CdpqnVfiiMM&r=wrVYSDBE8IFVcHaxZ41T7A&m=gbXgfocZ80Yd-GrfnbSCb\\_fHS2H5c2vtYYrppi1gXqA&s=maua3QFj9Xcw9qflus\\_7V0f3Bx61Zhxiir3O9AYv2iA&e=](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_hsta.us6.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3D31be4c2dbdddb0d80b4b4036a-26id-3D8bca9b8f47-26e-3D7a0338aad9&d=DwMFaQ&c=euGZstcaTDIlvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A_CdpqnVfiiMM&r=wrVYSDBE8IFVcHaxZ41T7A&m=gbXgfocZ80Yd-GrfnbSCb_fHS2H5c2vtYYrppi1gXqA&s=maua3QFj9Xcw9qflus_7V0f3Bx61Zhxiir3O9AYv2iA&e=)

Sent from my iPad

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Gail Kuroda <gailkuroda@gmail.com> on behalf of Gail Kuroda  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:20 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Against Reopening Hawaii DOE Schools

Sent from my iPhone

Reopening schools is willfully endangering our kids and entire communities for political gain. Forcing schools to reopen without providing them with the resources we need to do so safely is reckless, dangerous, and the last thing we should do.

As a mother and teacher I am not willing to put my children or students at even the smallest of risks. I have not been trained on any of the covid19 protocols and have many unanswered concerns. Do you realize the responsibility you are placing on teachers when you insist "back to school on August 4th?" These are life altering decisions, please don't act in haste at the expense of our keiki or teachers.

Please delay opening schools until training and procedures are in place to support both teachers and students.

Sincerely,

Gail Kuroda

Noelani School

Grd 3 Teacher

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** dmasukawa@hawaiiantel.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:29 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov; BOE.Hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** LtGov.UIPA@hawaii.gov; mayor@honolulu.gov  
**Subject:** Opening of the Schools, is the DOE really ready?

There seems to be a lack of clarity and consistency as to what the teachers and students are to expect. I totally understand that schools need to open to prevent students from further sliding behind on the academics, and yet at what cost are we doing this without the public transparency of what the DOE is implementing.

1. I understand the guidelines that the HSTA is recommending is the 6 ft. space between all students, in accordance with the CDC's recommendations. Yet I have heard rumors the 3 ft. is being considered under special request. Basically, restaurants are required to open with a spacing of approx. 6 ft. between customers, but with students and teachers there maybe exceptions that the DOE is willing to consider? This is a pandemic situation yet the State is willing to compromise on the safety of the student and teachers, and more so their families as well. This does not appear to have the public safety being considered having the greatest importance.
2. This is a pandemic situation, so what plans have the DOE considered to provide adequate masks and PPE's to the students and teachers? Is this a potential worker's comp. liability for the State in the event no adequate PPE's are provided? Does the State provide PPE's and what type to our front line workers at the airport, prisons and other state facilities that employees have high person to person contact. I would think not providing the same to our teachers would pose the State to be liable for any issues that may arise. We are not talking about your common flu's and colds.
3. For clarity, please provide the COVID plan that the DOE has adopted in the event a covid case is found at a school. I saw the Covid plan that the DOE has online, but there seems to be discussions that is will not be followed exactly. Please update and furnish to all families having students residing in their homes.
4. How are the teachers, students and family members having various health issues being taken into account with the current DOE COVID plans? I have not found any information pertaining to this.

Being that, I, as a State resident am unaware of the above, and apparently there has been no big push to educate our residents as to what everyone should expect, is the State of Hawaii really ready to open the schools without having thoroughly educating our residents what the DOE Covid plans are? The above situations and questions are very simple and common sense ones that should have been answered to date. If

not, is the State really ready to open the schools and expose our elders, students, residents and teachers that may have underlying health issues? Everyone is so focused on the tasks, like a student, and not realizing the repercussions of their actions.

*David Masukawa*

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kelsey Baker <kelseynanbaker@gmail.com> on behalf of Kelsey Baker  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:40 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha To Whom This May Concern,

My name is Kelsey Kahui and I am a teacher at Aliamanu Middle School writing to you to share my testimony regarding the opening of schools on August 4th.

There remains a vast plethora of unanswered questions by the Department of Education thereby making an August 4th opening not only unrealistic but downright dangerous.

The major issue I have with the August 4th reopening is the lack of necessary answers.

Important details regarding the reopening of school buildings, in the form of written guidance from the Department of Health has yet to be handed down. While we are all aware that this virus is ever changing, that is no excuse to have no written guidance based on what we currently know.

Specific procedures are necessary if and when schools need to be closed following a positive case. When will we have a set of those?

My school consists of 80% military students. With such a transient population, how will our school or any school for that matter, know if a newly enrolled student has quarantined for 14 days? With people's lives at risk, taking someone's 'word' is not enough.

What is the protocol going to be for requesting and receiving approvals for an exception to wearing face coverings at schools? I foresee there being many parents trying to skirt the face mask requirement, what will be done about this?

While I am not typically this overly concerned with my own health and safety, as I am a 33 year old in perfect health, I found out during the pandemic that I am expecting and due in November. Understandably so, my initial concern for my 'high risk' colleagues took a very personal turn when I too became a part of the 'high risk' category.

I mention this not for sympathy but to provide perspective in what seems like the *forceful* reopening of schools on August 4th. I implore you to ask yourselves, "what is the rush?"

When considering pushing back the opening of our public schools, please keep in mind that the students are not the ones in the high risk categories. It is the older, underlying medical condition, pregnant teachers and kupuna within a student's household that you are putting in harm's way... and at what cost?

I respectfully ask that you reconsider reopening our state's public schools come August 4th.

Mahalo piha,  
Kelsey Kahui

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Teacher Rights 808 <teachpower808@gmail.com> on behalf of Teacher Rights 808  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:40 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Fwd: Testimony  
**Attachments:** IMG\_20200722\_223449\_757.jpg

This is my back to school shopping list done, minus the kn95 masks I'm expecting.

If this is what we're buying to go back to in person learning, we shouldn't be going back.

And btw, we have received zero training, at the 9 schools I surveyed, about anything related to Covid or opening with it.

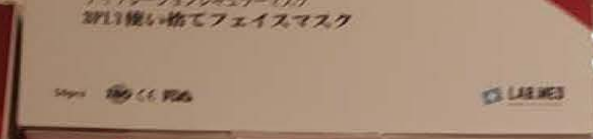
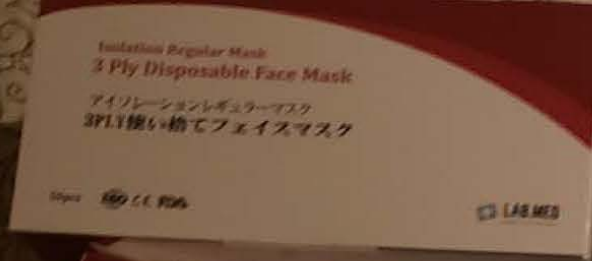
On Wed, Jul 22, 2020, 9:01 AM Teacher Rights 808 <[teachpower808@gmail.com](mailto:teachpower808@gmail.com)> wrote:

Just reading some news articles about potential long-term impact of the virus after exposure, and here's some food for thought. You aren't just condemning students and teachers to a "flu" that will go away. This is more akin to a permanent scarring of the body in many ways. You are okay with exposing people to this when there are alternatives.

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/as-post-covid-heart-and-brain-problems-linger-some-coronavirus-survivors-find-its-a-long-haul-to-recovery-165434453.html>

Look up the article yourselves if you won't click the link. It has plenty of resources you can check out. You KNOW about these things, and sending anyone back into it when there is a viable option is murder.





# Late Testimony

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Iris Yamamoto <ishindo28@gmail.com> on behalf of Iris Yamamoto  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:43 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

I am testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

I am a teacher at Wilson Elementary and I have a 2nd grade child attending at the same school. I am extremely fearful of sending myself and my child back to school when Covid cases are rising. I refuse to see myself as a guinea pig for school reopening and above all put my own child at risk of being a carrier for this virus and bring it home for my entire family. I love my job and I miss my students tremendously but if we cannot get solid guidance from the BOE then I may just need to walk away from this career. My husband and I both are concerned that there will be many families who just sends their child to school from an infected home because they have no other choice. I will not put my own child and my dear students health on the line just so that our economy can open up again. There is absolutely no amount of money that can be earned to replace our keikis' health.

Push back the reopening date. Allow us educators to thoroughly prepare. Solidify your own written guidance for us especially focusing on what the proper protocol would be if a staff member or student contracts the virus. Help us by guiding us. The planning and communication should have started MONTHS AGO. but it's better late than never.

I am grateful for BOE, DOE, and HSTA's conversation and planning that have been happening in recent weeks but we need to look past the economy and loss of academics...see this issue as saving human lives. We need to be alive and well in order to teach our children.

Mahalo,  
Iris Yamamoto

# Late Testimony

July 22, 2020

Dear Members of the Hawaii Board of Education,

My name is Kori Shlachter, and I am an educator in Honolulu, Hawaii. I am a graduate of Kahuku High School, and I have also worked at Campbell, Castle, and Kahuku High Schools, as well as other independent schools on the island. I am currently a college counselor working at an independent school that is planning to reopen for face-to-face instruction in late August. Even though my institution has established various protocols based on research and CDC guidelines, I am still extremely nervous about reopening because of all of the unknowns that cannot be controlled. School educators are about to be on the front lines of this pandemic.

My friends and family who work and attend in the public schools are even more at risk. Even if we are to put the issues of access and inequities associated with remote/distance learning aside, everyone I know is concerned about the health of their students, families, and themselves. We have had our own family physicians recommend that all of us working in public to independent institutions to update our wills/trusts. We care about our students and their education, but we shouldn't have to put our lives on the line.

One of my best friends has had heart valve replacement surgery and cannot afford to take leave. My sister and other colleagues have health issues that put them at high-risk complications associated with Covid-19. The unknowns about how young people are affected is also unnerving. In addition, extra compensation for special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs must be maintained.

That being said, the public school faculty and staff do not feel comfortable or confident in their training, protocols, and knowledge of the novel coronavirus to welcome back students on August 4th. More work needs to be done to update facilities and protocols to ensure the health and safety of the faculty, staff (including facilities, cafeteria, and other support staff), and students. Please delay the opening of school.

Sincerely,  
Kori Shlachter



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Fae H <faehirayama@gmail.com> on behalf of Fae H  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 11:00 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Shortage Differentials - Special Education

To: State of Hawaii Board of Education  
From: Fae Hirayama, Special Education Teacher  
MS Education, Special Education

Please continue the retention differentials for special education teachers and other hard to staff areas.

The recruitment and retention differentials have been effective, increasing the percentage of teachers special education and decreasing the loss of special education teachers.

School was closed abruptly and my special education students needed headphones with microphones to assist with their focus/engagement in distance learning. The headphones allowed connection using a variety of digital devices including parent cell phones and a variety of tablets. I purchased the headphones, had them shipped to me using my Amazon Prime (allowing for quick arrival to my home) and I mailed the headphones to my students. Additionally, I used my personal color printer to provide hundreds of pages of individualized paper-based instructional packets. By the end of the distance learning (May) all of my families were requesting paper-based learning packets. None of these expenses are reimbursed.

In preparation for return to school, I have had to purchase gloves, masks, cleaning wipes, alcohol and face shields as our school has limited availability. Since I began teaching in 2011, I have spent approximately \$1000 per year to pay for needed classroom equipment and supplies. I have also had to pay for coursework and travel expenses to attend specialized training on Oahu.

I began teaching as a 2nd career and I have not been able to pay off my student loans. When I started teaching in the 2011-2012 school year, we had large salary and benefit reductions. I was not able to afford my Federal Student Loan payments and entered a period of forbearance.

Please fund our positions to keep qualified teachers in Special Education.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Fae M. Hirayama

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Erin L <erintulee@gmail.com> on behalf of Erin L  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 11:06 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony on Re-opening Schools

My name is Erin Lee and I am the mother of a student at Kawananakoa Middle School. After seeing the school's brief plan, I would like to express my concerns:

-I do not think the schools/teachers had enough time to prepare to safely/effectively teach the children. I can tell by looking at the plan that the schools are unprepared and not ready to safely teach children

-What is the plan if a teacher or student shows any potential symptoms of COVID-19? Will schools have enough teachers if multiple staff have to be in quarantine? There is already a shortage of teachers so how is this going to be handled if multiple teachers get sick?

-I read that schools will try to keep children in a "bubble", but I do not think this is possible at the middle school/high school age. It appears students will be doing form class to class so they will be in contact with many students; the chances of COVID-19 spreading is much greater.

-What is your plan if a child or teacher tests positive for COVID-19 or even shows symptoms? I am concerned that there does not appear to be a protocol.

-Are all classrooms going to have the necessary equipment such a PPE, technology for distance learning and cleaning supplies? In March, I found out soap was out in the bathrooms on many occasions. How will these basic safety measures be kept up without extra staff?

-There does not appear to be any protocol for how often classrooms will be cleaned.

I urge you not to rush into re-opening schools and allow the schools the necessary time to prepare and keep our children safe. I am afraid for the health and lives of our children and staff at the schools. Please put health and safety first.

Thank you,  
Erin Lee

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Lillian Shaw <lilshaw168@gmail.com> on behalf of Lillian Shaw  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 11:09 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

**MOU between DOE and Teachers association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.**

I am special education teacher at Kawananako middle school teaching 6-8 grade resource math. My students need to come daily due to their disabilities. We cannot imagine how many students each will contact before, during, and after school. We cannot ensure no one get sick from keiki to staffs.

I am 64 years old. My husband is 72 with stage IV lung cancer. Please consider how we can secure everyone's health before school opening.

Sincerely,

Lillian Shaw  
Sent from my iPad

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Piilani Chong-Echiverri <pchongechiverri@gmail.com> on behalf of Piilani Chong-Echiverri  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 11:30 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

I personally do not feel right about having schools reopening soon. My children have a hard time wearing masks outside of the home. I would feel more comfortable if I'm given an option for distant learning. My other concern is who will be handling temperature checks and disinfecting? We already have parents who drop their kids off to school with head lice and flu like symptoms. Do you really think a parent will keep their child home if they are a symptomatic? What if that child's household member caught COVID and not inform the rest of the school then what? What can you do to ease my concerns?

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Lori Narimasu-Hirayasu <lorinarimasu@gmail.com> on behalf of Lori Narimasu-Hirayasu  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 11:36 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony to delay school reopening

I have the following questions:

Who will take temperatures?

If a student displays symptoms who will tell parents the student needs to go home?

Who is responsible for cleaning rooms?

What are cleaning protocols?

I have an autoimmune condition, i am taking immunosuppressants that suppress my immune system. I have a higher risk of complications from covid. What is the DOE doing to protect staff members with conditions that make them much more susceptible to contracting covid?

I am a speech therapist, students need to see my mouth. Will you pay for sneeze guards or face masks with windows?

Will you reimburse staff for cleaning supplies and ppe (such as smile masks)?

What is the protocol if a student tests positive? Do all staff that were in contact quarantine for 2 weeks or does the whole school get shut down?

When will we get training on procedures such as cleaning, interacting with students, what materials are allowed to be used with students?

I support my union on delaying reopening so that staff can be trained and questions can be answered. We are dealing with a aggressive illness that's very contagious. We need proper training on protocols and procedures. Without organization, there will be mistakes. And i don't want to see my students, fellow coworkers or myself to be fighting to breathe on a ventilator.

Please respect and show some compassion for your workers. This "get it done" attitude is not applicable to a covid-19 world.

The rest of the U.S. is watching Hawaii be the first state to open school statewide. Don't make us look like idiots. Give us time to organize.



## Testimony BOE

**From:** Carrie Shoda-Sutherland <carrie.shoda@gmail.com> on behalf of Carrie Shoda-Sutherland  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 11:42 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony: Action H

RE: ITEM H. BOARD ACTION ON MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN STATE OF HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION AND HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 RESPONSE): 2017-2021 CONTRACTUAL MODIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS OF WORK RELATED TO COVID-19 RESPONSE FOR BARGAINING UNIT 5 EMPLOYEES.

Aloha members of the Board of Education:

My name is Carrie Shoda-Sutherland, and I am the parent of three students currently enrolled in Hawaii public schools: Ma'ema'e, SEEQS Public Charter School, and Roosevelt High School.

I am writing to share my perspective that the Department of Education has repeatedly failed to comply with the intent and spirit of the direction you have provided during this pandemic. I do not think the BOE should approve the MOU. I know this does not prevent its execution but a unanimous approval of the agreement gives the impression that all is well, and it is not.

**DOE implemented the distance requirements in inconsistent, and possibly bad, faith.** Since the last BOE meeting, there has been progress made in the issue of the 6 foot distance between students. However, I continue to question why this was an issue to begin with. It was crystal clear that the intent was for 6 foot distance and the HSTA believed less than 6 foot would be the far rare exception rather than the norm. Otherwise, the MOU would have said minimum 3 foot with a preference up to 6 foot. In any case, a process has subsequently been set up to force transparency in requesting exceptions. **I hope you will make available information on the schools that requested and were granted exceptions, and the rationale for such approvals.**

**The appearance that DOE is complying with your direction to provide a distance learning option and guidance to families is an illusion.** Yes, DOE leadership has finally mandated to their schools the need to provide a 'distance learning' option. **However, do you realize that distance learning really means an online platform for homeschooling?** Do you realize there has been little to no communication to families and no training provided to teachers? The launch of a distance learning program is not feasible within the budgetary and staffing constraints of a single school. The Department has abdicated his responsibility to set up this critical infrastructure under the guise of empowering schools to make and implement their own choices.

Because of the lack of centralized infrastructure and training made available by the Department, parents like me have to receive a message from their school as it relates to 'distance learning' the school will make available:

- Ma'ema'e teachers will not be giving direct instruction online. All distance learning activities will be exclusively through the online program selected by the school.
- Students will be monitored by our school personnel for the purpose of grading only, but will not receive any reminders, instruction, or other direction from the school.
- Final grades will be completed by the teacher assigned to monitor distance learning students. Grades will only be given for the subject areas covered by the online program, and students will receive an N/A for all standard areas not covered by the program.

I felt abandoned by my school after seeing this message. And yet, I cannot blame them because I know there has been an overall lack of support by the DOE system for distance learning.

In the alternative, I have to give HUGE praise and appreciation for my child's charter school, SEEQS. The leadership of that school has been communicative, flexible, thoughtful, and creative in the solutions they are implementing for their students. In every communication and action, I have felt confidence that they are truly caring for the concerns of the families and the needs of their students.

**We have bright examples in our public school system. Let us lift up those examples as the expectations. Let us settle for no less. Please send a message to the DOE that they are not meeting expectations and must do better for Hawaii's families.**

Thank you for your attention.

Carrie Shoda-Sutherland

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Fae H <faehirayama@gmail.com> on behalf of Fae H  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 11:46 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** DELAY SCHOOL OPENING

to: Board of Education,  
Department of Education

### Facility Readiness

Our schools are not ready to open. My classroom has not yet been cleaned and I have not been able to pick up my classroom keys to begin preparing the classroom. I have had a change of teaching assignment and location and I need to set up my room for physical distancing and for meeting the needs of students who are medically fragile and students who are at increased risk due to asthma and other diagnosed conditions that place them at increased risk of serious illness, should they be exposed to COVID-19.

We were not able to order gloves and masks at the end of the school year because they were not available (out of stock) from our vendor.

### Faculty Training in Distance Learning

We have not been trained in Distance Learning as a faculty. I have attended training on my own. We do not have enough digital devices to have students have their own device.

The computers that have been ordered with Special Education funding have been distributed to students not in special education and limit the ability of our Special Education students to have their own device.

### Need to provide own Personal Protective Equipment and Cleaning Products

In preparation for return to school, I have had to purchase gloves, masks, cleaning wipes, Medical grade cleaners and wipes, isopropyl alcohol and face shields as our school has limited availability. Scanning Thermometers are available only in the Health room and not in the classrooms.

We are placing ourselves and returning students and increased risk of exposure to the Covid-19 virus and associated illness. Young children are the most likely to have no symptoms of illness after exposure to Covid 19 but are able to transmit the virus. Unfortunately, young children also may have a later onset of abdominal upset and fever with sudden onset of multisystem inflammation and organ failure, resulting in very serious illness and death.

The Department of Health has sent conflicting messages, saying that a Task Force will be convened...then most recently saying the Department of Health will not be issuing its own guidelines but will be following the CDC guidelines.

Our state is experiencing an increase in Covid-19 cases. It is not time to re-open schools to face to face learning. There is no medical basis for the "ohana unit model" in school being safer to allow closer proximity.

We need answers...before school opens. We asked questions like, what will happen if we find that we have someone who has Covid-19 at school. We were not given any answers.

If we follow the exposure tracking, everyone in contact will need to be quarantined or isolated. A single student will have multiple sites of potential exposure (travel into school by car or bus, breakfast/lunch in the

cafeteria, time with other students in homeroom, recess, return home by car or bus). In our community, we have a very high percentage of multigenerational families and we have one of the highest rates of very elderly living at home. Hawaii has the highest rate of Asthma in the United States.

Please keep our students, teachers and our school community safe. Delay DOE opening of school. We are not ready.

Fae Hirayama  
Special Education Teacher  
Eleele Elementary School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Mahina B. <m6mabarr@gmail.com> on behalf of Mahina B.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 12:09 AM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delay opening schools and give Schools time to plan and prepare

"School opens in two weeks and we are still building." These are the words from my principal at Lihikai Elementary. She and our entire staff have spent countless hours and meetings trying to get a plan going for our students safe return. They are all such amazing and wonderful people. I am grateful for my colleagues and Administrators for their support in doing all they can to prepare for school on Aug. 4th.

The reality however is all schools are not ready to be reopened. I will list some of the reasons why below. Most of these reasons pertain specifically to my school, however I know that it is the same statewide.

- Small custodial staff
- custodial staff is still moving 600+ Student desks to meet 6ft distance and they need more time.
- teachers need more training with online platforms to utilize in teaching -teachers now need to create a 100% online learning option to help keep our enrollment numbers.
- We need paid work days without students to train and plan for full online option, but don't have enough time from now and Aug. 4th to do that.
- teachers really need to plan with their grade level team what each day will look like with a rotational schedule.
- rotational schedule has never been done in elementary school and we need to plan for how we can teach our curriculum with this new rotation.
- We need time to inform parents About reopening plans and give parents time to give us feedback on whether their child will do a full online option or not.
- We do not have proper PPE supplies To start our school off with and our Administrators have all diligently placed orders.
- our administrators are still working on cafeteria, recess plans, they need time.
- technology devices and internet for students are still trying to be figured out.
- Throwing us in for the sake of opening by August, without the proper planning and Preparation, will not ensure that health guidelines are being Properly followed. It will ensure that teachers and students are NOT safe.
- teachers need time to figure out how they will grade and test students with a rotational schedule.
- Teachers are not prepared to teach under all these changes and requirements. We need time.

The list continues but I will stop there. I know that with more Prep time, Training and planning we can have a solid and safer reopening for our staff and students. Please delay the opening of schools to a later date to allow educators and administrators to prepare.

Mahalo

Mahinalani Plunkett

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

**From:** Dayna M <beinthesolution@gmail.com> on behalf of Dayna M  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 12:51 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony in favor of PHASED APPROACH starting w/ 100% Distance learning and live teachers to reopening in-person classrooms

Dear Hawai'i Board of Education Members,

**I am a seriously concerned single mother of a child entering into the Fourth Grade in a Maui School. I am a Nurse who has been heavily involved in the efforts to fight covid-19 by helping in community education for Covid-19 Awareness, volunteering at Maui Drive-thru test sites, as a Certified Contact Tracer, and Board Member of Hawai'i Covid-19 Healthcare Provider Taskforce.**

I say the following with respect and great concern in this urgent matter.

### **FIRST DO NO HARM.**

How can you allow schools to open when they are NOT ready??

Teachers/Schools don't have BASIC necessities to survive a COVID-19 Pandemic plus a flu season on top of this. Ask teachers on the ground. Are you talking to them?

Don't rely on other officials or entities to say that teachers/schools are ready, when it serves their own agendas. Even parents have agendas to push teachers to work ASAP, because they need to work.

This is URGENT.

Please! Teachers are crying out in FEAR FOR THEIR LIVES- many are HIGH RISK with comorbidities.

Many Hawai'i Households are multigenerational.

Teachers worry about their families.

### **All teachers are asking for is MORE TIME!**

They know it's futile to ask for distance learning only, which poses no risk to them. They accept that they will be sacrificed at some point. Some are longing to go back to normal. But this is NOT normal. In fact, we are all being pushed hard with an agenda suddenly that we are in the so-called "*New Normal.*" *Please stop pushing this agenda as it is harmful to the community. This messaging leads people to become complacent and removes the urgency of using precautions to protect each other.*

### **"NEW NORMAL?"**

Hawai'i is **NOT** in the "*New Normal*" because we don't have the first clue of what it's truly like to be hit with a massive surge such as what is happening in Mainland America. This is yet to come with the hasty and unforgivably lenient lifting of the travel quarantine. Many medical professionals believe the one-test strategy is insufficient and recommend a two-test method with some quarantine. Many other measures must also be in place-

**\*\*High testing capacity, adequate isolation/quarantine facilities and support services, Contact Tracers, a supported roll out of a Contact Tracing App (already developed through a grassroots effort!), and wide community cooperation in use of precautions like physical distancing and mask wearing.\*\***

We have none of this in place.

And, it is important to avoid opening travel and schools at the same time to be able to see the effects of each action on the community.

### **BOTTOM LINE:**

Teachers need time! The phased approach they are asking for starts with 100% Distance Learning while cases get under control. What happened to the 4 week standard of no increase in cases before schools can reopen? Hawai'i is experiencing wide community spread. As you are aware, we've also lost a significant portion of our testing capacity and we have never truly tested the Contact Tracing system, even with the low number of Contact Tracers available. We will not have enough Tracers to handle both schools and a vast increase in Travelers. Teachers won't receive regular testing either, so they will spread this virus while asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic.

## **DISTANCE LEARNING**

While *Distance Learning with \*Real LIVE\* teachers* (NOT planned cookie cutter programs) occurs, preparations can be made, outdoor structures built, correct ventilation systems installed, materials gathered, and increases to staffing are made.

## **ESSENTIAL NEEDS FOR SCHOOLS:**

**1) Does every school have multiple isolation chambers for all the kids and staff who present with symptoms which will be monitored by a Nurse?** (Not just an adult w/ BLS cert) We are headed into flu season as well.

**Does every school have contactless thermometers and pulse oximeters?**

**2) Who will assist every student safely to the bathroom and monitor and clean bathrooms after each use?**

**3) Who will assist teachers & keep an eye on the kids hygiene while the teachers provide quality education?**

**4) Why are schools doing proficiency tests on the first day back with a bunch of kids who have been TRAUMATIZED and away from friends for months?** Kids need to adjust and catch up with each other. Not take stressful tests! They need time to work on learning to use the precautions and talking about their time at home. They won't be greeted with hugs. Many families don't even use precautions so they will be in for a rude awakening. **Where is the time to ease into this and acclimate for teachers and parents as well?** Teachers & Parents have experienced trauma & will have to adjust too.

**5) Where are the classrooms' accessible hand-washing stations with soap & water?** Alcohol-based Hand Sanitizers were discouraged by Sarah Park, but what alternative is offered?

**6) Where are the hepa filters, UV lightbulbs, and Hypochlorous Acid foggers to disinfect classrooms & offices?**

**7) Where are the cleaning materials & disinfectants?** Many schools don't even have soap & paper towels in their bathrooms throughout the year.

**8) Where is the PPE (masks/shields) and safety dividers for desks like they use in Asia?**

**\*Why are teachers spending their own money on PPE for students and safety materials for classrooms?**

**9) Where are the sturdy, simple, outdoor shade structures** for classes so they can have ventilation per CDC? Other successful countries are using these. Why did we not build these over the last few months? Can we put a priority on this?! *They will need microphones/electricity.*

**10) Where are the mandatory temperature screenings and thermal scanners for schools?** Everyone has been told these are effective and that they add layers of protection for Travelers, so why the lowering of standards for schools? Is it because Screening temps is not actually effective or schools aren't worth the trouble and expense?

**11) Why were CDC recommendations for distancing and masking also compromised for schools as well and how much lower is the bar going to go?**

**12) Where is the National Guard now to assist with building outdoor classroom spaces, staff health rooms, perform temperature checks, and manage the hordes of people that will be congregating when parents bring their kids to school?** Parent drop-off & pick-up is a logistical nightmare under normal circumstance. Some of us pay for after-school programs just to avoid this.

**The community is getting mixed messages.**

Do you remember what it was like for Nurses and Physicians who were fighting for their lives, their safety, PPE, and the use of personal PPE when it wasn't being provided? Do you recall how terrified medical personnel was? We called them the frontline, but healthcare workers are the last line of defense.

The frontline is really comprised of grocery workers, postal/delivery workers, restaurant workers, transportation workers, Dentists etc.

NOW it's **TEACHERS/school staff** & aware parents who are seriously concerned about the dangers and permanent complications and sequelae from even mild infections of COVID-19 can have have. Next, it will be **ALL parents** who re-enter the workforce in the hotel and travel industry and who will have to be in contact with travelers from the American Mainland.

***These travelers WILL import the virus widely unless stronger measures are put in place.*** As it stands, Governor Ige will be fully lifting the quarantine with an inadequate ***“one pre-flight negative test”*** and release thousands of travelers and returning residents to roam our shores despite the fact that they may have been exposed after they took their test and all the way up through the flight. When this happens, *nobody will be safe- including schools, teachers, staff, parents, you and your own families.* What will happen to our schools when parents in the hotel industry exposed their kids and send them to school with your own kids and with teachers who are at risk?

**NEED FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION TO REINFORCE PRECAUTIONS AND CREATE UNITY:**

*We are sorely lacking in community education measures, public awareness, and UNITY & ALOHA in using precautions widely so, unfortunately, many still remain unaware or in denial of the reality that is about to burst the “bubble” of safety that Hawai'i has so far been in.*

***Also, the new “Ohana/School/BUS Bubbles” concept is contradictory to everything the public has been taught about the SAFE BUBBLE concept*** and they are not comfortable with this, so maybe they were listening. This new “bubble” concept exposes teachers and students to a mix of the highest risk families who will be forced to send their keiki to school so they can work in our hotels and hospital.

**UNIVERSAL MASK-WEARING**

Though children may not experience severe illness, they may still transmit COVID virus to teachers, their families, and the community. And unless Schools can step up safety measures like universal mask-wearing, **TEACHERS/STAFF WILL SPREAD COVID TO EACH OTHER.**

\*Allowing masking to be “per teacher preference” will prove to be disastrous, complicated, confusing, and create conflict where we really need UNITY!

We need to help send a positive message of reinforcement here. Hawai'i needs to universally mask to get through this.

**“HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS SUPPORTING TEACHERS & SCHOOLS EFFORT”**



We have recently had a fruitful zoom call which allowed for teachers and healthcare providers to share information and collaborate! It was extremely beneficial and insightful. Teachers are not trained the way medical practitioners and scientists are, rigorously maintaining aseptic technique, disinfection, prevention of cross-contamination. It becomes second nature to us after years of practice reinforcement.

Following CDC guidelines is not something that that Teachers are used to. Yet our State expects that TEACHERS will be able to successfully manage the virus and it places the weight of public health enforcement for entire communities on them...and we expect them to provide quality education!

Our expectations are pretty lofty!

Sure, a pediatrician may argue that they feel completely safe after seeing 20-30 kids a day, but they only see one patient at a time and are in full PPE with a nurse present to disinfect in between patients in a completely controlled setting. The parent/guardian is with the child the entire time to monitor and assist the child to the bathroom. This is no comparison to what teachers are facing.

Unfortunately, it seems that there is a disconnect between healthcare providers and teacher - a disconnect between what is being assumed in the Public vs. the reality of the situation. The public is told that everything is prepared and ready and they have been trained. Teachers report that this is not the case.

### **QUALITY CONTROL SYSTEM:**

WHO WILL BE REGULARLY OVERSEEING INSPECTING, MONITORING, & IMPROVING SAFE AND BEST HEALTH PRACTICES IN EVERY SCHOOL THROUGHOUT THE YEAR? Create a Taskforce/Committee for this and inspect every school regularly and make improvements accordingly.

Schools will be in a position similar to medical facilities & will be working with “patients” in essence. Anyone could be infected with COVID-19 just like at a clinic. How will a lay person make health assessments? THEY ARE NOT MEDICALLY TRAINED.

Yet, per Dr. Sarah Park, a school doesn’t have to have a Nurse present, and any adult with BLS certification will suffice to monitor symptomatic students & staff in whatever “isolation room” schools will come up with on their own. How is this being allowed?

***Please employ nurses, use the National Guard like at airports, or recruit MRC volunteers to assist at EVERY School.*** MRC will be busy with Contact Tracing.

**Please HELP TEACHERS and ‘OHANA, DO NOT HARM THEM.**

Mahalo.

Respectfully,

Dayna M. (Concerned Parent/Nurse)  
Concerned Parent/Community Member  
MRC Nurse & Certified Contact Tracer  
Hawai’i COVID-19 Healthcare Provider Taskforce Member

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** jlander827@aol.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 12:54 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Pay Differential

Board Members,

Please continue to fund the pay differential for teachers in the public schools which were previously in place so as to continue to retain teachers in those difficult to fund areas. As well the decision to maintain a 6 foot distance in the classrooms is very wise, especially until we better understand how schools can effectively adjust to the Corona Virus.

Respectfully,

John Lander

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** David Vasquez <maestrovasquez3511@gmail.com> on behalf of David Vasquez  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 4:54 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Covid

Please do not open schools. We are not ready or prepared. Basing these decisions on the economy is wrong when it means the cost can be lives of those most important to our future and the ones preparing them for the future. I fear for my fellow teachers and I dread thinking that a student leaving my classroom will go home and spread this virus to their loved ones. Let's take this time to reinvent a school system that has historically failed our most vulnerable students instead.

David Vasquez

# Late Testimony

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Aubrey-Ann K. <aubziscrazy@yahoo.com> on behalf of Aubrey-Ann K.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 5:04 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** A Concerned Parent on Reopening Schools

Hello! My name is Aubrey-Ann Kaneshiro. I am 29 years old. I work a part-time job as a Package Handler at UPS. My work hours are late nights and I don't finish until the early morning. I'm also going to school at Leeward Community College to obtain my Associates and plan on furthering my education and transferring over to University of Hawaii West Oahu to obtain my Bachelors Degree in Business. I'm a single mom of three little girls who go to Wahiawa Elementary School. My oldest daughters Kayleigh (Kay-Lee) and Jaeleigh (Jay-Lee) are 9 years old and are going to be in 4th Grade this upcoming school year. My youngest daughter Ayverleigh (Ay-Ver-Lee) is 7 years old and is going to be in the 2nd Grade this upcoming school year. But as the coronavirus numbers continue to climb higher and higher, I'm rethinking my decision about sending them back to school. My daughters and I still live with my parents and my parents are not getting any younger and I know they are at high risk to get sick if they were to ever catch the coronavirus. My parents (are some of the lucky ones) as well as myself who are still able to work and have jobs during this pandemic but, I cannot risk and I don't want to take any risks of my daughters getting sick and catching the coronavirus and then getting my parents sick. I know the schools are planning to take many safety precautions but, I feel you can't be safe enough. Because I feel so uncomfortable sending them back to school, I'm planning on withdrawing from my college courses this fall semester and taking on the responsibility of homeschooling them on my own. I was hoping for the coronavirus numbers to lower as it got closer to the set date for the kids to go back to school but, it's doing everything else but that. Homeschooling them was my last resort because I will be honest, I do not have the patience like many teachers to teach my daughters but, I have to make the decision and think about what's best for my daughters and my family. I ask that you, the Board of Education, reconsider sending the kids back to school so soon. I feel it's too early and I'm sure that I'm not the only parent/ guardian who feels like this. Please, take my concerns into consideration when coming to a decision about reopening the schools. Please! Thank you for taking the time to read what I had to say!

Sincerely,  
Aubrey-Ann Kaneshiro

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Luke McKenney <mckenne9@hotmail.com> on behalf of Luke McKenney  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 5:08 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Luke McKenney, Parent

General Business Meeting

School Reopening

Support and comment

Board of Education,

I have looked over some of the proposed reopening plans and largely support them. Our keiki have suffered enough and have been burdened with at least \$3 trillion in federal debt and growing without their consent.

However, I recommend offering partial face-to-face services on Saturdays to those students who would be only offered two days a week services under the current plan. If the primary argument for limited services is the need to keep social distancing to six feet or more, expand the amount of time the space is available. Currently schools are empty two days a week. What a waste of limited resources given the crisis.

Sincerely,

Luke McKenney

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Pauahi Kazunaga <hstapauahi@gmail.com> on behalf of Pauahi Kazunaga  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 5:46 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** testimony

Aloha,

I am testifying on on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

I am a veteran teacher, having taught at all grade levels in either private or public schools. After working out of the classroom for over a decade, when I returned to the classroom I knew it would be at a school where I would stay until I retired. My freshmen students are my kids. Kids whose parents entrust me with their care.

Unfortunately, when school reopens in August, I do not know if I can maintain my students, my kids, health and safety. Our Hawaii Department of Education is saying that we are ready to reopen school.. That classrooms are a "controlled environment." Any teacher can tell you that it is very difficult to maintain all students remain in their seat for the entire class period, Any teacher will tell you that there are still many unanswered questions.

The Center of Disease Control shows that having students and teachers less than six feet apart, especially without face coverings, creates a high risk for the spread of COVID-19. Our own Department of Health website suggests that social distancing should be maintained at a distance of six feet or two-arms length and that face masks should be worn. If both the CDC and DOH indicates this, why isn't our Hawaii Department of Education requiring everyone to do so?

The Department also refers to the use of hand sanitizers, hand washing, and the cleaning of the classroom. Who will provide the hand sanitizers, and will it be provided in a touch free dispenser? What will be the protocols for sending students to the restroom, or anywhere out of the classroom? With secondary students rotating classes throughout the day,, how will the classrooms be cleaned between class periods? I ask that that our Department of Education address these concerns before our students return to campus. Or, at the very least, give schools the extra time needed to discuss this, and the many other concerns not addressed by the DOE in their plan for reopening.

My kids deserve no less than us striving to do our best in protecting their health and safety.

Mahalo,  
Pauahi Kazunaga  
Social Studies Teacher  
Aiea High School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Eileen Bebeau <bebeaulicious@hotmail.com> on behalf of Eileen Bebeau  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 6:04 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Reopening of schools

I don't think the schools are safe for employees and students yet. Too soon. Thanks for your support-Retired educator of 24 years

Sent from my iPad

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Eileen Bebeau <bebeaulicious@hotmail.com> on behalf of Eileen Bebeau  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 6:06 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

I'm a retired educator of 24 years at Waianae intermediate and leihoku elementary schools. I don't think it's safe for students teachers and employees to return to schools until further notice. Eileen Bebeau

Sent from my iPad



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Moa Noble <bijung.mugara@icloud.com> on behalf of Moa Noble  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 6:22 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION

Re: Action Item G: Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year

CHAIR Payne and members of the Board of Education,

My name is Moa Noble, I am a makua of Ke Kula o 'Ehunuikaimalino ma ka moku o Keawe. I am submitting testimony in support of continuing the pay differentials for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year.

Located in South Kona, Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino is the only public K-12 Hawaiian medium school on Hawai'i Island, and only one of two in the state. Every year it is a challenge to fully staff our kula with the kumu and limahana needed for our keiki. Not only is it difficult to find kumu that can 'olelo Hawai'i as well as teach academic content, but we are also located in a geographic area that is hard to staff.

Honolulu Magazine published an article (How Hawaiian Immersion Programs Are Inspiring Public School Students) in May of 2019 stating, "Another challenge? Finding enough Hawaiian textbooks for all grades. That means teachers are constantly translating and creating their own materials."

"And then there are the stereotypes associated with Hawaiian immersion—that students are at a disadvantage or the program is easy".

In many ways our kumu work hard to ensure our keiki have a quality education while maintaining a Hawaiian worldview.

I ask you reconsider pay differentials for our kumu and support their integral role in our small community.

Mahalo nui no kou kōkua,

Moa Noble



# Late Testimony

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

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2020  
ANDREA ESHELMAN  
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board,

I respectfully submit the following testimony related to the reopening of Hawaii's public schools and the ongoing response to COVID-19. As the chief negotiator for the Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA), I have engaged in hundreds of hours of discussion with various HIDOE leadership in the last few months. On June 27<sup>th</sup>, the HSTA agreed on a memorandum of understanding to supplement the HSTA collective bargaining agreement, yet key pieces of the agreement remain elusive. While we are committed to continue persistently, working through the many critical questions yet unanswered, in an effort to be clear, the following list of issues need to be addressed before school buildings reopen to students. While not exhaustive, this list represents significant areas, which cause HSTA to implore the state of Hawaii and the Board of Education to delay the opening of school buildings to students until they can be answered.

**Issue #1: Written Guidance from the State of Hawaii Department of Health: NOT PROVIDED**

The MOU with HSTA requires that the DOH provide written guidance before "in-person schooling will resume" (pg. 2, line 34 HSTA MOU). In addition, lines 47-48 of our agreement states that the HIDOE will "consult and take direction from the DOH for health and safety measures." If no written guidance is provided, what is the HIDOE following?

**Issue #2: Contingency plans for school building closure: NOT PROVIDED**

Per the MOU agreement, HSTA has requested information regarding any plans for when (not if) someone connected with a school tests positive for COVID-19. While the HIDOE has a facilities plan for how to shut down, clean and reopen a building, there is no plan on how to deal with the humans who work and learn in those buildings. There is no plan for how and if students will continue to receive instructional services when a building closes for COVID-19. There is also no plan on how to have teachers continue to deliver instruction to students during such times.

**Issue #3: Clarity of addressing absences of teachers and or shortages of substitute teachers: NOT PROVIDED**

A key component of CDC consideration guidance for schools includes the need to have a "back-up staffing plan." There is no plan or guidance for administrators on what to do if there are

inadequate teachers to start the school year. There also seems to be no plan to assess substitute availability and ability to have substitutes utilize all of the same technology that teachers use for the blended and distance learning.

**Issue #4: Military families and NO travel quarantine: NOT PROVIDED**

The HSTA has been asking since General Hara announced that military families will not be subjected to the 14-day self-quarantine when entering the state and how the HDOE will ensure that any incoming students will not be a risk to others on campus. This includes families who are both new to the state AND are returning from travel out of state. There has been no answer.

**Issue #5: Standard practices and procedures for exceptions to face covering rules: NOT PROVIDED**

Since reaching agreement regarding the expectation that everyone should wear a face covering, “with exceptions for those for whom it is not safe to do so due to age, medical condition or other consideration,” the HSTA has asked for written guidance to be provided to schools. Specifically we have asked if there can be a standard set for what will be considered a medical exception. There has been no answer.

**Issue #6: Instructional models and clear guidance to families on 100% distance learning: NOT PROVIDED**

The HDOE, per the BOE resolution and the HSTA MOU, should provide “*clear guidance to families that allow parents or guardians who do not feel comfortable sending their children to a school campus to keep their children at home.*” To date, nothing has been provided by HDOE to clearly explain options for families to pursue a 100% distance learning. This failure has further complicated and exacerbated schools’ efforts to plan for in-person physical distancing and instruction.

**Issue #7: Clarity and consistency of guidance and training: NOT PROVIDED**

Throughout the preparation for the reopening of schools, the HDOE has published many different documents, including a principal’s handbook, health and safety guidelines, a pandemic handbook, and countless other documents which are scattered throughout the DOE website (public facing and private), all of them full of contradicting information. More importantly, to our knowledge, unlike the annual blood-borne pathogens training in schools, the HDOE has no centralized and standardized plan to ensure fidelity of training for its employees for COVID-19 preparation and the “return to learn.”

HSTA remains committed to taking whatever steps are necessary to ensure the safety of our members and the students they serve. **We ask the BOE ensure that the above issues are addressed by the HDOE before students return to classrooms.**

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Dana Lee <danaklee@gmail.com> on behalf of Dana Lee  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 6:47 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Classroom Ventilation Procedures

Due to my observations of mask-wearing in children and many adults and their inadequacies, I believe how classroom spaces are vented for air exchange will either make or break a defense against any virus threat.

Please consider a covid policy for classroom ventilation encouraging the maximum use of outside air ventilation by keeping classroom doors and windows open.

Extra caution and alternative procedures must be put in place should a classroom space only be ventilated by a central air system, including the requirement of HEPA air purifiers or air scrubbers.

The cleaning schedule of air conditioning filters should be increased, ideally being disinfected daily.

Allow the use of air conditioning as needed for comfort with windows and doors kept open.

Pay attention to how occupants are seated in the classroom to allow the flow of a natural breeze to come from behind & carry droplets downwind to an exit out of the classroom.

Give the teachers and keiki mask training (how to properly wear and handle masks).

Teachers, who are theoretically better mask wearers, should teach from the most downwind location in the classroom with a mask on.

Purchase voice amplifiers for each teacher (a microphone & speaker).

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Mahalo nui,

Dana Lee

Waiiau Elementary parent

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Roxanne Campbell <sanae.iha3@gmail.com> on behalf of Roxanne Campbell  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 7:00 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delay opening of school

Aloha,

I was looking forward to the start of the new school year, but now I am concerned that the state is not adequately prepared to safely open schools.

Among the questions that the state has not answered that cause for worry are:

How will teachers be trained to handle the current situation when no additional admin days have been scheduled to do so?

Will there be sufficient PPE everyday for students, teachers, and staff who need it?

How will substitute teachers be trained to step right in from the first day of school?

Roxanne Campbell

Until these concerns are fully addressed by the state, I will be apprehensive about the environment that students, staff, and teachers are facing.

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Trisha Gushikuma <trishatg6769@gmail.com> on behalf of Trisha Gushikuma  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 7:10 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Schools reopening

I am a concerned parent of two children who will be attending high school on Oahu and an aunty to one child in elementary and one in middle school.

Who is deeming that the DOE schools are safe for all children to attend? when in the media it is stating of positive cases from hospitals to urgent care clinics(the hidden cases).

Why is that the teachers only have four to five days at the minimum of training during a pandemic about necessary protocols?

Is there enough PPE supplies for all schools if need be to return?

As a parent it seems that the DOH and DOE are bargaining the lives of all the young ones in Hawaii and staff.

Thank you so much for your time.

Sincerely,

Trisha

Sent from my iPhone

# Late Testimony

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Grace Guillermo <graciechelle@icloud.com> on behalf of Grace Guillermo  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 7:20 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Hello,

I am a concerned parent about the decisions being made with our children's education and health. I feel that with a new pandemic and virus that everyone is still learning new things about, it is not safe to send teachers and children to school. Please give the teachers more time to plan their school year out whether it be through distance learning, in person learning or a hybrid of both. Rushing them to school will only cause more stress and clusters of cases could arise. Which would then affect our healthcare system! If you aren't allowing tourists into Hawai'i, then why are you allowing our keikis to be in classrooms that aren't socially distancing!!! Please extend summer break and allow teachers to plan accordingly!

Mahalo,  
Grace Rosales



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Amy Lapilio-Oakes <amyoakes@waikikischool.org> on behalf of Amy Lapilio-Oakes  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 7:22 AM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Postponement of reopening of school

Aloha,

I am a kindergarten teacher who is passionate about teaching. As I prepare for the opening of school this year, our wonderful principal, awesome faculty, and custodial staff are still searching for solutions as to how we are going to stagger recess, lunch, etc. Our faculty met on Monday, virtually, which made me ponder, "Why I am expected to teach face to face with a group of sixteen, when we are still unable to safely conduct meetings face to face?" Aren't gatherings limited to groupings of no more than ten? I am terrified to start school when so many protocols still need to be addressed. Giving autonomy to teachers as to whether their students need to wear mask, is simply unacceptable and it should be a mandatory mandate-Teachers are being put on the front lines without adequate safety measures. As much as I love my students, my family also needs me. Please reconsider the opening of school date.

Aloha,

Amy Oakes  
Kindergarten Teacher  
Waikiki Elementary School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Nathan Smith <naterob9@yahoo.com> on behalf of Nathan Smith  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 7:24 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Schools reopening

As a middle school teacher on Kauai, I am looking forward to being back in the classroom and not teaching from home. I understand that there are some uncertainties at this time, but also understand that as a teacher my job is to teach. I know that there will be areas that our school and every school will have to deal with on a case by case basis this year, and I trust that my administrative team will work with our staff to the best of their abilities.

I apologize for the tardiness of this email - I didn't see the deadline until this morning.

- Nathan Smith

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Trina Albright <trina.albright@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Trina Albright  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 7:43 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Good Morning,  
My name is Trina Albright. I am a Math teacher at Kalama Intermediate School on Maui.

I am testifying on Action Item **H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees**. Please do not allow the students and DOE staff to be treated as substandard community members by allowing the DOE to make this arbitrary change and jeopardize their health.

Please consider the reopening of school on Aug 4. The schools are not ready to open due lack of training and safety. concerns that have not been addressed by the DOE. Opening Aug 4 is a grave health concern. Our exposure COVID 19 will increase exponentially for all- teachers, students and their families therefore the community.

While the HSTA has continued to work in good faith with the state, HIDOE, and public charter schools throughout the summer, we continue to ask the following questions:

- When will the State of Hawaii's Department of Health provide written guidance on the reopening of school buildings, which the HIDOE agreed to in our MOU?
- What options are available to families seeking 100-percent distance learning options for their children? And will classroom teachers have to provide that 100-percent distance learning instruction in addition to the model they're currently expected to teach?
- What are the clear protocols for requesting and receiving approvals for an exception to wearing face coverings at schools? HSTA believes everyone must be required to wear face coverings at schools, especially within six feet of each other.
- What happens to the students and adults on a school campus if a student, teacher, other school employee, and or one of their household members test positive for COVID-19?
- What standard practices and additional personal protective equipment (PPE) methods should be followed by employees who need to get within six feet of others, especially students who are medically fragile and/or very young?
- How will schools determine that newly enrolled students, especially those from military households, followed 14 days of proper self-isolation upon arrival in Hawaii?
- When a school needs to shut down due to a COVID-19 infection, how will schools move to a 100-percent distance learning environment, and when will teachers be trained?

Teachers will be most at risk when schools reopen. They will be in close contact with dozens, and potentially hundreds, of children for multiple hours in a given day. Yet they seem to be more of an afterthought in the health director's overall concern for health and safety. In testimony before lawmakers last week, Anderson admitted, "The disease is far more serious for older people. That doesn't necessarily help the teachers, of course, or the faculty who are worried. But for the kids themselves the risk is relatively low for serious disease."

Thank You,

**Trina Albright**

6th Grade Math Teacher

Kalama Intermediate School

(808) 573-8735

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kesha Morgan <chemkm17@gmail.com> on behalf of Kesha Morgan  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 7:43 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Thank you BOE for Remote Learning Options

Dear BOE a few weeks ago my school notified parents of their plans for school to reopen with classes resuming in person 5 days a week. Even with the precautions and the pods or bubbles it still felt like the risk was too great for my multigenerational family plus 2 members with asthma.

I emailed the BOE and called to requests guidance for homeschooling because at the time I wasn't aware of the remote learning option w the DOE.

Last Friday my school sent out a email w the option for remote leaning for the first semester. Thank you Mililani 'Ike, BOE and DOE for providing remote learning options. I realize the classroom is better than remote learning. I know my children may fall behind with some of their educational needs however I'm okay with it, remote learning is safer for my family right now. This pandemic will be over hopefully next year first quarter and we can return to the new normal. Thank you for your hard work. Thank you for providing multiple options to families. I know some parents need the option of having their children in the classroom I do acknowledge that as well.

Aloha

Mrs. Kesha Morgan

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Brian Walulik <bwalulik@gmail.com> on behalf of Brian Walulik  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 7:48 AM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Shortage Differential necessary

Aloha, the loss of shortage differential pay will make it very difficult for me to financially sustain teaching in Hawaii. Please continue the funding for shortage differentials so I may remain in a remote Hawaii school classroom.

Thank you, Brian Walulik

Sent from my iPhone



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** merri Wada Tanji <merriwada@gmail.com> on behalf of merri Wada Tanji  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 7:58 AM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delaying the opening of schools

Aloha Board Members,

I implore you to consider delaying the start of schools. Our schools are NOT ready, despite Dr. Kishimoto's statements that we are. Here are just a few areas that we are still working through planning:

- Disseminating information to ALL our parents and students
- Procedures for student movement on campus (including lunch procedures, recess procedures that can ensure physical distancing, walking from point A to point B with half our students which actually equal 300+ students)
- Re-entering campuses with physical screening or checks for 300+ students,
- Taking attendance for students off-site along with taking and submitting lunch orders,
- Ensuring physical distancing when students use the bathrooms
- Ensuring physical distancing when students move around the class being that students are sitting 6 feet apart
- Distance learning for student opting for complete online learning
- Obtaining tech equipment to allow teachers to do distance learning

Despite what has been articulated by Dr. Kishimoto, we still have no clear understanding of the following

- Curriculum for students who are opting for complete online learning.
- Guidance on how devices will connect to the internet for students without internet access
- Formal PD by the state on distance learning
- Guidance without contradictions

Dr. Andersen stated that statistically, if 4000 children catch COVID, then 1 will die. It is known that COVID-19 affects adults more, primarily adults with underlying health issues, such as mild to severe asthma, heart disease and diabetes. So putting aside that children have parents or kupuna that are in this category, or that many of our teachers are in this category. Let's also disregard the fact that children are mostly non-symptomatic but still contagious, negating the screening procedures which are being used to ensure the health of the ohana bubbles. Let us not think about the fact that having students sitting 6 feet apart does not allow for any movement by children or teachers, but let's focus on the fact that there is a real possibility that one of our Keiki could die. Are you confident that reopening schools is the best decision when you have multi school level people telling you that we are not. Are you confident that the DOE has taken the level of care and purposefulness needed to ensure the health and safety of our educational community? Do you wonder how it is that the DOE "Leadership" are saying that schools are ready while school level personnel, including principals are telling you that we are not?

When we are sick we seek the advice of Doctors, when we do our taxes we seek the advice of accountants, when we buy a house, we seek the advice of realtors. So why would we not listen to advice to the thousands of educators across the state on the education of students and the best actions for schools?

Mahalo,

Merri Wada Tanji

Teacher, Curriculum Coordinator

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Karlen Ross District 17 <karlenrossdistrict17@gmail.com> on behalf of Karlen Ross District 17  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 8:01 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Support for HSTA position

Hello, please submit my testimony for today's meeting.

I support the position of the HSTA to delay the opening of the public schools. I have a child who will be entering first grade, and while it is a hardship to find child care, it is a worthwhile sacrifice to ensure the safety of her and of the hard working educators who serve our state.

Mahalo,  
Karlen Ross

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Charlene Kincaid <charlene\_kincaid@baldwin.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Charlene Kincaid  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 8:10 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Differentials

The purpose was to fill hard to fill positions. Differentials were successful. Breaking a promise? Campaigning next year?

The situation is difficult as it is. Why make it harder! Set an example. Cut from yourselves, each one of you, what you want to take from us. Then we may be more willing to consider your breach of a promise.

Charlene Kincaid  
Baldwin High School  
SPED Teacher

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Violet Fontes-Ringor <vringor7@icloud.com> on behalf of Violet Fontes-Ringor  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 8:33 AM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Covid-19

Yes we all need training. During summer school shields were up in the front office and no one allowed in. But for me and the staff helping parents and students in front of the school entrance we had no shields no 6 feet distancing, but that was ok for us and not for some OTHER STAFF MEMBERS... So yes we ALL NEED TRAINING..Thank you for listening..

Sent from my iPhone

# Late Testimony

July 22, 2020

The Hawaii Board of Education,

I am writing this to express my concern in reopening schools to students on August 4. I am supportive of schools opening as soon as possible and can't wait to see my students. But, this must be done in a manner that keeps students, teachers, administrators and everyone at school safe and healthy.

The school where I am currently employed is doing an amazing job preparing for our students and teachers return to school. I trust my school leadership. They are concerned and taking all the necessary actions to support everyone at the school level. My concern is not about what my school is doing, instead what the state is doing to be proactive in protecting students, teachers, and families.

Overall, the state's plan to return to school concerns me. I believe it may be putting people's health at risk and this is dangerous. My peers and I have a lot of questions that have not been answered about public safety and it seems that more information is forthcoming and will be shared only after school opens.

Important questions need to be addressed; such as, will the DOE be offering COVID-19 testing to teacher regularly? If a student or teacher contracts COVID-19, how does the DOE plan to do contact tracing? What is the role of the department of health with schools and what kind of support can we expect from them? There are so many unanswered questions leading to confusion and more direction is needed.

Parents and students that I have spoken with have expressed their concerns for the health and safety of their children and their family members. I feel the DOE is moving too swiftly to open schools without an overall consistent plan of action that we can be confident in. I ask that our state leaders reconsider the start date for all schools and their students. It is critical that everyone is prepared, safe and confident with the state's plan of action.

Education and academics are important, people's health and lives matter more.

Susie Honda  
Radford High School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Karen Nishioka <k\_nishioka@yahoo.com> on behalf of Karen Nishioka  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 8:45 AM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Karen Nishioka  
**Subject:** School Opening 2020-2021 School Year

To: Board of Education members,

Re: Opening School Year 2020-2021 Aug 4, 2020

I am a retired DOE teacher and am very concerned about rushing the opening of school next month. I have a daughter, also a school teacher, who lives with us along with her three children ages 15, 13, and 5. My husband is 80 and I will be 72 this year. We are considered to be in the high risk group for contracting and dying from Covid-19.

Upon observing the school protocol and preparations for the opening of school in a couple of weeks, my husband and I are very concerned that there are insufficient preparations and training provided for the staff to handle the problems and containment of Covid-19.

We understand that there is pressure from parents who need childcare in order to go to work, and that is a real concern. But we feel that you shouldn't regard teachers as merely childcare personnel and rush them back to care for the children without proper training and PPE to help them keep everyone (themselves as well as the children) as safe as possible. We also realize that the 180 days per school year set as a requirement for student learning may be driving the rush to begin, but that requirement should be flexible. Maybe the Board can push the entire school year a little further back and still fulfill the 180 day requirement.

We feel that having face to face encounters will definitely increase the risk of spreading the virus, and without proper training and time to prepare to mitigate the risk it will cause the virus infections to multiply. Primarily, we are extremely afraid that the children and DOE employees will be taking the virus home and infect elderly people like my husband and me. We are one of many households that are in this situation.

If childcare is a problem, each family who needs someone who can supervise the children while they're at work should arrange to hire their own babysitters (possibly someone who needs employment because of the shutdown of businesses), or utilize family members who can volunteer to oversee the children. Use distance learning as much possible. That way the children and employees do not have to put themselves in harm's way, at least for the first quarter or semester. When using distance learning the students must be accountable for their work being turned in and schools must strictly enforce the rules for time and effort put into their studies, unlike the situation at the end of last school year.

Thank you for your attention. I'm sorry that this message is turned in late, but I was having trouble accessing the written testimony link on your website.

I hope you take into account all the concerns that people are expressing about rushing the school year. Please delay the opening of school, and please provide for distance learning as much as possible. Do not put the community's health at risk.

Thank you very much.

Karen Nishioka  
Retired DOE teacher

July 23, 2020

Aloha Board of Education Members!

My name is Claudia Honaker and I am a second grade teacher at Honoka'a Elementary School. I began teaching in 1991 and this will be my 30<sup>th</sup> year working for the Hawaii Department of Education. My first year was at Honoka'a High School, then 17 years at Waimea Elementary and Middle School and these last 12 years at Honoka'a Elementary.

I am writing in regards to item G on today's agenda.

I humbly ask you to continue to fund the hard to staff \$7,500 teacher bonus and \$10,000 special education teacher bonus for the following reasons:

1) I have been teaching for a long time at multiple schools. During ALL of these years I have never worked at a school fully staffed at the start of the school year. There has always been at least one substitute teacher who opens a classroom and often teaches for the whole year then closes the classroom. Some years there are many substitutes in multiple grades. This is common in all of our Hamakua Schools. I personally have worked with a substitute teacher as a grade level team member many years. These substitute teachers always try their best to provide a quality education for their students and I have always assisted them as much as possible. However, they are not highly qualified in their field and cannot provide a quality education for their students in the same way a credentialed teacher can.

2) Not only do our country schools suffer teacher shortages in the general education grades, as my second grade did just a few years ago, so do special education classes. For instance, just last year, my elementary education student teacher was hired to be one of the full-time lead special education teachers for a grade level (as a substitute teacher) who shared the position with another substitute teacher on the two days she met her student teacher requirements in my classroom. Again, this wonderful elementary teacher in training did her best to meet her special education students needs, however, she



was asked to teach students without the educational background, experience, or degree which our special needs students deserve.

3) Credentialed teachers do not want to live far from the conveniences and ease of lifestyle that comes from living in one of our larger towns. Nor do they want to spend hours commuting from town to our country schools. Commuting is exhausting, time consuming, and expensive. For instance, if I wanted to go to Hilo to shop at the nearest WalMart or go to a movie, it is a two hour round trip. If I wanted to go to Kona to Costco or Target it is a 3 hour round trip. Just going to the grocery store in Waimea, either KTA or Foodland, or to pick-up my medicine from Longs Drug's Store is a 1 hour round trip. The beach is an hour away – 2 hours there and back. Everything takes effort, planning, and time. Even simple things like grocery shopping. In addition, housing in Hamakua is expensive and affordable rentals few.

4) However, according to my Principal, this year ALL of our school positions have been filled. This is the First Time I can remember this happening. Even the special education position that could not be filled all of last year has been filled with a licensed special education teacher. He said that because of the bonuses he had 60 applicants for this position. This is because of you. The monetary incentive makes commuting worthwhile.

In conclusion, the bonuses work. It fills teaching positions that would otherwise be staffed with substitute teachers. Hawaii students deserve a quality education taught by highly qualified teachers. They deserve more than a nice teacher on their educational journeys. Please continue to fund the \$7,500 Hard to Staff and \$10,000 Special Education Teacher Bonuses.

Aloha,  
Claudia Honaker

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Valerie Harmon <lenscap@me.com> on behalf of Valerie Harmon  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 8:56 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Dear Sir/Ms.,

I apologize for missing the deadline to submit testimony, but I was at the doctor's office having surgery on some cancer. To keep this short, I recommend that you click on the link below and read the posts written by many concerned Hawaii teachers.

Thank you,  
Valerie Harmon  
Middle School Teacher  
HSTA Head Representative

## Testimony BOE

**From:** Dana Lee <danaklee@gmail.com> on behalf of Dana Lee  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:00 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Please DELAY school openings

The safest, smartest path to take right now is to delay the opening of school. There is too much discussion between the parents and schools that need to occur before parents can decide what they should do with their children this year. It was only last night that parents at our school had a chance to speak with school leadership and have their first questions addressed which has only led to more questions. The schools have not yet addressed important concerns with in-person as well as distance learning. Based on the timelines that have been explained to us by our principle, the opening of school is being rushed and the procedures and policies currently in place have not had enough discussion, especially with the parents.

I do recommend delaying the start of school until parents have been briefed on all procedures and options, have been given a chance to provide feedback and have their questions addressed. You are missing out on valuable input from the customer you serve. Please give us the time to understand the situation and options and let us help make the schools a safer place for our children.

Mahalo,  
Dana Lee  
Waiau Elementary School parent

On Thu, Jul 23, 2020 at 6:47 AM Dana Lee <[danaklee@gmail.com](mailto:danaklee@gmail.com)> wrote:

Due to my observations of mask-wearing in children and many adults and their inadequacies, I believe how classroom spaces are vented for air exchange will either make or break a defense against any virus threat.

Please consider a covid policy for classroom ventilation encouraging the maximum use of outside air ventilation by keeping classroom doors and windows open.

Extra caution and alternative procedures must be put in place should a classroom space only be ventilated by a central air system, including the requirement of HEPA air purifiers or air scrubbers.

The cleaning schedule of air conditioning filters should be increased, ideally being disinfected daily.

Allow the use of air conditioning as needed for comfort with windows and doors kept open.

Pay attention to how occupants are seated in the classroom to allow the flow of a natural breeze to come from behind & carry droplets downwind to an exit out of the classroom.

Give the teachers and keiki mask training (how to properly wear and handle masks).

Teachers, who are theoretically better mask wearers, should teach from the most downwind location in the classroom with a mask on.

Purchase voice amplifiers for each teacher (a microphone & speaker).

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Mahalo nui,  
Dana Lee  
Waiau Elementary parent

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** RKJ J <rkjakita@yahoo.com> on behalf of RKJ J  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:05 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony for teacher pay differential

Aloha,

I am a certified teacher in both math and special education. I received a degree in secondary math education over 25 years ago but only taught one year and then was a homemaker for 20 years. 4 years ago I took a math PTT job and then a year later hired as an emergency hire for full time special education. I taught for 2 1/2 years in special education. It's been both emotionally and physically exhausting at times with all that I've learned and been trained to implement. Because of the pay differential, I took the Praxis in January and became certified in special education. I also signed a contract for the next school year. The differential has helped to retain teachers and address the shortages. I sincerely hope the board does not take our state backwards and get rid of the pay differential.

Mahalo,

Rebecca Akita  
480-318-0248

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Nichole Paleka-zirzow <nichole.paleka-zirzow@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Nichole Paleka-zirzow  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:06 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Fwd: Testimony

Aloha,

Please accept my testimony on Action Item G: Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff, geographical locations and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year.

July 21, 2020

Hawaii Board of Education

RE: Testimony for Teacher Shortage Differential

Dear Hawaii State Board of Education Members,

First, I would like to thank you for your support and efforts to improve the education system in Hawaii. As we are all aware, the last few months have been extraordinarily challenging for all due to COVID-19. Despite the curtailed economy that has negatively impacted the state, teachers have put forth extra effort, time, and energy to continue providing educational opportunities for all students.

Hawaii state educators have been faced with many new challenges during this time. Teachers were required with little notice to pick up all of their materials and begin providing educational activities to students via new online platforms both synchronously and asynchronously. To do so required teachers to independently learn new technology, create and/or alter materials and adapt curriculum to ensure the students of this state had continued access to a quality education.

I am one of those teachers who currently receives a differential for special education teachers. As a special education teacher, I have had to take this new way of teaching and learn how to support students with disabilities at a distance. This adds an additional layer of stress and responsibility. I am responsible for differentiating within this new model of teaching. This looks different for each student depending on their individual needs, skills, and access to technology. It entails making modifications to the online curriculum and providing accommodations across the content for each of my students with special needs.

I am responsible for the ongoing communication and support of the entire team including; parents, teachers, and related service providers in a time when information is changing almost daily, and much is still terribly uncertain. In many ways, we have become responsible for teaching not only the students, but also the parents and family members who have become the students' educational partners at home.

I am one of many teachers on the front lines who had to return to the classroom this summer to provide special education students with extended school year (ESY). Special Education did this with little guidance, training and access to PPE. Many of us created our own masks, shields and barriers as well as purchasing our own cleaning products.

I meet the diverse needs of students with hearing loss across the continuum. I provide direct service and related service to multiple students, across multiple schools, grade levels, and languages. I service students included in general education as their LRE as well as those in special education classrooms, SPED preschools, and Hawaiian immersion charter schools.

Although Kauai is not considered a hard-to-staff geographical location, it has been traditionally very difficult to staff teacher of deaf and Hard-of-hearing (HH) students. Kauai has no resource rooms, no oral/aural programs and no residential schools. The itinerant teachers for Deaf/HH students provide all specialized direct instruction and related services.

Teachers of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students have a unique skill set that not only requires us to be able to teach across all content areas and all grade levels in American Sign Language, but also to meet the expanded core curriculum needs of social-emotional skills, audiology, communication and assistive technology, transition to post-secondary, career education, self-determination and self-advocacy, and family education.

We are passionate educators and many of us have additional certifications that make us even more difficult to replace. I am certified to teach mild-to moderate disabilities k-12, vision impairment pre-k-22 and also deaf education prek-12. I hold a doctorate in Special Education.

I love my job and I not only work to encourage my students to be life-long learners and to overcome their challenges, I work to instill the unique history and culture of the Deaf while teaching them language and self-advocacy skills.

Whether we are in a classroom or in a resource teacher position, teachers of students with hearing or vision loss are difficult to retain and even more difficult to recruit. Every year we lose special education teachers, especially in these low incidence areas. This is amplified now. Due to the pandemic, many teachers are retiring or considering leaving the state. According to DOE data, we know teachers transferring into the hard to fill special education positions for school year 2020-2021 increased by 29 percent and teachers who left special education positions last year decreased by 57 percent. That is due in large part, to this differential!

Please continue to support the funding of these teacher shortage differentials. Support all special education certified teachers by continuing to fund the teacher shortage differential. Without qualified special education teachers our most vulnerable students will suffer.

Mahalo Nui,  
Dr. Nichole Paleka-Zirzow  
Itinerant Teacher for Deaf/HH Student  
HI-DOE Kauai Complex  
[Nichole.Paleka-zirzow@k12.hi.us](mailto:Nichole.Paleka-zirzow@k12.hi.us)

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Daniel Tavares <danielpktavares@gmail.com> on behalf of Daniel Tavares  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:40 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

My name is Daniel Tavares and I am a teacher at Keaau High School. I would like to raise the following concerns.

1. There is no current plan in place in any school yet for screening the student population for covid-19 symptoms. I know that many administrators are quite stressed and understandably so. They have no additional resources for equipment and staffing for student screening and so they're trying to make due with the budget and staffing that they have. With this in mind they also must develop a written protocol to screen students and have it available so that parents can review it and determine if it addresses their safety concerns. I am not aware of any school that has done this yet.
2. There is no current screening plan for students prior to boarding a bus. As of right now bus drivers and support staff do not have any screening protocols. In fact even if a student is symptomatic bus drivers are not allowed to deny entry of a student onto a bus. This means that the entire bus may be put at risk when it is preventable twice (once when going to school and then again when returning back home on the bus). Even busses in Oahu screen symptomatic folks.
3. There are no widely available hand washing stations or hand sanitizer for students on campus. Currently the only hand washing available for the students are in bathrooms and we have bathrooms in each building, however these are often in use and students need to wait quite a while before it is available. One of the CDC guidelines indicates that handwashing or sanitizer should and used often to prevent the spread of the disease.

CDC guidelines for reopening indicate school staff/students should be screened and temperatures taken when symptomatic as the best way to handle the disease is to avoid exposure. Practices such as hand washing are important to also prevent the spread of the disease. As these things have not yet been worked out at our school as well as other schools around our island I would ask the Board of Education to please consider postponing any school re-opening. When the appropriate resources are in place and clearly written screening and response protocols are made available for review we look forward to taking the step of reopening our schools.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,  
Mr. Tavares



Virus-free. [www.avast.com](https://www.avast.com)

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kathleen McKeon <kathymckeon58@gmail.com> on behalf of Kathleen McKeon  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:42 AM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delay school opening for students of Public Schools

To Whom it May Concern:

As a retired but proud-to- have- been public school educator, I implore the Board of Education to delay students returning to school until all safety protocols and PPE material are in place.

There's too many lives at stake.

Best regards,

Kathleen McKeon M.Ed.



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Laulea Smythe <laulea.smythe@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Laulea Smythe  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:55 AM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha!

My name is Laule'a Smythe. I am the technology coordinator as well as the Academic Coach for Kalaheo Elementary School on Kaua'i. I am writing to urge you to push back the reopening of schools to students. The primary purpose of me opposing opening on August 4th is mainly so that teachers can have the time to plan and train. As a leadership person at my school, we have had countless meetings over the summer to come up with our model. However, the teachers have been on break and there is SOOOO much that they need to do in order to prepare for students. As the tech coordinator, I would rather teacher AND students be prepared technology wise so that they can hit the ground running. As is, it will be difficult for students in grades K-2 to hit the ground running on their virtual days because these young students are not fluent with Google classroom, etc that they need on the virtual days. Teachers need time to prepare technology, scheduling, and logistics to meet the needs of COVID rules as well as needs of students and parents. This is a whole new animal and there are so many little facets that need to be considered so that everything can be rolled out safely. Until then, students should not be allowed back into school until teachers have had this time to get trained, and plan.

Sincerely,  
Laule'a Smythe

--

Laule'a Smythe  
Tech Coordinator/Academic Coach  
Kalaheo Elementary School  
(808) 332-6801, ext. 115

*"The difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is how you use them."-Author Unknown*

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STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
**ALA WAI ELEMENTARY**  
503 KAMOKU STREET  
HONOLULU, HI 96826  
(808) 973-0070

# Late Testimony

Hawaii State Board of Education Testimony  
Michelle DeBusca, Principal  
Ala Wai Elementary School

## Relating to the Reopening of Schools for SY 2020-21

To Our Honorable Board of Education Members,

I'm writing today to express my concern for the reopening of school for the school year 2020-2021. I wake each morning at 4:00 am with thoughts related to the opening of school. At times, I wake at 3:00 am with ideas, worries, and frustration related to the challenges of keeping every school community member safe. These are not normal times and not normal worries. I'm the only administrator at my school and I feel the weight of responsibility for the life and death reality of this current pandemic. Dr. Bruce Anderson said this at a recent legislative hearing "if schools are not ready, then they should not open". I do not believe I have been given adequate time to prepare my school to reopen for the following reasons:

### **Health and Safety of our Students and Staff:**

- I need to secure additional PPE for my school. I've experienced multiple purchase order cancellations due to community demand. It has been a struggle to secure PPE with the current school budget without additional funding to secure PPE. I do not have sufficient PPE such as hand soap, hand sanitizers, face masks, face shield, and sneeze guards to sustain the reopening of school. I will run out of supplies if additional funding is not provided and if supplies are readily available to the school.
- School employees need training on appropriate safety measures to keep themselves and colleagues safe while at work. Appropriate training has not been provided by the HDOE or DOH on COVID-19 related protocols for daily health and safety practices and for cleaning and disinfecting personal and common areas. What should "new normal" look like in relation to cleaning and disinfecting? How will custodian schedules be adjusted to add this additional duty when their schedule is filled with school other required duties? What might be the expectations for all employees to maintain a safe space on the school campus?
- Appropriate training is not scheduled for our teachers to address concerns related to keeping themselves and students safe in school. One teacher asked if the student bathroom needs to be cleaned after each use. Should the staff bathroom be cleaned after each use? It's my understanding that training will be provided in the opening days of school. It is not clear if I need to plan for these trainings or if the department will provide the expected training. In addition, we need time to train without the presence of students.
- I do not have a school health aide at this time and my sub health aide will not start until school opens. Training and guidance on procedures and documentation should be provided by the Department of Health, Public Health Nurses, and the HDOE for our School Health Aide (SHAs) specific to new health room protocols in the areas of safety, cleaning, and disinfecting prior to the start of school and with principal participation.
- I need time to prepare learning spaces for students. While the HDOE analysis of school space is somewhat helpful, the analysis did not consider the furnishings and resources in current classrooms. My school's furniture was selected for student collaboration. I had to purchase tray tables to support the 6-foot physical distancing in my upper grade classrooms. Purchases were done with current school resources as no additional funding was provided to address this need.
- I have many questions related to the simplified "bubble concept" that is difficult to conceptualize when the current realities of our island wide community behaviors show a lack of this practice. How do I maintain a "bubble" for the teachers who are asked to rotate through two to three groups of students that will change daily?
- I have not received information related to COVID-19 testing that should be readily available to teachers, staff, students, and school community members. There are no assurances that this will actually happen at each school campus.

### **In-Person Instruction**

- How do I fill instructional positions if there are no teachers and substitute teachers available when schools open? One teacher has notified me that she will retire early because she worries for the health and safety of her family. Other teachers are considering retirement to protect their loved ones at home.
- I need time to address safe rituals and routines for all aspects of in-person instruction with faculty & staff without students being present. It is critical that all stakeholders be a part of this conversation and practice. In addition, I need time to work with substitute teachers, educational assistants, paraprofessional tutors, and part-time teachers.
- Principals were asked to develop a reopening plan with minimal stakeholder input. I need more time and flexibility in developing this plan. I prefer a phased in approach to address the needs of my student population that also allows the school staff time to implement new rituals and routines. I would have selected to start with a 100% percent distance learning option with a phased in approach for in-person instruction for the most “vulnerable” students, but that options was removed from the initial list. We are just learning how to swim in this new reality of school with COVID-19 and I feel like we’re being thrown in a cold pool to sink or swim on our own.
- I’m receiving increased phone calls from parents wanting to “opt-in” to distance learning given the current increased COVID-19 cases in Honolulu. I was given initial communication that parents would homeschool their child if they did not want to return to school. Recent communication now allows for parents to “opt-in” for distance learning. I need more time to work with my staff to differentiate services for our families.

In BOE resolution, school communities were encouraged to Give Hope, Act with Kindness, and Work Toward Togetherness in reopening our schools. I have read BOE testimonies, watched the legislative hearings, and participated in numerous conversations with colleagues related to the reopening of school. We are doing the best we can. I believe we still need more time to Give Hope, Act with Kindness, and Work Toward Togetherness. As an administrator, I’m making every effort to reopen school and in-person instruction a reality, but I feel that the Reopening of Schools on August 4th is too soon with minimal support and a top down communication with principals holding the ball. Please give us the time, funding resources, and the flexibility to the 180 days and 1800 minutes a week to address our school community needs. Please empower and trust in our decisions to design an innovative learning experience for our keiki that is safe for the entire school community. Allow us the time to work with our School Community Council and stakeholders to address school design and student learning.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my concerns regarding the opening of school campuses. Providing schools with time to plan, time to train our employees, and time to address safety concerns will support our ability to ensure that our schools are safe, prepared, and ready to receive our students.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle DeBusca, Principal  
Ala Wai Elementary School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Brent Watanabe <brent.watanabe@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Brent Watanabe  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:09 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Hello,

I am testifying on Discussion Item VI(A): "Presentation on Department of Education comprehensive plan for reopening schools plan for the 2020-2021 School Year." My name is Brent Watanabe and I teach English Language Arts at Moanalua Middle School. As a teacher, I am struggling with the discussions for school reopening this year. I am not comfortable that the 3 feet distancing is enough space to keep a safe distance from each other. I have seen the news with numbers spiking all over the mainland and even on the Hawaiian Islands. I worry about the protective measures taking place for people's health. Seeing healthy athletes, celebrities, older and younger citizens get Covid proves how real and easily it can transfer from person to person. I do not believe that putting teachers at risk this school year makes sense, especially without a vaccine in place. I am also wary of how effective face masks all day will be in the classroom and how it will negatively affect student engagement and participation.

I understand that getting education back and running is important, but there needs to be thorough discussions and measures put into place. I think hypothetically, if one student gets Covid, then the fallout will be time-consuming and deplete resources. Even though there are some preliminary discussions for getting school started, it is still hard to foresee what it actually looks like. I do not believe that students will be actually able to concentrate on learning when their own health and worry for others are at risk. I believe that online teaching is the best option right now.

Thank you, Brent Watanabe

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Tracey Rodrigues <traceyn808@gmail.com> on behalf of Tracey Rodrigues  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:09 AM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

I'm providing written testimony for returning to school as scheduled. I feel the HSTA has not been bargaining in good faith. An agreement was reached to reopen schools and now the HSTA wants to delay the reopening. Hawai'i public schools have been closed since mid March and teachers are still getting paid to do their job. I'm sorry but saying you're afraid to return to work is not an option. Essential workers have been reporting to work throughout this pandemic. What makes teachers feel they deserve special treatment?

The children are the ones who are not getting an education. Teachers providing packets & virtual instruction for an hour during the school day is not teaching.

What about the children who are homeless? If parents want to keep their children home & learn virtually it should be an option. However, if parents want to send their child to school for face to face instruction a teacher should be in the classroom. Also, virtual classroom learning should be conducted like a normal school day. It should be a teacher doing online instruction for one hour. Personally, I feel the HSTA doesn't meet in the middle with the DOE. Where or rather what has the HSTA President been doing since mid March? Corey should provide input not just complain using public sympathy for teachers. Instead, Corey agreed to a contract and is now back peddling on teachers returning to work.

Teachers should return to the classroom. If they're afraid: ask for a leave of absence without pay or 2) find another job which will allow he/she to work from home.

Mahalo for allowing my testimony.

Best regards,  
Tracey

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Marisela Martinez <mm2046@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Marisela Martinez  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:30 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Hello,

As the school year approaches, and it gets closer to the time my husband has to report back to work, my worry increases. The numbers were reported back today, 55 cases with 50 just on Oahu. We are on Oahu. This is especially disconcerting. I have a few concerns, this is outside of all of the disconcerting guidelines within the classroom:

1. If my husband is exposed in the classroom, I myself am a UH student... this impacts an entirely separate campus as well. This also works both ways. If I am exposed at the university, then all of your students at the school he teaches in are now potentially exposed as well.
2. Who is going to pay for his time in quarantine? He is the sole provider for our household while I am working on my graduate studies full time. We can't afford to have him take 14 days off to quarantine. We want to be able to do the right thing and not put people's lives in jeopardy, but we face the same risk that many families face and that is: how do we afford to take that amount of time off?
3. I need to know who exactly to hold accountable, meaning, who do I sue, if my husband gets COVID from a student, faculty or staff member who has decided they don't want to enforce mask wearing and has put my family in danger and the DOE has moved ahead anyway knowing the risks to students and staff. Who do I sue to recoup the medical costs, and any damages? Because I guarantee you, I won't be the only one who will be bringing charges. There will also be families who want this information when their children get sick. So, who is accountable for not stating CDC guidelines must be followed for the protection of everyone in the classrooms? Kishimoto? The DOE? I would like to know who?

Maybe people here need to be reminded of Kishimoto's track record, her districts unwillingness to renew her contract in Hartford, CT, her miscalculation of almost \$1 million dollars in Gilbert Public Schools, in Arizona and wonder if the damage she is going to do here is going to come out in the lives of the people that we love.

Remove Kishimoto, and delay the opening of schools until a real solution can be found.  
Mari Martinez

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"Let me tell you a little bit about myself. It's a reflexive pronoun that means 'me'" - Ally Houston

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Cruz Call <cruzcall@yahoo.com> on behalf of Cruz Call  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:37 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Opening schools

I feel schools should not open! This is a PANDEMIC school should be our least worry right now. If there is not a safe plan across the state for the schools to follow , school should remain close. Seems like each school n teacher are on their own. It is not the teachers responsibility to come up with a plan their job is to follow a plan that is put in place. You have grown adults who can not keep a mask on while shopping,you expect young children to wear a mask for 8 Hours? Nobody Doe,Mayor or Gov want to come up with a plan because if that plan does not work they do not want to be responsible. Its time you all take responsibility. Do your jobs that you were elected to do. Its all nice and cozy job you all have but when there is a crisis yow all run n hide and wash your hands of the situation. I am a voter n i know that Governor, n current Mayor you do not have my vote!! Get off your rumps and do something.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Cori Dudoit <coridudoithotmama@yahoo.com> on behalf of Cori Dudoit  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:43 AM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

I am an Educational Assistant at Baldwin High School on Maui. I provide one on one assistance to a special needs student. How can I maintain social distance when she needs my help? How can I be protected from her when she sneezes or coughs (she does not cover her mouth)? I believe we are not ready to reopen the schools for face to face learning. The kids could be carrying the germs from home and spread it to us. What will happen if a staff member or student tests positive from attending school? So many questions and yet no answers.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Cheryl Reed <cheryl.reed@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Cheryl Reed  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:47 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Regarding the DOE's comprehensive plan for reopening of schools

Aloha- My main concern is how only some students will be in school full time. I have a son going into 5th grade and will be home alone every other day. I'm very concerned about this but feel I am stuck. I have to be at school teaching while my young child has to be self directed and teach himself at home. I don't understand how that is ok with the Governor. This makes me very uncomfortable and I don't make the kind of money to pay a nanny or sitter three days a week. What can be done about this ridiculous hybrid schedule for working parents.?

Cheryl

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** hawaiiibrothers <hawaiiibrothers@aol.com> on behalf of hawaiiibrothers  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:51 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

### Students Social Development

In regards to opening schools much is being sad about students needing to return so that they can socialize in the learning environment which is so important for their social and emotional development.

In fact though the schools environment will be nothing like students remembered.

Limited class size, enforced social distancing, wearing of mask and other safety protocols will dramatically change the experience of socialization which students remember and which schools are notably being touted to provide thereby enhancing the students social and emotional development.

Example: Students in the lunchroom will not sit together as groups facing each other talking story laughing and relaxing while eating lunch.

Students will be separated with

6 ft distance between each other and not seated across from one another which will place great limitations on any conversations and socialization which may have normally taken place within the cafeteria during their lunch.

One way walking patterns and social distancing between students as they walk to there next location will limit socializing .

Seating while bussing to and from school will also maintain social distancing placing limitations on socialization.

I am quite sure when parents are imagining and some educational speakers are justifying the need for students to return to school for the social and emotional well being gained through socialization that those expectations will no be accomplished under the current circumstances.

The socialization which schools provide as aspects of the social and emotional development within the learning environment and that students remember may factually no longer exist.

### My Thoughts

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

# Late Testimony

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Rachel Kalauawa-Hauptu <hauptu3@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Rachel Kalauawa-Hauptu  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:55 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delay Education during COVID-19

Aloha

I am the parent of three Keiki who attends public schooling. All three children have Asthma one who takes Steroids daily to control flair ups. With the reopening of school it is unsafe and there is a great chance of fatalities. With this also comes the children who are left behind with lack of support. My son who is in second grade is behind and with teachers and students going back to school I am stuck in a position to take chances. Chances in which could do harm to the children I leave home. Please do not go forward with face to face education

Rachel Kalauawa-Hauptu  
808-265-1132



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** neriegpadamada@aol.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:57 AM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@BOE.HAWAII.GOV  
**Cc:** neriegpadamada@aol.com  
**Subject:** Re-opening of schools

The Honorable Superintendent and the Members of the Board of Education:

Thank you for all your efforts in keeping our community safe from the coronavirus. Your efforts are highly appreciated. However, as we are opening schools, there are no safety protocols yet in place aside from the 6 feet distancing that must be followed in the classroom. Because of this I am very concerned about re-opening of schools in Hawaii in a few days. Our first responders went to school for six months, two years, four years or more, yet, many of them have lost their lives, or they are at the hospital in critical condition. Undoubtedly, our first responders are wearing gloves, gowns, N95 masks, and face shield and they received the training on how to use those equipment and procedures on how and protect themselves from pathogens. Sadly, many of them have perished.

Our DOE system has not trained teachers, classified staff, parents and students in regards to safety protocols. Additionally, without PPE equipment, our schools will become petri dishes for COVID-19.

I understand that you care for the academic, emotional and social intelligence of our students, but if death occurs among our teachers, parents, and students due to COVID -19, our aspiration, our hard work, our compassion will become futile.

So to keep our community more safe, we need everybody to receive proper training and be given the appropriate PPE equipment.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,  
Nerie Padamada

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Michelle Debaldo <michelle.debaldo@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Michelle Debaldo  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 10:57 AM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony for SPED and hard-to-staff from a teacher

Aloha Chair Payne and members of the Hawaii Board of Education,

Thursday, July 23, 2020 1:30p.m.

**II. Public Testimony on Board of Education Agenda Item. Board Action on Temporary Discontinuance of Extra Compensation for Classroom Teachers in Special Education, Hard-to-Staff Geographical Locations, and Hawaiian Language Immersion Programs for the 2020-2021 School Year**

I am a Special Education teacher who has taught at King Kamehameha III Elementary school in Lahaina since 2017.

1. There is no place hiring for a second job.
2. If we knew this in the spring we could have taken a job that pays the rent in another state. Now we are stuck for a limited time.
3. You can not say the policy isn't working when people didn't know if it would be funded enough to move into a hard to staff area or take a vacant sped position.
4. We still are under threat of being furloughed 40% by the Governor.
5. Austerity measures makes it harder for the economy to bounce back.

Mahalo,

**Michelle DeBaldo**

**Second Grade Special Education Teacher**

**King Kamehameha III Elementary**

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**Michelle DeBaldo, 1st/2nd Grade Special Educ Teacher**  
**King Kamehameha III Elementary School**

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Dale Sales <dsales777@gmail.com> on behalf of Dale Sales  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 11:03 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

Good day, I am a teacher at Na'alehu School on The Big Island testifying on Action Item [H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association \(SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response\): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.](#)

When dealing with peoples' lives and in attempting to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread in our schools, and consequently, in our community, state, nation, and world, I ask that you provide a detailed, comprehensive, explicit, written plan on the reopening of our schools. In addition, we need detailed steps on what to do when students or adults on campus, or their household members, test positive for COVID-19. One question is: How do we effectively teach through distance-learning without appropriate training, and with only a fraction of the students participating? Although the "big picture" plans sound like a good start, the "lesson plans" provided were not detailed/explicit enough. Being thorough takes time. Being intentional means knowing the details involved. What should be blatantly emphasized is that we are not primarily dealing with education, we are dealing with life and death.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Dale Sales  
Grade 1  
Na'alehu Elementary School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Juliana Romero <julianamoose6@gmail.com> on behalf of Juliana Romero  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 11:23 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Cc:** Rebecca Hadley-Schlosser  
**Subject:** oral testimony participants signed up for 1:30 oral testimony

Hello Hawaii BOE members:

I just sent a message to Rebecca Hadley-Schlosser letting her know that her name was called to give her oral testimony and she did not answer. There were others who did not respond to their names being called. Rebecca told me that she was told that her testimony was supposed to be at 1:30. She is in another meeting now and that is why she signed up to testify at 1:30.

What can be done about this? There are other members who were told that they would testify at 1:30.

Thank you

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Julie Anne Lewis <mauijewel@gmail.com> on behalf of Julie Anne Lewis  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 11:39 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Hawaii school opening testimony

Aloha,

**I am writing this testimony to voice my concerns about the reopening of Hawaii Schools. I am a great grandmother raising my great grandson here on Maui. I am at high risk for Covid-20. I have been following all precautions recommended. I feel that allowing educators and Keiki to be in groups in an enclosed area is just not safe of following the CDC recommendations. Our teachers are not health care professional and janitors. We need to do what is best for the community.**

**I have a multigenerational household like many here in Hawaii. Not a good idea to expose my family to possible virus clusters at school.**

**I am a retired technology teacher. I have studied distance learning and technology in education and worked in that field for 10 years. I know what is possible. It is possible to deliver high quality, engaging, educational content to a variety of levels across all learning domains. It is easy to use metrics and tools to align the curriculum to standards and evaluate progress and learning. It is easy to communicate online and be social while learning. We have the resources to keep kids in school online. Please develop these programs as rapidly as possible looking at other models other states have used and borrowing the platforms. We are in this together. I know that many tech people would gladly work hard to make this happen.**

**Time is of the essence.**

**Please consider pivoting to the new normal and put school online virtual. We can do this and save many lives, keep healthy and happy without putting trauma on our Keiki.**

**Mahalo Nui Loa for your service,**

**Julie Anne Lewis  
Great-grandma and Educational Technologist**



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Nakamura <skyjav123@aol.com> on behalf of Nakamura  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 11:45 AM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** please delay reopening of schools

As a longtime employee of the DOE, I implore you to please DELAY THE REOPENING OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS. It is ludicrous to stay with the normal schedule (August 4) for students when the entire state is still trying to figure the best way to deal with the pandemic. This year is anything BUT normal, so there is no pressure to try to follow the normal schedule! Do not use our keiki and school teachers/staff as guinea pigs for this risky experiment! Lives are at stake, as well as money. Do we really want to open the state to costly lawsuits and litigation when things go south? Everyone can benefit from having more time to prepare.

Matthew Nakamura  
Ph: (808) 255-4129 cell  
Honolulu, HI.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** darya ives <missdarya@gmail.com> on behalf of darya ives  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 11:57 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Differential Discontinuation

Aloha,

I am writing this email as a tenured teacher in the HIDOE system. I have been teaching middle school math for the past 8 years, and I am currently the math department head and an after school program coordinator at my school. Students must return to school in the fall in a safe environment. And, I trust that all efforts will be made to make safety a priority that if students and teachers return to school as planned.

I am concerned, however, about the possible discontinuation of differential pay for hard to staff areas. I work in a school that is hard to staff and know that the differential pay was a help to maintain teachers in their classrooms. The way that the DOE views the discontinuation will not have any effect on how the teachers themselves view the discontinuation. Removing the differential pay will feel to many as a pay cut. I already know that many teachers are concerned about their health and not sure how to provide childcare for their school-aged children when they need to report to work but their children do not need to attend school.

Cutting differential pay will increase the likelihood for teachers to take time off from work to take care of their children. It would be a detriment to the safety and education of our Keiki to be in the hands of more long term substitutes and/or unqualified teachers in these uncertain times. I urge you to consider keeping the differential pay in these hard times.

Keep our kids in school. Keep our teachers working. And keep our spirits high.

Sincerely,  
Darya Ives

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Damian Nash <damian.nash@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Damian Nash  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 12:15 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony about postponing the date students return

Aloha.

As the new Academic Coach at Kaimuki High School, one of my responsibilities is helping teachers find the professional development they need to teach successfully in a blended classroom environment. I spent the last three years of my career at Kauai High School learning how to transition my classes into a nearly paper-free, 21st century, customized and personalized learning environment, using the Google Suite for Education.

My testimony is letting you know that it takes a lot of hard work, over time, to learn these new technologies and restructure classes to take advantage of all of their benefits. It compares to the amount of work that was required to earn my National Board Certification. If we hope to see all of our teachers successfully integrating the tools for distance learning and blended learning, we must allow them the time and training resources they need. In an ideal world, I wish we had a full month or more to help all the teachers at Kaimuki prepare.

Mahalo,

Damian Nash

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Healy, Jennifer M. LTC USARMY USINDOPACOM J0 (USA)  
<jennifer.m.healy@pacom.mil> on behalf of Healy, Jennifer M. LTC USARMY  
USINDOPACOM J0 (USA)  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 12:29 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** On-Line Course Offerings

Sir or Ma'am,

I am writing to request that the Hawaii Department of Education make available a completely on-line course option for elementary school students for academic year 2020-2021.

Our family has two members who, due to pre-existing medical conditions and age, are in the more vulnerable population for COVID-19. We have significant concerns about the health and safety of our family with in-person learning.

We are concerned with the quality of education our children may receive through "distance learning" provided by our children's elementary school based on our experience with the "distance learning" implemented by that school in March 2020, continuing through May 2020. We felt that the educational value of "distance learning" was very low.

I have heard that Aikahi Elementary School is making on-line learning through the Acellus program available to their students. Could this or a similar on-line option be made available to other elementary schools? If not, could students be granted a Geographic Exception to enroll in Hawaii schools that do offer their students an on-line option?

Thank you for your consideration of my request. I believe that there are other similarly situated families who would be well-served by this on-line option.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Healy

July 23, 2020

To: Hawai'i State Board of Education

Re: AGENDA ITEM VI.H: BOARD ACTION ON MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN STATE OF HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION AND HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 RESPONSE): 2017-2021 CONTRACTUAL MODIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS OF WORK RELATED TO COVID-19 RESPONSE FOR BARGAINING UNIT 5 EMPLOYEES

Hearing: Wednesday, July 23, 2020  
1:30 PM  
Virtual Meeting

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The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA), a member-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to enhance the cultural, economic, political, and community development of Native Hawaiians, echoes the sentiments expressed by the Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) and many other organizations and individuals in respectfully urging you to consider **delaying the opening of our public schools until such time that it can be assured, without a certainty of doubt, that our children, our teachers, our school staff members, and their families are protected from exposure to COVID-19.**

**CNHA would like to emphasize that the State of Hawai'i, along with many other states, is currently engaged with a second major spike in COVID-19 infections.** Following the initial 'flattening of the curve,' the State, like many others, began lifting security protocols that were in place to reduce the spread of infection. Subsequently thereafter, the State began seeing signs of major community spread, where there had not been prior. In response to the rapidly rising second spike of infections, State and county officials re-engaged those aforementioned previously lifted security protocols in order to attempt another *flattening of the curve*. **As our State and counties bolster safety protocols in order to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 through our communities, so too should our schools be observing those strategies that have allowed us to drastically reduce the spread of infection – the opening of our schools should be delayed.**

**CNHA would also like to emphasize that Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, including Filipinos, are at high risk to COVID-19 lethality.<sup>i</sup>** This high risk is often the result of pre-existing medical conditions, overrepresentation among essential workers, and low wages and poorer economic conditions.<sup>ii</sup> Native Hawaiians comprise roughly 25% of the public school student population in Hawai'i and roughly 10.5% of the teacher population.<sup>iii</sup> When combined with other Pacific Islanders and Filipinos, the total number of individuals at high risk to COVID-



#### TESTIMONY

19 lethality, who also risk exposure to infection associated with the re-opening of schools at this time, will encompass nearly 50% of the statewide student population and nearly 20% of all public school teachers, at a total exceeding 90,000 individuals – this number does not include the countless number of family members who also risk infection by a member of their household.<sup>iv</sup> For those communities at high risk, like Native Hawaiians, the concerns for their health and safety are great. **A single life lost is too high of a price to pay, when delaying the opening of schools at this time can ensure that COVID-19 is not spread through our schools to families throughout Hawai'i.**

Finally, CNHA acknowledges the economic hardship suffered by so many right now and appreciates the intent to free up parents so that they might be able to return to work. However, with school re-openings, teachers also suffer economic concerns. With very few options to safeguard themselves, teacher (and staff) will likely face the possibility of forced COVID-19 exposure or the loss of their own job. **For the teacher or staff member at high risk, it is a question of whether they are ready to risk their own life for the education of another<sup>v</sup> – a choice that no teacher should ever have to make.** In a recent Kaiser Family Foundation report,<sup>vi</sup> it was reported that one-in-four teachers, who are teaching at a traditional face-to-face public school, are at greater risk of serious illness from COVID-19 infection. This State has the opportunity to learn from the mistakes of others and to heed the warnings of the many lives lost and communities impacted by COVID-19. In Arizona, a trio of teachers observing social distancing and other safety protocols, who were teaching an online summer school course in a shared classroom had been infected by COVID-19; one of them, unfortunately, did not survive.<sup>vii</sup> These accounts are growing in number across the nation, but they do not need to. Hawai'i should learn from these incredibly valuable lessons and elevate the health and safety of our people. **With economy still at issue, CNHA, like many other organizations, will continue to work tirelessly to find economic relief for the people of Hawai'i and will continue to do what we can to keep our communities safe. Please consider delaying the opening of our public schools until, at least, the spread of COVID-19 is brought under control.**

Mahalo nui loa,

J. Kuhio Lewis  
President & CEO  
Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement

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- <sup>1</sup> University of Hawaii News, *Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Communities Hardest Hit By COVID-19*, May 1, 2020, available at <https://www.hawaii.edu/news/2020/05/01/nhpi-hardest-hit-by-covid19/>; accessed on Jul. 23, 2020.
- ii *Id.*
- iii Appendix, Hawaii Department of Education Databook 2018, Jun. 2019; available at <http://arch.k12.hi.us/PDFs/state/databook/2018/2018AppendixCDataTables.pdf>.
- iv *Id.*
- v EdSurge, *Teachers at high risk for COVID-19 face a terrible choice: your job or your health*, Jul. 15, 2020; available at <https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-07-15-teachers-at-high-risk-for-covid-19-face-a-terrible-choice-your-job-or-your-health>.
- vi KFF, *How many teachers are at risk of serious illness if infected with Coronavirus?*, Jul. 2020; available at <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/how-many-teachers-are-at-risk-of-serious-illness-if-infected-with-coronavirus/>, accessed on Jul. 23, 2020; also discussed at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2020/07/15/are-nearly-1-4-teachers-really-greater-risk-serious-illness-covid-19/>, accessed on Jul. 23, 2020.
- vii NPR, *A Teacher Who Contracted COVID-19 Cautions Against In-Person Schooling*, Jul. 14, 2020; available at <https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/07/14/890716897/teacher-recovering-from-covid-19-says-school-reopening-is-tough-decision>.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jenny Nishida <junatong12@gmail.com> on behalf of Jenny Nishida  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 12:40 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** In support of school opening

Aloha,

I am a parent with two kids. I am writing to express my support for the Hawaii school opening. My reasons are simple, I want to see teachers teach and the kids learning. If for whatever reason, the teachers are not able to teach and the kids are not learning, then BOE, DOE, the State (and parents) all have a part in this. The kids are the future of this world. As it is, due to the pandemic, the education and the mental health of our kids have already suffered when we had to shut down the 4th quarter of last school year. I understand there was distance learning models in place, but they did not work for us and many others I have spoken to. Many kids admitted that they did not learn much during that period. If there is a need to delay school opening, I think there should be a plan to make up lost time in the instructional days. Perhaps, extending the instructional days into the summer? As a parent, I am concerned about the health and safety of my children. But I am more concerned with mental health and the quality of education my kids are getting right now. Kids need to have the interaction with their peers and their mentors. They need to have the venues for them to stay active. They need to be learning! As responsible adults, we need to come together and implement better plans to help these kids learn and thrive in the face of adversity. We all need to ask ourselves, what have we done and what will we do to help them?

Thank you!  
J. Nishida  
A Concerned Parent



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Anna Vidinha <avidinha@hawaii.rr.com> on behalf of Anna Vidinha  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 12:45 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Delay reopening of schools

Aloha,

My name is Anna Vidinha and I am a parent of two school-aged children and also a young adult child working in the Department of Education at one of the elementary schools.

I appreciated the meeting that the BOE had on Monday and the concerns brought about during that meeting summed up many, if not all of the concerns we as parents also have.

There is no clear guidance or proper training for teachers and staff on how to safely re-open schools in the coming week ahead. With the number of cases on Covid-19 on the rise and with the state not being able to monitor visitors and returning residents that should be quarantined, this puts more people at risk of being transmissible.

Although schools are trying to set protocols such as mask-wearing, school groups or "Ohana" groups, social distancing, etc. will that be a reality? The vision is there, but will we be able to see it through for hours each day? And what about cleaning/sanitation of frequently visited places such as restrooms, playgrounds, classrooms, etc. Who will see that it is properly cleaned after each use or how often should they be cleaned? Staff are eagerly waiting for guidance to ensure they are safe and what to do should there be a case that arises in one of their groups.

Parents are anxious about safety protocols in place to ensure their children are safe too. I also understand that some families do not have the capability to participate in online learning and that will prove a challenge on its own. Not all parents are also concerned about their children's health and may send them to school if they aren't feeling well, jeopardizing the health and safety of those they may come into contact with.

There are so many unanswered questions and concerns and there will be many more that may arise so I believe that pushing back the reopening of schools so that staff and teachers can properly prepare.

Online only options should also be given to families that wish to pursue that route but teachers need to know how to properly execute those classes simultaneously with their physical classes.

I am concerned about the health and safety of my children as students and as a staff of schools and want to ensure they will be safe and that measures and guidance is in place prior to schools reopening. One week is not enough time to prepare and be ready for the unknown reality. So please delay the start and allow the BOE to work together with the DOE, DOH, CDC, and all other agencies that is necessary in reopening schools safely.

I could probably write more concerns that I may have, however, the BOE brought up many of them in the meeting on Monday.

Thank you for your time and consideration in pushing back the reopening of schools this coming fall. I appreciate all that you are doing to ensure the safety and health of everyone involved either directly or indirectly.

Mahalo,  
Anna Vidinha

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Leilani Blankenship <leilanibblankenship@gmail.com> on behalf of Leilani Blankenship  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 12:51 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Opening school

Aloha,

I am a parent of three children who attend a public middle school and public high school. We reside on the east side of the big island.

I have a child who has g6pd and asthma. All three play school related sports and hold a 3.7-4.0 cumulative gpa. They take their education serious. They also adore and respect their teachers and staff members. Although our children would prefer to be in school and not to have to deal with this virus, the fact that one of our children has a medical issue that can be very concerning should the virus be brought home weighs heavy in our immediate decision. We've decided to do distance learning. I would prefer virtual to be used, however as of today everything seems uncertain. We have applied for distance to the middle school and emailed to notify the high school of our choice. I do not agree with the fact that once distance learning through their school is chosen, no matter of any changes (vaccine), they will have to do distance for the entire school year.

As a parent, I feel our educational start date absolutely needs to be pushed back for numerous obvious reasons. No one is ready for school. The constant worrying, the unknown factors of this virus, how will it affect each of us individually, why are our state's positive numbers steadily rising, how will our children learn while being restricted in classrooms, how can a teacher educator under all these issues - and so it all safely. The emotional stress of potentially passing this virus to fellow classmates or teachers and visa versa in itself could be life altering. Everything about starting school Aug. 4th is concerning and therefore should be pushed back and all option reviewed for all the right decisions.

Mahalo for your time and understanding.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Allegra Petras <petrasbills@gmail.com> on behalf of Allegra Petras  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 1:00 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Please reopen school on August 4th

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in favor of schools to open with the current plan we have been given. I am a business owner and working parent of an incoming 11th grader with special needs, a 9th grader, a 7th grader with special needs, and a 4th grader in Hilo. I unable to support all of their individual learning needs, keep my business running and provide my employee's with a job.

This time has been especially hard on my special needs kids. With out the face to face accountability they both have slid dramatically in their social, emotional, and cognitive functioning.

The current plan is less than ideal for my situation but a compromise to protect everyone in our community. This will be a steep learning curve for all involved and everyone will learn how to be flexible together.

To push back the start date, to come up with the perfect "plan" or training is just plain unrealistic.

Thank you,  
Allegra Petras  
808-825-8090

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE


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**From:** Kristi <kristid@hawaii.rr.com> on behalf of Kristi  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 1:04 PM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Please delay school opening

Aloha,

It is important for schools to determine how best to serve students safely. Please allow the start date to be pushed back so that we can better plan. Most private schools have already done this. Our schools are not ready to implement COVID plans, please give us more time.

Thank you,  
Kristi Desuacido  
Charter school teacher

Sent from my iPhone 

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Leilani Blankenship <leilanibblankenship@gmail.com> on behalf of Leilani Blankenship  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 1:14 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

I am a parent of three children who attend a public middle school and public high school. We reside on the east side of the big island.

I have a child who has g6pd and asthma. All three play school related sports and hold a 3.7-4.0 cumulative gpa. They take their education serious. They also adore and respect their teachers and staff members. Although our children would prefer to be in school and not to have to deal with this virus, the fact that one of our children has a medical issue that can be very concerning should the virus be brought home weighs heavy in our immediate decision. We've decided to do distance learning. I would prefer virtual to be used, however as of today everything seems uncertain. We have applied for distance to the middle school and emailed to notify the high school of our choice. I do not agree with the fact that once distance learning through their school is chosen, no matter of any changes (vaccine), they will have to do distance for the entire school year.

As a parent, I feel our education start date absolutely needs to be pushed back for numerous obvious reasons. No one is ready for school. The constant worrying, the unknown factors of this virus, how will it affect each of us individually, why are our state's positive numbers steadily rising, how will our children learn while being restricted in classrooms, how can a teacher educate under all these issues - and do it all safely. The emotional stress of potentially passing this virus to fellow classmates or teachers and visa versa in itself could be life altering. Everything about starting school [Aug. 4th](#) is concerning and therefore should be pushed back and all option reviewed for all the right decisions.

Mahalo for your time and understanding.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kelii Billington <keliibillington@yahoo.com> on behalf of Kelii Billington  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 1:21 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2020 VIRTUAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am a single father of two little girls, one of whom is high risk due to asthma. I stand wholeheartedly against starting school in August, especially as hastily planned as what has been brought.

What is the difference between May and August? We are actually worse off now, and though we had no problem with 100% remote learning in May, yet for some reason, August simply cannot be done? Add the reintroduction of tourism and new carriers of the virus, and this will be a recipe for disaster. Until somebody can explain the difference, I will continue to believe this has nothing to do with education and the welfare of our keiki, and everything to do with economic interests and childcare so parents can get to work serving our only industry while opening up far sooner than we should ... and our keiki and teachers are the sacrificial lambs.

Kelii Billington

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kahakualoha <kahakualoha@gmail.com> on behalf of Kahakualoha  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 1:26 PM  
**To:** Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** BOE General Business Meeting 7/23/20

Dear Honorable Members of the Board,

### General Business Meeting of July 23, 2020

#### 1. This is my testimony supporting agenda item

##### **G. Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year**

I received this differential pay as a teacher assigned to an rural area for 6 years. While I was grateful for the additional pay, I did not think it was fair for me to accept this additional pay while many of my colleagues did not for doing essentially the same work. I believe that teachers should receive a differential for specific issues. Teachers on Molokai and Lanai should receive a differential for the high cost of living in those areas. Teachers who work with students that are physically violent should receive a hazardous differential. Teachers should receive a differential for the extra challenges that come with teaching in a disadvantaged neighborhood. Should all special education teachers receive a differential. No. Many already receive a bonus for accepting a special education assignment if they are dually certified. Some also received a free college education when they committed to accepting a special education assignment for a certain number of years.

The decision to provide a differential should be based on specific measures not just because a position is hard to fill. And then the DOE should look at addressing the issues that make certain positions hard to fill. For example, rather than recruiting out of state teachers, invest the money in cultivating homegrown teachers. For example, the DOE-UH partnership that offered a teacher education program on Molokai so prospective teachers did not have to attend UH Mānoa off island yielded more teachers who committed to remain on Molokai for their teaching careers than the teachers that were recruited out of state who mostly left after a few years. There won't be difficulty in recruiting teachers in *hard to fill positions* if support is given to cultivate local teachers and efforts are made to offer fair working conditions and compensation. Differential pay needs to be reassessed and reformulated.

#### 2. This is my testimony opposing

##### **H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021)**

**COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees**

There is no substantive research that can state that the benefit of children returning to school outweighs the risk of death. Even if the likelihood of death is less than 2% for children, who would willingly volunteer their own child to death? Who would willingly offer a sister, father, son, grandparent --- anyone of the relations employed at a school -- to death? The bottom line is we need to keep people safe and disregard the counter narrative that says otherwise. It's unfortunate that parents are given little choice in how they protect their child. Most do not have the option to remain at home with their children. We need to delay the reopening of schools with face to face instruction. Instead, all learning needs to be delivered remotely for at least a few months before learning is transitioned to a face to face model. It doesn't matter that Hawaii's COVID19 numbers are low. As we know from other states' examples, those numbers could spike in a nanosecond.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kahaku Kia'āina



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Merian Amby <meriamby@gmail.com> on behalf of Merian Amby  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 2:21 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Aloha,

Although my child misses seeing his friends and teachers, I do NOT feel comfortable letting my child attend school at this time knowing that there is a chance that he may contract the virus and possibly be asymptomatic and pass it on to one of my loved ones. Many of Hawaii households have multiple generations living under one roof and we do not want to risk everyone in the household because of school.

Children touch everything in sight regardless of what you tell them. Even if you tell them and they listen the first time, they are more likely to forget and do the thing you told them not to do. They touch with their hands and put things into mouths so they have a higher chance of contracting all kinds of sicknesses. Even the cleanest child might get something because you can't control what other children have failed to clean.

Is there a procedure that will be followed if someone does contract it? Will we be notified? I understand that there are HIPAA laws that indicate privacy of the patient, but in order to better protect ourselves, the public should be allowed to know who has it so that we can do contact tracing for our own selves as well. What if the parent still insists that the child still attend the school physically? What is your procedure then?

There is no confirmation of anything at this point and I feel like taking temperatures is not the only way to figure out if someone has the virus. The teachers and staff are already overwhelmed and overworked with hundreds of things to think about, learning how to spot out COVID-19 shouldn't be one them since they are not health care professionals and shouldn't be treated as such. And if they are the ones that misses it, then parents will blame them which should NOT be the case.

With the technology that is out there, we can do distance learning and we can make it happen for now. Please reconsider the opening of children physically attending school and do only online learning until everything is safe. Yes, education is important, but the safety and well being of all our families is much more important. **OUR CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BE TREATED LIKE GUINEA PIGS!**

Signed,

A worries and concerned parent.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Erika Graves <erika.graves777@gmail.com> on behalf of Erika Graves  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 3:47 PM  
**To:** Testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Input Help!!!!

Our community and schools really need your help! We are asking for a delay in opening schools until teachers and staff receive the proper training, protocols, technology and PPE to open. We understand that none of these things have happened yet and our teachers report next Wednesday.

Please!!!! We need more time to receive the proper training to make sure schools open safely and with protocols in place.

Even Trump said on TV he supports delayed opening and virtual learning!!!!!!

Please help! God is watching :).

God Bless you.

**My Best,**

**Erika**

I would say that the thrust of my life has been initially about getting free, and then realizing that my freedom is not independent of everybody else. Then I am arriving at that circle where one works on oneself as a gift to other people so that one doesn't create more suffering. I help people as a work on myself and I work on myself to help people. - \*Ram Dass\*

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Malia Lane <malia.lane@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Malia Lane  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 4:57 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

Hello,

I am a second grade teacher on the East side of Oahu. I am absolutely petrified to go back into work. You folks are currently having a virtual meeting because it's too dangerous for you all to meet in person.. yet you expect teachers and students to be back on campuses in less than two weeks? This is asking teachers to commit suicide. Not only am I worried for my own safety, but I am deathly afraid of bringing Covid home to my mother, who is a stage 4 cancer survivor. We haven't been going ANYWHERE because of the risk factor, but now I have to be exposed to 23 children and their families EVERY day. This is wrong in so many ways. Please change your minds and think about the people who are here to educate the future. We need to feel safe and we need more time to prepare. Please push back opening, and start us off virtual. Please.

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** ichiokaj001@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 6:13 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony for H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19

My name is Michelle Ichioka and I am a teacher at Barbers Point Elementary and have been teaching for over 20 years. Therefore, I am in the "at risk" category in regards to this pandemic and am extremely worried about being forced to return to a face to face learning environment. There are still many issues that have not been clear and set as to protect us from COVID 19, such as:

face mask exceptions, cleaning protocols and procedures, testing to be sure that no one coming to/remaining on school campus has COVID symptoms, or what happens in a scenario when someone tests positive, and preparation for teachers in the hybrid learning environment, to name just a few concerns. As the cases continue to rise, it is very unfair to insist upon schools re-opening at this time as the safety of teachers and families have not even been considered in these extreme circumstances. I, myself, not only have health issues, but am also in a household with elders (aged 75+) and am frequently around elderly family members and relatives. This is definitely not a time to rush the re-opening of schools. I sincerely urge all those involved in this decision to not rush the opening of schools and to take care of the teachers who give of themselves over and over again for our students and families. As a quote that I heard in the last few days, "teachers are here to teach, not to die".

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Larry Junsay <larryjunsay@hotmail.com> on behalf of Larry Junsay  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 8:16 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** PPE methods

It is necessary many times for teachers of learning disabled students to be within six feet, at best next to them, in order to have the fullest effect of a teacher's instruction. Manual guidance during instruction is a necessity many times. However, the need to stay distant, as recommended, is a disadvantage and a difficult way to guide a learning disabled student through an instruction. I'm an asthmatic & must take extra precautions to avoid contracting Covid19. Having students return to school who will have come from various places in the community & homes and most likely have associated with a variety of people increased the chances of virus contact. Multiply that times the amount of students who will attend school, the virus infection possibilities rises exponentially. What protocols are in places for this scenario?

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Bo Frank <radfordrams@hotmail.com> on behalf of Bo Frank  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:38 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** BOE Virtual meeting

Aloha,

I have a few questions. If it is safe enough to open schools face to face for students and teachers why wasn't your BOE meeting face to face today? Why did you have a virtual meeting for your safety but say schools can open? Is student and teacher safety not as important as BOE board member safety? That was the clear message that was sent today. On your website it states "Due to current circumstances because of COVID-19, the Board of Education ("Board") will be holding a virtual General Business Meeting at 1:30 p.m. and a Finance and Infrastructure Committee meeting at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 23, 2020." That statement communicates clearly that due to covid it isn't safe for a board meeting to be face to face. It implies board members are important enough to keep safe through a virtual meeting but students and teacher aren't. Sorry about it students and teachers you aren't important enough, even though we know opening schools isn't safe and people (students and teachers) will get sick and possibly die, you are not as important as BOE board members are. You must attend school in person, face to face even though we know we are putting you at risk while we continue to have virtual meetings due to safety concerns over COVID-19. That is sad! So much for putting student safety as your number one priority!

Bo Frank  
Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Terry Reed <terry\_reed@icloud.com> on behalf of Terry Reed  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2020 6:42 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** M.Y. <mrs.mommy@aol.com> on behalf of M.Y.  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2020 7:21 AM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

My name is Marvis Yanagisawa and I completed my 30th year of teaching at Honokaa Elementary, grade 4 on Hawaii Island.

PLEASE DELAY THE OPENING OF SCHOOL.

First, WE are not ready to start a school year with virtual learning. There was no official training, no guidance or clear implementation since March 2020.

First, physical set-up: With an unorganized opening of school, teachers would be expected to physically prepare the classroom set up for distance learning, that will be inconsistent between classroom. The last official day I was required to be in my classroom was the last day before Spring Break. For the safety of myself and my family I am thankful for my administration for following HSTA's guidelines to complete my responsibilities virtually. But now I need to physically set up the classroom for distance learning: 6 feet distancing, create and agree upon classroom and school transitioning flow, research and provide personal protective equipment for self and students: soap, masks/shields, barriers etc.

Second, teacher curriculum, what and how will I be teaching? Last quarter I was learning as I was teaching and barely survived. I needed to choose my own technology platform, learned how to convert lessons for my students and hope I was aligned with my grade level and school. We need time to plan a cohesive approach to be properly trained with agreed upon curriculum. This will hopefully eliminate confusion for all involved, parents and teachers as well.

Third, as a school we need to know how to follow CoVid requirements. What happens if student refuses to wear a mask? What will happen if a student shows flu like symptoms? Who will be checking temperatures for not only students but adults as well? What are the schedules and rules for going to the bathroom, lunch, recess etc. What happens if a student is tested positive for CoVid while attending school for two weeks while asymptotic?

Fourth, social and well-being of our students begins with myself as a teacher. I am not able to be confident in the many roles a teacher is to provide for students. The constant fear of an illness that is not under control in our world, nation, state, community and now school.

I am a few years short of retiring. In my teaching career I've worked with many senior teachers over the years. Many enjoy their retirement years, traveling, bucket listing, babysitting and fulfilling life. But there were a few due to illnesses that were not able to survive and enjoy at least one day after sadly working a lifetime of educating Hawaii's students. Which one will I be?

Sincerely,

Marvis Yanagisawa

A committed lifelong teacher asking for a delay of reopening schools for the State, DOE, schools and teacher to plan for the safety of all involved!

Sent from my iPhone



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jacque Yoshizumi <jacque.yoshizumi@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Jacque Yoshizumi  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2020 8:02 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

Jacque Yoshizumi  
Elementary EL Coordinator/Teacher  
Parent of elementary aged children

I feel schools should postpone start date of the students to give teachers and schools more time to plan for a safe reopening of the schools.

We do not know exact protocol if a student is found positive for COVID-19.

I listened to most of the BOE's meeting on July 23, 2020. Thank you for fighting for the teachers concerns.

Thank you,  
Jacque Yoshizumi

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## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Buffy Whiteman <buffywhiteman@gmail.com> on behalf of Buffy Whiteman  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2020 10:27 AM  
**To:** TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Where's the National Guard?

Why can't the National Guard help schools with the masses at drop off/pick ups? Temp checks? Building outdoor shade structures for learning? Manning quarantine stations for ill children/adults?

They are a resource during peaceful protests, why not on campuses to assist with faculty and staff? As always, too much is asked of our teachers.

~buffy whiteman

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Kahea napeahi <kealia0115@gmail.com> on behalf of Kahea napeahi  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2020 12:04 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony for our ohana

CHAIR Payne and members of the Board of Education,

My name is Kahealani Napeahi, I am a Makua at Ke Kula o 'Ehunuikaimalino ma ka moku o Keawe. I am submitting testimony in support of delaying the date that students physically return to campus for the 2020-2021 school year. Ke Kula o 'Ehunuikaimalino is located on a small campus in South Kona. Over the last few years, we have seen an increase in student enrollment, so much so that we do not have the physical space to house all of our haumana. With the implementation of social distancing, we are left wondering how our already overcrowded kula will be a safe space for our haumana and limahana. Our kula has not been given clear safety protocols, nor have all of our limahana had the opportunity to be trained on how to implement the vast amount of new expectations placed upon them for this school year.

This will help me and my Ohana by making sure their health and safety is not put at risk for going back to soon. we know there is active cases still going around here in our town that is not being mentioned so how can we know to keep our kids safe even at a school were children will be children. for the well being of my ohana and everyone else, it would be best to extend the Start date for school and resume at a later date. distance learning is the BEST option at this time.

Mahalo nui no kou kōkua,  
Kahealani Napeahi

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** jaclyn\_96792@yahoo.com  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2020 1:51 PM  
**To:** testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Mahalo nui loa!

Mahalo for all of your support for our Keiki and teachers..... you've spent many hours yesterday discussing issues with covid and school preparations, in addition to supporting our teacher differentials. I am so grateful that you understand our plight in the education system. Again , Mahalo nui Loa, Jaclyn Wills, Makaha Elementary, Sped Preschool teacher  
Sent from my iPhone

## Testimony BOE

**From:** Sen. Kurt Fevella <senfevella@capitol.hawaii.gov> on behalf of Sen. Kurt Fevella  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2020 2:38 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov; boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov;  
catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony on item G- Agenda 7/23/20



**The Senate**

STATE CAPITOL  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

July 24, 2020

Board of Education  
Hawaii Department of Education  
1390 Miller Street.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Board Chair Payne and Members,

As the Ewa Beach 19th District Senator, I am writing in behalf my constituents regarding my Opposition to Meeting (7/23/2020) Agenda Item G:

"Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school year."

We, as a State are already suffering to find, keep and maintain great licensed school educators in not only our classrooms but in special education and Hawaiian Immersion programs. I've learned that these special educators and immersion teachers are now being discontinued in their compensation which hurts those who are financially burdened during these times. I hope that the Board of Education really take into consideration of not only this pandemic but the livelihood of our educators who've made great sacrifices just to fill those positions.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kurt Fevella".

Senator Kurt Fevella  
State of Hawaii, District 19  
Minority Leader/ Minority Floor Leader



## Protecting substitute teachers

**Amanda Antonmattei Brightbill** <amandaantonmattei@gmail.com>

Wed, Jul 22, 2020 at 2:38 PM

To: doeinfo@k12.hi.us, kathleen.dimino@k12.hi.us, boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov, catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov, kenneth.uemura@boe.hawaii.gov, shanty.asher@boe.hawaii.gov, kaimana.barcarse@boe.hawaii.gov, margaret.cox@boe.hawaii.gov, kili.namauua@boe.hawaii.gov, dwight.takeno@boe.hawaii.gov, bruce.voss@boe.hawaii.gov, senbaker@capitol.hawaii.gov, senchang@capitol.hawaii.gov, sendelacruz@capitol.hawaii.gov, senenglish@capitol.hawaii.gov, senfevella@capitol.hawaii.gov, sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov, senihara@capitol.hawaii.gov, seninouye@capitol.hawaii.gov, senkkahele@capitol.hawaii.gov, senkanuha@capitol.hawaii.gov, senkeohokalole@capitol.hawaii.gov, senkidani@capitol.hawaii.gov, senkim@capitol.hawaii.gov, senkouchi@capitol.hawaii.gov, senmisalucha@capitol.hawaii.gov, senmoriwaki@capitol.hawaii.gov, sennishihara@capitol.hawaii.gov, senroads@capitol.hawaii.gov, senriviere@capitol.hawaii.gov, senruderman@capitol.hawaii.gov, senshimabukuro@capitol.hawaii.gov, sentaniguchi@capitol.hawaii.gov, senthielen@capitol.hawaii.gov, senwakai@capitol.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

I am sending this email to all the appropriate email addresses I could find, including BOE members, the DOE, and our Senators. I hope this email finds you all well.

This email originated following a series of phone calls I made trying to get personal health insurance before returning to school next week as a substitute teacher.

Substitute teachers in the state of Hawaii make up about 1000 full time teaching positions. There are approximately 4,700 substitute teachers throughout the state. From my understanding many substitutes go on to get their teaching certification. I am one of those full time substitutes that is considering furthering my education to get a teaching certification.

Going forward I believe it is very important that any person working in the school system be provided affordable health insurance. As a full time substitute teacher working five days a week I make about \$2600 a month after taxes. The health insurance offered to substitutes by the DOE seems to range from around \$500-\$1000 a month. Does that seem fair? Now, I am being offered to return to work amidst a pandemic and my feeling is that it is more important than ever to be insured. No, I don't qualify for Quest. The enrollment period for [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) is closed. What are our options as substitute teachers to protect ourselves and continue to work? I am a mom of three, I am uninsured, I have pre-existing conditions and I'm a substitute teacher.

In the state with the highest teacher turnover rate that relies so heavily on substitute teachers please don't forget to think about us! If my numbers are correct, long term substitute teachers make up a little less than 10% of full time teaching positions in the state. That's a pretty big number of people that could like myself be uninsured and potentially be heading back to the classroom.

Last school year I took on the roll as a full time long term substitute teacher for a vacant position the school couldn't fill; I loved my job. Throughout the entire school year I took off a total of two days. How is it that in a state where employers are required to ensure employees working a minimum of 20 hours a week full time substitutes fall through the cracks? Considering that Hawaii is one of the most expensive places to live and we have such a teacher shortage, providing affordable insurance to substitute teachers should be a priority.

Please, as you consider school reopening plans don't forget to think about how the thousands of substitute teachers in Hawaii will be affected.

As a substitute teacher who has been asked to start the school year in the classroom, and a parent of 3 kids in public school I have so many questions other than health insurance. I'm going to ask them, hopefully it will give you something to think about that you may not have already...

\*Have you considered substitutes who work in a variety of classrooms and schools. There has been so much talk about the safe bubble of keeping kids with the same class and teacher. How does having substitutes come in and out of different schools and classes contribute to the safety of everyone?

\*How are teachers and/or full time substitutes supposed to work a 5 day week if we have school age children who are only going to school 2 days a week?

\*Will substitutes be eligible to collect unemployment in the event schools go back to distance learning?

\*If a teacher falls ill with Covid and a substitute is called will that person be informed they are going into a class with potential covid carriers?

\*As a parent, will we be informed if another student or staff in the class or at school catches covid? Will families be held responsible for reporting to the school if someone in their household has covid? Will families be held responsible for quarantining after traveling?

I am sure the DOE and the BOE have thought about these things already. What I really want to stress the most is when you're considering how to keep students, teachers, and staff safe please remember to include Hawaii's substitute teachers. Also, if we could be ensured to receive unemployment in the event there is no work for us that would be good too.

If you made it to the end of my email I can't thank you enough for taking the time to read it.

Mahalo for all that you all do for our community.

-Amanda Brightbill



## School reopening August 4

Tiffany Brooke <tifbfit@me.com>

Wed, Jul 22, 2020 at 3:21 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov, BOE.Hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov, Chair Person <catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov>, Vice-Chair <kenneth.uemura@boe.hawaii.gov>, shanty.asher@boe.hawaii.gov, kaimana.barcarse@boe.hawaii.gov, margaret.cox@boe.hawaii.gov, lynn.fallin@boe.hawaii.gov, kili.namauu@boe.hawaii.gov, dwight.takeno@boe.hawaii.gov, bruce.voss@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

I'm writing you in regards to my concerns about schools reopening in face-to-face settings August 4th. I am a substitute teacher and mother of 3. I enjoy my work and the flexibility it gives me to be available for my children. I am looking forward to returning to work as soon as it is safe. However, I am not comfortable with the current settings in which we are about to reopen.

First, all three of my children attend three different schools which presents a logistical nightmare for my husband (who is an essential worker) and me. It also complicates the "bubbles" as I see many parents seeking childcare for their children for their off days. Won't that actually expose them to even more people by forcing them to seek additional care for their children? Furthermore, 3 of 5 of our family members are high risk and having three different schools, plus both of the adults working with multiple people expands our "bubbles" beyond a capacity to conduct contact tracing should one of us come up positive for COVID-19.

Second, while I feel fairly comfortable with the policies and protocols put into place by my children's schools the bus policy is of concern to me. If bus drivers cannot refuse service to a child with a child who refuses to wear a mask or is displaying symptoms, how does that protect the rest of the students in the bus and prevent spreading infection?

Third, I am confused as to why we are reopening when cases are higher now than they were when we first closed the schools. I have worked with children for many years and find that it's very difficult for them to maintain healthy personal hygiene. They frequently sneeze, cough, spit, bite their nails, and pick their nose with little to no regard for their environment or germs. I realize the masks will help reduce this behavior, but I also see many challenges ahead in enforcing proper mask wearing ALL DAY. To impose social distancing rules and mask wearing all day seems an insurmountable challenge in which teachers will spend most of their day managing classroom behaviors instead of educating.

Lastly, I have yet to see a comprehensive plan regarding what will happen when someone at the school tests positive. How will that play out? Also, please consider the confusion for students as they transition from in person A/B schedules to distance learning if their school closes due to positive COVID-19 cases or when the community numbers grow, and then back to the A/B rotation.

I would like to make a few suggestions. Instead of age appropriate bubbles, it seems to me ohana bubbles should be just that.... keeping siblings or household members in class groups or schools together and lumping them together based on their community locations to reduce the need for multiple bubbles in one family and allow neighbors to cooperate in mitigating social exposures outside of school. Also, mandated adult-supervision at bus stops so children can be refused service if they're not compliant with wearing a mask and/or exhibiting signs and symptoms. Finally, I would like to encourage distance learning options for all students with the exception of those IEP/504/ High risk students AND those who are not capable of effective distance learning for a number of reasons.

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns. This is a difficult and challenging time for everyone. I look forward to working again and returning my children to school safe and healthy for everyone.

Mahalo nui loa for all your hard work in creating solutions for our teachers, students, and ohanas. We appreciate you! Stay safe and healthy!

Tiffany Brooke, Bachelors is Science in Exercise & WELLNESS

Sent from my iPhone





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## Back to School

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**B S** <briansajona@gmail.com>  
To: boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jul 22, 2020 at 4:22 PM

Hi,  
Who should I contact regarding legal action when my children get COVID from their school?  
Thank you,  
Brian



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## Please postpone the Opening of Hawaii Schools

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**Jennifer Orta** <jc5363@gmail.com>

Wed, Jul 22, 2020 at 4:59 PM

To: boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern,

I am a parent of two boys who will attend Makalapa Elementary and a teacher at Ilima Intermediate. I am hugely concerned with the thought of my kids getting sick and coming home with it, or me getting sick and coming home with it. I feel that we are rushing into a situation we are not prepared for.

I truly feel that a delay of 1 month to help us better prepare will be beneficial. As we continue to discover the new norm, it is okay to consider revamping the way we do school.

It is time for HDOE to reinvent the wheel. We can make up lost education by finally switching to year round school and lengthening the school day. It is time to let students and education come first.

Thank you,  
Jennifer Orta



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## School Starting

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**Malia Maielua** <maliamaielua@gmail.com>

Wed, Jul 22, 2020 at 5:04 PM

To: boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov, Catherine.Payne@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: doeinfo@k12.hi.us

Aloha, I am a mother of an amazing soon to be 3rd grader.

I am against starting the new school year this coming August.

The news and leaders of this state indicates that it is safe for our children to return to school but that isn't the case.

Numbers are rising and not being seen as going down. I do not feel assured that once school start there isn't going to be a case. I am feeling more that its going to rise and its going to start with our children.

What would happen if there was a second wave of the virus?

We should try this distance learning for the remainder of the year.



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## Against Re-opening AUG 4

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**Joseph Orta** <joseph.orta@gmail.com>  
To: boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jul 22, 2020 at 5:19 PM

Aloha,

I would like to voice my concerns putting the lives of students, teachers and staff at risks.

I am parent with two young boys that will be attending Makalapa Elementary this upcoming school year. I dont want my family at risk. I dont trust other families will take the appropriate actions to minimize the spread due for lack of care and using school as a daycare so parents can work.

I will only support virtual classes/learning until a vaccine is in place. It's a known fact and COVID cases have been on the rise.

My wife is also a teacher so my whole family is at risk of contracting COVID. I will pursue a lawsuit if my boys and/or wife if becomes infected due to your staff's poor judgment and incompetence to listen to medical health advisors.

Other states are pursuing virtual learning and the state of Hawaii should as well. If not, delay the start of school to better prepare teachers and students. There is no need for any family's pain and suffering on Hawaii for the illness or death of a loved one.



## Schools are overdue for re-opening!

**Jennifer Peters** <benjamindavidpeters@gmail.com>

Wed, Jul 22, 2020 at 9:12 PM

To: boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov

Greetings,

I would like to express my strong support for schools re-opening on August 4. (Closing in March was a big mistake, since there were no known risks or infections at the public schools.) Teachers have what they need to do their preparation. If they had wanted more time, they shouldn't have let HSTA sue the State for telling them to go to work!

I do, however, take issue with the Covid-19 regulations that are being put in place (e.g. social distancing, face masks, etc.) These regulations are unhealthy for teachers, let alone the students, who are still developing and maturing. I realize that most people are worried about losing their jobs, so they do what their boss tells them to, but sometimes these rules are still wrong, anyway. Take face masks, for example. Everyone in the nation is made to wear these germ-laden muzzles that make us sound like a suffocating Cookie Monster. The reason? The WHO (which originally said healthy people shouldn't wear them) says to wear them, so everyone tells everyone to wear them. But if you read the medical research carefully, you will find that face masks are not proven to protect anyone from coronavirus. So, please do not force children to wear germ-spreaders on their faces! That could be construed as corporal punishment, which is prohibited by BOE policy.

I also disagree with social distancing among teachers and students. Here is another unhealthy practice that leads to misunderstandings, loss of self-esteem, loss of friends, depression, and anxiety, and lends itself to obnoxious social police officers who only live to snitch on innocent people who are just trying to be kind to each other. Without human interaction, schools will turn into internment camps. Everyone needs positive human contact, whether it takes the form of a handshake, high-five, hug, or a pat on the back, and you have to admit, that people in your household are not always the best people to share this contact with, due to family problems like domestic abuse, for example.

Please show some mercy and allow teachers to teach the best way they know how. One reason they're pushing back is because they feel they can't implement these Covid-19 procedures. They're right, because these inhumane regulations are impossible, and should not be followed to the letter! The other reason they're trying to delay, is because they've been sheltering in a bubble for too long, have believed the political hype, and are actually terrified of getting Covid from students.

Now that the HGEA and UPW unions are supporting the teachers in their misguided cause, it would be fantastic to free everyone of the burden of Covid by telling the straight and simple truth: Covid-19 is not the health crisis it's been purported to be. The actual deaths from Covid-19 have been inflated, and the vast majority of those who contract it, recover just fine at home. Hospitals are absolutely not overtaxed, so there should be no worries in that regard. It is well to practice good hygiene, but let's not go crazy, or we'll cause another run on sanitizer.

Once everyone knows the truth, the fear will start to dissipate, and people will finally be able to interact with each other in normal ways again. Let's turn back from this dark path, and allow our schools to be joyful places for learning. So please, do not delay; tell the truth about Covid, and remove the restrictions! If you do, teachers, administration, and school staff will be more than willing to re-open schools on August 4.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jennifer Peters  
670 Prospect Street, Apt. 807  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Phone: (808)763-8369  
E-mail: [jenniferzadapeters@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferzadapeters@gmail.com)



## Opening of the Schools, is the DOE really ready?

**dmasukawa@hawaiiantel.net** <dmasukawa@hawaiiantel.net>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov, BOE.Hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov  
Cc: LtGov.UIPA@hawaii.gov, mayor@honolulu.gov

Wed, Jul 22, 2020 at 10:28 PM

There seems to be a lack of clarity and consistency as to what the teachers and students are to expect. I totally understand that schools need to open to prevent students from further sliding behind on the academics, and yet at what cost are we doing this without the public transparency of what the DOE is implementing.

1. I understand the guidelines that the HSTA is recommending is the 6 ft. space between all students, in accordance with the CDC's recommendations. Yet I have heard rumors the 3 ft. is being considered under special request. Basically, restaurants are required to open with a spacing of approx. 6 ft. between customers, but with students and teachers there maybe exceptions that the DOE is willing to consider? This is a pandemic situation yet the State is willing to compromise on the safety of the student and teachers, and more so their families as well. This does not appear to have the public safety being considered having the greatest importance.
2. This is a pandemic situation, so what plans have the DOE considered to provide adequate masks and PPE's to the students and teachers? Is this a potential worker's comp. liability for the State in the event no adequate PPE's are provided? Does the State provide PPE's and what type to our front line workers at the airport, prisons and other state facilities that employees have high person to person contact. I would think not providing the same to our teachers would pose the State to be liable for any issues that may arise. We are not talking about your common flu's and colds.
3. For clarity, please provide the COVID plan that the DOE has adopted in the event a covid case is found at a school. I saw the Covid plan that the DOE has online, but there seems to be discussions that is will not be followed exactly. Please update and furnish to all families having students residing in their homes.
4. How are the teachers, students and family members having various health issues being taken into account with the current DOE COVID plans? I have not found any information pertaining to this.

Being that, I, as a State resident am unaware of the above, and apparently there has been no big push to educate our residents as to what everyone should expect, is the State of Hawaii really ready to open the schools without having thoroughly educating our residents what the DOE Covid plans are? The above situations and questions are very simple and common sense ones that should have been answered to date. If not, is the State really ready to open the schools and expose our elders, students, residents and teachers that may have underlying health issues? Everyone is so focused on the tasks, like a student, and not realizing the repercussions of their actions.

*David Masukawa*



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## Reopening Schools, DOE

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mnoelanileong@aol.com <mnoelanileong@aol.com>

Thu, Jul 23, 2020 at 4:53 PM

Reply-To: "mnoelanileong@aol.com" <mnoelanileong@aol.com>

To: "webmail@doh.hawaii.gov" <webmail@doh.hawaii.gov>, "boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov" <boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov>, "doeinfo@k12.hi.us" <doeinfo@k12.hi.us>

Aloha,

I know its a teacher's concern and Issue for them...

However, I'm sure you know Hawaii is not like NYC, FL, CA, or TX.

My concern is the education of the children of Hawaii, who already are behind in academics in the Nation.

How is having ONLY 2 days of school going to improve that. It will only make matter's worse.

Hawaii does not have the kind of Covid numbers as other states.

We have substantially less than most states.

So why are we only giving Children, (especially Elementary students) only two days per week.

Its absurd.

Was there not a consensus vote amongst parents as well?

Or was this strictly a Teacher's vote..... hmmm

I hope we parents get the money that the government gives to the schools, per student.

That way, we can use the money allocated to the student in DOE school and use that money to pay for our kids to "choose to go to a different school of their choice. (eg. Charter, Private, etc...) not in their district.

This is frustrating parents, students, and employer's who need their employees return to work as well.

This will NOT work for many families moving forward.

Mcarver



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## Concerns regarding schools' reopening

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**Alexa Ridela** <alexaridela@gmail.com>

Fri, Jul 24, 2020 at 8:52 AM

To: boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov, catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov, doeinfo@k12.hi.us

Aloha,

I am greatly concerned for the health and safety of our community in Hawai'i. As a member of this community, I have been using new, safe practices in all aspects of my life, to protect my kupuna and all at-risk individuals. Despite this, it has been evident to me that not all people are willing to do the same. We have great evidence to support that wearing masks and keeping socially distanced is our best defense against the disease, and there is no possible way to keep children socially distanced for 30+ hours a week. This does not just put our keiki's lives at risk, it also affects our teachers, and our families. Now is not the time to reopen schools. I feel that any progress we have had in containing the virus will be lost if schools reopen before we can really get a handle on this disease.

I do not know how to properly handle a situation like this but I hope that you will do your best to keep kama'aina safe and healthy before schools are ready to reopen.

Mahalo nui loa,  
Alexa Kūlia Ridela





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## Re-opening of Schools

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**Barb** <phillipb001@hawaii.rr.com>

Fri, Jul 24, 2020 at 9:03 AM

To: boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha and Good Morning Board Members.

I am a mother of two that attend Kahuku High and Intermediate School. I am also a mother of a 2nd grader that attends Kahuku Elementary. I ask you full heartedly to please start school August 4th for all with 100% distance learning, until the teachers are confident about allowing students back in the classroom.

My children will be attending school on campus, but with how the teachers feel about the start of August 4th, I'm very worried. I'm worried about the covid cases rising. I've listened to many teachers. They are being put into a very vulnerable state right now. I ask you to not rush this. I ask you to not rush face to face learning if the confidence in keeping everyone safe is not there.

Respectfully,

Barbara Phillip

Sent from my iPhone



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## Delay School Opening

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**liaina claytor** <vateatea@hotmail.com>

Fri, Jul 24, 2020 at 9:28 AM

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

To all concerned,

I beg you to reconsider your decision to begin classes on August 4th.

We are not ready. We are not confident.

We are far more creative and able to find solutions than what we are giving ourselves credit for.

Delaying the opening would mean we actually value our teachers; Value life and good health.

Do the right thing. Open when we have armed our teachers with proper PPE and have trained an armada of online teachers and support staff. Open when we have a better handle on community spread!

Courage, dear heart.

Respectfully,

Liaina Claytor  
Parent & Substitute teacher  
@ Wheeler Elementary

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## Kauai Teacher recommending student start date...Aug. 17th (not virtual Aug 4)

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The Burtons <kauaiburtons@gmail.com>

Fri, Jul 24, 2020 at 9:40 AM

To: boe.hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

My name is Laura Burton. I have taught Kindergarten here on Kauai for 11 years, and previously taught in California. I also have an earlier career in Human Resources at a California Hospital.

I am writing today, in response to your meeting held yesterday - July 23, 2020. I understand that, after hearing a lot of testimony, you are holding an Emergency Meeting, to discuss a possible delay in opening schools, specifically either by virtual learning beginning August 4...or...a full delay for students to return August 18th.

**I highly recommend the August 18th (or Aug 17)** start date for all students. Our school, like most others across the state, have not adequately trained their teachers on what is expected of online educational processes, nor been given the training or introduction to programs we can use, so it makes it very difficult to rush trainings July 29 - 31, then try to apply that to our students just a few days later.

Additionally, teaching Kindergarten virtually the first 2 weeks of school would NOT be productive. The whole first quarter of Kindergarten is all about forming relationships, learning rules & procedures, learning to respect one another and other social nuances. It is counter-productive to do this one-on-one online, with no peers available to socialize with. I believe this would apply for all "first-year" grades at a new school...needing to be introduced to the school, build relationships with new teachers, and then settling into a Blended Learning routine. I wish that for my 9th grader...entering Kapa'a High School this year.

I am a teacher that wants to get back to the classroom as soon as possible. Teaching in person is crucial for the younger students (K - 2). However, I know that not all of the safety protocols are in place yet. And, there is still much to be learned about regarding our online platforms and processes, to best provide education to our keiki on their "at home" learning days (most Kauai schools are doing a Blended model - alternating days). Furthermore, the "rush" to start with all of these new complications, frankly, has already exhausted our Admin and teachers - as most of the summer was spent not recharging, but communicating back and forth with unions, Admin and each other - trying to keep up with the latest information and make some sense of it all.

We appreciate your consideration of all of the concerns raised. Again, I am ready to get back into my classroom and care for my students, but we want to be sure to do it right. Please consider granting 2 weeks of prep for our Admin/Teachers the opening weeks...then bringing the students back August 17 or 18th.

The students would miss a few school days, but the level of preparedness of our teachers and staff would be greatly enhanced.

Mahalo Nui Loa for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laura Burton  
Kapa'a Elementary



## Governor's 10th Proclamation and CDC Guidance

Renee Dieperink <reeneedieperink@gmail.com>

Fri, Jul 24, 2020 at 1:09 PM

To: BOE.Hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

Please consider this:

According to governor Ige's tenth proclamation, we have to comply with CDC guidance, and that this shall be the LAW. The CDC tells us that we should REOPEN schools, and since the CDC guidance takes the effect of LAW, there should be no question about this.

### Governor Ige's 10th Emergency Proclamation from 7/17/2020

[https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2007090-ATG\\_Tenth-Supplementary-Proclamation-for-COVID-19-distribution-signed.pdf](https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2007090-ATG_Tenth-Supplementary-Proclamation-for-COVID-19-distribution-signed.pdf)

On page 4, under the section III. Act with Care, part B. Safe Practice, it says:

"All persons shall comply with applicable guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as State, county, industry and regulatory requirements for safe practices to mitigate the spread of COVID-19."

Also on page 4, under section D. Force and Effect of Law, it says:

"Pursuant to section 127A-25, HRS, all provisions set forth in Section III of this Proclamation are hereby adopted as rules that shall have the force and effect of law."

Okay, so what does the CDC tell us?

### CDC Guidance on "The Importance of Reopening America's Schools This Fall", updated on 7/23/2020

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/reopening-schools.html?fbclid=IwAR2bp69cBRKmt8JNpxN7d9Lj7ZVn7wm6lzyNJeDkQlu1wZu48O4JSZntfwQ>

This is the CDC's OWN REPORT about the importance of the reopening of schools, and the EXTREMELY LOW RISK OF COVID-19 TO CHILDREN and those in a school environment.

"The best available evidence indicates if children become infected, they are far less likely to suffer severe symptoms."

"The harms attributed to closed schools on the social, emotional, and behavioral health, economic well-being, and academic achievement of children, in both the short- and long-term, are well-known and significant."

"The lack of in-person educational options disproportionately harms low-income and minority children and those living with disabilities."

"The best available evidence indicates that COVID-19 poses relatively low risks to school-aged children."

"Scientific studies suggest that COVID-19 transmission among children in schools may be low."

"International studies that have assessed how readily COVID-19 spreads in schools also reveal low rates of transmission."

"Based on current data, the rate of infection among younger school children, and from students to teachers, has been low."

"There have also been few reports of children being the primary source of COVID-19 transmission among family members."

"This is consistent with data from both virus and antibody testing, suggesting that children are not the primary drivers of COVID-19 spread in schools or in the community."

"The available evidence provides reason to believe that in-person schooling is in the best interest of students."

"Extended school closure is harmful to children. It can lead to severe learning loss, and the need for in-person instruction is particularly important for students with heightened behavioral needs."

"Remote learning makes absorbing information more difficult for students with disabilities, developmental delays, or other cognitive disabilities."

"Extended school closures are harmful to children's development of social and emotional skills. Important social interactions that facilitate the development of critical social and emotional skills are greatly curtailed or limited when students are not physically in school."

"Extended closures can be harmful to children's mental health and can increase the likelihood that children engage in unhealthy behaviors."

"A review of studies conducted on pandemics found a strong association between length of quarantine and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms, avoidance behavior, and anger."

"Another review published this year found that post-traumatic stress scores of children and parents in quarantine were four times higher than those not quarantined."

"For children with intellectual or physical disabilities, nearly all therapies and services are received through schools."

"Extended school closures deprive children who live in unsafe homes and neighborhoods of an important layer of protection from neglect as well as physical, sexual, and emotional maltreatment and abuse."

Germany

<https://news.yahoo.com/german-study-finds-no-evidence-164704005.html>

Sweden

[https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-sweden-schools/swedens-health-agency-says-open-schools-did-not-spur-pandemic-spread-among-children-idUSKCN24G2IS?fbclid=IwAR1\\_ftvahcMyuYZujYWDaTkifB1fpV-n9Wp42grFXJebD6Bas8ScB92fnsk](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-sweden-schools/swedens-health-agency-says-open-schools-did-not-spur-pandemic-spread-among-children-idUSKCN24G2IS?fbclid=IwAR1_ftvahcMyuYZujYWDaTkifB1fpV-n9Wp42grFXJebD6Bas8ScB92fnsk)

Denmark

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-denmark-reopening-idUSKBN2341N7?fbclid=IwAR1KkWaqqzttn6MfoE-SQqxlnXVkrQCtQLRV4DtvXiPm5h5DuuMsCrPx0Mw>

Top Pediatricians Will ALL Send Their Kids Back to School

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=0C7R1vrbne8&fbclid=IwAR0hCPVib7UxRCK-gcyHP0WpMj0h6T\\_BsiFLtWMuB\\_cQat1rkNIgiUZRRzZk&app=desktop](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=0C7R1vrbne8&fbclid=IwAR0hCPVib7UxRCK-gcyHP0WpMj0h6T_BsiFLtWMuB_cQat1rkNIgiUZRRzZk&app=desktop)

Epidemiologist Says Send Kids Back to School

[https://www.vox.com/2020/7/9/21318560/covid-19-coronavirus-us-testing-children-schools-reopening-questions?fbclid=IwAR3IIS3TCI6IBvLgdnCCIL-hv0EmHbt6b\\_mZtG4r9-91fXS2eaouYFkagy4](https://www.vox.com/2020/7/9/21318560/covid-19-coronavirus-us-testing-children-schools-reopening-questions?fbclid=IwAR3IIS3TCI6IBvLgdnCCIL-hv0EmHbt6b_mZtG4r9-91fXS2eaouYFkagy4)

Aloha,

Renee Dieperink

Teacher at Enchanted Lake Elementary School

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Jocelyn Buchalter <Pinky\_B5@hotmail.com> on behalf of Jocelyn Buchalter  
**Sent:** Monday, July 27, 2020 7:06 AM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** General Meeting; 7/23/20; Agenda Item G; Opposed

First, thank you for your work. I relate completely to coping with the transformed work of educating our students.

I am writing to your Agenda item G.

Is cutting hard-to-fill teacher pay the right thing to do right now?

As you go through your work today, continue prioritizing resources to insure teacher compensations that will keep qualified teachers in our hard-to-fill classrooms.

We are here, we are working. Really working. Yesterday, I spent 4.75 hours online learning, diagnosing, refining the best hybrid syllabus for my high school students. Then, I attended a virtual “optional” faculty meeting from 1 to 3 on the reopening our high school. Today, it’s 7:33 a.m. and I am in my second hour of curriculum work, and yes, I stopped my work, and decided for the first time ever, in 23 years, to write to you. Then, tomorrow, I have a virtual meeting from 9 to 12 on Instructional Leadership and I continue on to another virtual meeting from 1 to 3 on a cross-curricular unit on Anti-racism. The next day, I have another Instructional Leadership virtual meeting from 9 to 12.... This is the reality of a classroom teacher’s weekends, holidays and “breaks.”

Despite my own woes on being a classroom teacher caught in the Compression Pay Freeze for over 10 years, I did not give up on my students.

Please don’t give up on me.

## Testimony BOE

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**From:** allan cunanan <allanc23@yahoo.com> on behalf of allan cunanan  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 26, 2020 5:38 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY

To whom it may concern,

I am testifying on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

I am a UHM graduate and part time resident of Royal Kunia in Waipahu who has a long list of family members in the medical profession. Please reconsider the opening date for the new school year set for August 4th 2020.

Where I currently reside in California, schools are not reopening for classes for online learning until the end of August or beginning of September.

I would also like the Board to adopt the FOUR-PHASED APPROACH Highlighted below.

Here are some key points that I feel need to be addressed

- Benchmarks (not set dates) based on reliable science need to be met before moving from from one phase to the next
- Checklists need to be created to address critical safety issues
- Ventilation and cooling systems of indoor spaces need to be made safe
- Parents need training for online programs to help their children navigate the system(s)
- Substitute teachers will be essential to delivering instruction when teachers have to quarantine due to exposure or when teachers are absent for other reasons. These substitutes will also need training on best practices and school safety protocols
- Proper training and planning time will enhance the quality of education students will receive (the distance learning model will NOT be the same as 4th quarter)
- Parents need to be educated about the difference between home school (taking away funding from public schools), distance learning (on a program), and virtual learning (with a qualified teacher)
- Survey families to determine access to devices with cameras and internet connection
- Quality education requires devices with cameras for virtual learning to interact with teachers (technology needs)
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) needs to be provided and masks must be REQUIRED for all on campus
- Disinfecting bathrooms needs to be throughout the day, not just once or twice a day
- All students deserve a real, live, and qualified teacher if learning for students takes place home (not just an educational program)
- School nurses should be trained to provide care and make critical decisions for potentially ill students and staff
- Public health education campaign needs to be launched throughout the community
- Pay substitute teachers for training days to receive similar and relevant training as teachers

## 4 Phase Plan (4PP)

### Phase 1: TRAINING

- Training for educators on the technology needed for online teaching
- Distribution of technology with training for parents and students
- Evaluate ventilation of indoor spaces and order supplies
- Training for substitute teachers
- Training on sanitation, mask-wearing, setting up classrooms and high traffic areas for Phase 2
- Training for faculty and staff on procedures pertaining to illness of staff and students

### Phase 2: NO CONTACT

- 100% online teacher-led classes
- School traffic flow design to minimize person-to-person contact
- Classroom ventilation modifications put into place
- To move to Phase 3, agreed upon, science-based benchmarks need to be met

### Phase 3: MINIMAL CONTACT

- Hybrid (mix of face-to-face and online learning) teaching plan
- Student classes will be limited to no more than 12 students
- 100% Mask requirement (unless documented medical reason)
- Cleaning schedule for classrooms, bathrooms, cafeterias, etc.
- Students will meet with teachers, in person, at least once a week
- To move to Phase 4, agreed upon, science-based benchmarks need to be met

### Phase 4: NEW EDUCATION MODEL

- Return to school campuses
- When safe, all students will return to in-person instruction *with* a virtual option
- Students will return to school for in-person instruction pending further health and safety guidance

Benchmarks will be decided upon by ALL stakeholders and based on scientific findings.

Benchmarks will be measurable.

Failure to meet benchmarks in current phase will trigger a return to the previous phase.

Sincerely,

Allan Cunanan



## Testimony BOE

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**From:** Holly <hollybakescookies@gmail.com> on behalf of Holly  
**Sent:** Monday, July 27, 2020 8:39 PM  
**To:** testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
**Subject:** Testimony

To The Board of Education,

I would like to testify on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

I am a kindergarten teacher. This year is going to be my eighth year teaching. Throughout my years of teaching, I've learned many lessons. The most important of these lessons being, "failing to plan is planning to fail".

This is why I am writing to you today. As teachers, we are required to assess students and plan according to their needs. In order to create an effective plan, teachers collect data and make observations. This is what an effective educator should do.

If the state of Hawaii was a student, that student would be classified as a struggling student. According to data, the cases of COVID are going up. In fact, more cases have been identified in the past few weeks than during the entire lockdown. Hospitals are beginning to surge. This data shows that the state of Hawaii has regressed.

If the state of Hawaii was a student, this would be the time when a teacher would start planning on how to help that student. The last thing a teacher would do is to start pushing that student into something they are not prepared for. The last thing a teacher would do is start teaching without clear objectives and a clear plan.

If we do not plan well, we will fail. Failure, in times like these, can come in many forms. It could mean having to shut down a whole school, having to shut down the state again, or worse, dealing with the death of a student, teacher, or faculty member. I say worse, because nothing is worse than the loss of a life that could have been prevented.

A question I heard in the testimony last week hit me hard. Someone asked, "What happens to the student who is struggling?" The answer is simple, teachers will teach from anywhere. They will put in the time to reach those struggling students. Then when schools are SAFE to open again, teachers will be there to do their job. That struggling student will be alive to learn another day. Teachers will be there to assess and plan. Teachers cannot do that if teachers end up catching COVID and dying. I cannot teach from the grave.

I am writing to you today, because we need a better plan, one backed with clear objectives, protocols, and science. I am writing to you today, asking you to help us plan to succeed. Please support the 4 Phase Plan, as stated below.

### **4 Phase Plan (4PP)**

#### **Phase 1: TRAINING**

- Training for educators on the technology needed for online teaching
- Distribution of technology with training for parents and students
- Evaluate ventilation of indoor spaces and order supplies

- Training for substitute teachers
- Training on sanitation, mask-wearing, setting up classrooms and high traffic areas for Phase 2
- Training for faculty and staff on procedures pertaining to illness of staff and students

**Phase 2: NO CONTACT**

- 100% online teacher-led classes
- School traffic flow design to minimize person-to-person contact
- Classroom ventilation modifications put into place
- To move to Phase 3, agreed upon, science-based benchmarks need to be met

**Phase 3: MINIMAL CONTACT**

- Hybrid (mix of face-to-face and online learning) teaching plan
- Student classes will be limited to no more than 12 students
- 100% Mask requirement (unless documented medical reason)
- Cleaning schedule for classrooms, bathrooms, cafeterias, etc.
- Students will meet with teachers, in person, at least once a week
- To move to Phase 4, agreed upon, science-based benchmarks need to be met

**Phase 4: NEW EDUCATION MODEL**

- Return to school campuses
- When safe, all students will return to in-person instruction *with* a virtual option
- Students will return to school for in-person instruction pending further health and safety guidance

Benchmarks will be decided upon by ALL stakeholders and based on scientific findings.

Benchmarks will be measurable.

Failure to meet benchmarks in current phase will trigger a return to the previous phase.

Thank you for your time,

Holly Uehara

To the Honorable Board of Education,

I would like to testify on Action Item H. Board Action on Memorandum of Understanding between State of Hawaii Board of Education and Hawaii State Teachers Association (SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response): 2017-2021 contractual modifications and conditions of work related to COVID-19 response for Bargaining Unit 5 employees.

Please DO NOT return students to face-to-face learning in school settings until HSTA/UPW/HGEA concerns regarding proper and detailed safety protocols have been established and communicated to families and teachers by the DOE, and until adequate training on distance learning and safety protocols have been taught to school staff.

As of today, teachers have yet to be trained in COVID-19 safety protocols and distance learning for an online teaching environment, which in all probability will and SHOULD be the norm for the foreseeable future to ensure the health and safety of our children, teachers and community members and businesses statewide. Schools need time to safely prepare for reopening following STATE MANDATED guidelines that have yet to be released in adequate form. The DOE's poor leadership and lack of foresight by insisting that schools are safe to reopen, while purposefully leaving many of the decision-making issues to the individual schools (in order to avoid any liability at the state DOE level) has been the main contributing factor for the confusion and frustration leading up to the reopening of unprepared schools across the State.

Teachers are AFRAID to go back to work under these potentially life-threatening workplace scenarios. The DOE is not only purposefully minimizing teachers' concerns for the safety of their workplace environment, but they have the audacity to say so without having any classroom teaching experience. Dr. Park and Dr. Anderson are basing their thoughts on schools reopening based on their medical background, and that's fine in THEORY. However, it is then up to the

Superintendent to take their recommendations and apply them as much as safely possible in a classroom in order to keep people safe in the school setting. My question is, how can this be done when the Superintendent has NO classroom experience? And despite this glaring fact, she dismisses the countless teacher testimonies that state how it is pretty much impossible to keep children in a school setting safely distanced from each other for hours on end.

Why has a statewide distance learning plan not been promptly and aggressively advertised to the public when this is clearly the safest way to address learning while still keeping the community at large safe? Was time since April not enough time to at least have a basic plan in place? Given the possibility of a COVID resurgence, and the relative safety of at home environments, per Dr. Park, this should be something that is publicly shared and encouraged to all parents. Face the glaring fact that we are in the midst of an UNPRECEDENTED global pandemic, and although schooling is important, human life is irreplaceable. Our current learning situation is not permanent. It is only until a vaccine can be developed and administered to the public. In the grand scheme of things, students will not fail at life if they miss out on traditional face-to-face learning temporarily. Distance learning can bridge this gap until the threat of Covid-19 has passed.

I will note that I have heard anecdotal evidence from school parents that some principals have been outright refusing to offer at-home distance learning options to those requesting it, in a DIRECT violation of lines 174 - 177 of the Board's own School Reopening Resolution that they adopted in June, as well as lines 173 - 175 of the DOE/HSTA re-opening memorandum agreement. This is the fault of the Superintendent not communicating options properly lower in the chain of command.

Teachers are not baby sitters, despite the desires of government officials desperate for the workforce to resume haphazardly. So much emphasis is made in the news regarding face masks, social distancing, the fining and closing of establishments that violate

Covid guidelines, yet children and teachers are being forced to congregate together for long periods of time in enclosed areas with no attempt at making that scenario a LAST RESORT. Making teachers choose between their safety and possibly their very lives and their desire to return to teaching students is a false choice. Don't let the department continue to change the discussion to this false conflict!

How are children being cared for year after year during the summer while parents go to work? Why is there such a sharp philosophical shift regarding who should "babysit" children once the school year starts? Teachers can teach without having to be face-to-face with students. Consider the REALISTIC consequences of forcing large numbers of students together: many common areas/objects (faucets, toilets, sinks, desks, doorknobs, toys, books, etc.) are touched by different students throughout the day. What about close contact during recess, actual classroom time, transitioning between classes, fights, PDA, etc? Is there a realistic way of controlling these occurrences during the long hours of school everyday of the school year? The answer is NO. You would need custodians solely dedicated to disinfecting surfaces.

If the DOE cares one iota about peoples' health and safety, schools should re-open GRADUALLY in phases. Opening schools all at once is another reckless move that will open the door for another Covid resurgence. Included in the phased re-opening should be MANDATORY face masks worn by students. If the Mayor and Governor mandate face masks in public, why are schools given a choice? The hypocrisy is ludicrous and frankly disgusting.

The community wants schools to open, but do it SAFELY. We want a specific PLAN to give to principals and teachers, as well as students' parents, and until that is delivered, we the community are asking to delay students' return to school buildings, and to allow for parents to take advantage of distance learning if they so feel inclined to keep their children safe. Please make the health and safety of Hawaii's

children, teachers and families a top priority until the threat of Covid is gone.

Please refer to the attached phase plan reopening suggestions.

Thank you for your time.



# 4 PHASE PLAN

## 2020-2021 REOPENING PROPOSAL

We are a grassroots group of parents, educators, and concerned citizens who believe the State of Hawaii school reopening plan has **SKIPPED TWO CRITICAL STEPS**. The following phased approach, following the advice of public health experts and scientists, will reduce community spread of COVID-19.

### PHASE 1: TRAINING

- Training for educators on the technology needed for online teaching
- Distribution of technology with training for parents and students
- Evaluate ventilation of indoor spaces and order needed supplies
- Training for substitute teachers
- Training for faculty and staff on the procedures pertaining to illness of staff and students

### PHASE 2: 100% ONLINE LEARNING

- 100% online teacher-led classes
- Training for school staff on sanitation, mask protocols, set-up of classroom and high traffic areas
- School traffic flow design to minimize person-to-person contact
- Classroom ventilation modifications put into place

### PHASE 3: HYBRID LEARNING MODEL

- Learning will take place in-person and online
- Student classes will be limited to no more than 12 students with recommended social distancing
- 100% mask requirement (unless valid medical reason)
- Cleaning schedule for classrooms, bathrooms, cafeterias, etc.
- Students will meet with the teachers, in person, at least once a week
- Note: Phase 3 is essentially the current state reopening plan

### PHASE 4: FULL RETURN TO CAMPUS

- Resume 100% in-person instruction with online option still available
- Campus learning will retain many lessons learned from previous phases

Benchmarks will be clearly defined metrics based on disease trends that will initiate transitions between phases of reopening. These benchmarks will be determined by a transparent, multi-stakeholder process to reach a broad consensus based on public health and scientific expertise.