



Testimony on School Reopening

Esther Kanehailua <ekanehailua@yahoo.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 1:33 PM

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

Aloha Board Members, I want to provide my perspective as it relates to Discussion Item A on the agenda: [Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication](#)

This past week while at schools, I had the opportunity to observe students navigate schools with safety procedures in place and staff coaching along the way. It was great to see the bright eyes, smiling behind a mask, and although short, I hope it provided closure for some of a school year that ended abruptly and hope of what school could be like for others. My school administrators went through great lengths working with their school staff to ensure a safe opening. Walking through protocols thinking of every person in the school community, tweaking and retooling. If this is a virus we must learn to live with then we have to educate and practice. Having staff on campus to engage students virtually/distance, builds confidence in the procedures and protocols providing feedback on refinements. Additionally, staff can be supported with the resources, admin and other support staff to develop their practice in this new medium. More importantly, we can give students what they deserve, our dedicated attention and responsiveness as a school staff to meet all of their needs. Needs that will be much greater requiring more of our undivided attention.

Mahalo for your support of our keiki.

Esther Kanehailua

Complex Area Superintendent

Hilo-Waiakea Complex



Fwd: Testimony

Janette Snelling <janette.snelling@k12.hi.us>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 1:36 PM

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

From: **Janette Snelling** <10008209@k12.hi.us>
Date: Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 12:22 PM
Subject: Testimony
To: <BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Name: Janette Snelling/Complex Area Superintendent/West Hawaii Complex Area

Meeting: General Business Meeting; August 20, 2020

Agenda Item: Telework

Position: Comment

My testimony today focuses on the dedication of our administrators, teachers, and staff who have worked tirelessly during this time of crisis for our state. I am very appreciative of your time to consider how we can provide quality learning for our students during this unprecedented time.

In the past few days, I have had the opportunity to see the reactions of staff and students as they returned to school on August 17th. Students were so thrilled to be back on campus and my conversations with principals and teachers have been overwhelmingly positive. School safety protocols were in place upon entrance to the school, on campus, and with mask wearing.

I am strongly advocating for all staff to report to campus to work including the times we are in fully distance learning for the following reasons:

1. Safety protocols are in place to create a safe working environment for our employees. Our administrators and support personnel have worked diligently to address campus safety.
2. The resources are readily available on campus. Equipment and access to technology is secure and available at all school sites. Internet bandwidth can support the needs for synchronous instruction and tech support can be immediate for teachers experiencing technical difficulties.
3. Instructional support can be efficiently provided. At its finest, we all know that teaching is not a solitary profession. Teachers need to be able to collaborate and support one another in teacher teams while practicing social distancing and principals need to be able to have access to their staff in order to effectively support them.
4. Our students deserve the best instruction we can provide even during a pandemic. In a time when "normal" is not possible for our students, as much normalcy and familiarity to their surroundings will go a long way to open access to quality instruction and learning for all students.

I applaud the efforts of our principals, teachers, and staff in West Hawaii and across the state to prepare for reopening. Their efforts have been stellar. Thank-you for your time and consideration.

Sincere Regards,

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Janette Snelling
Complex Area Superintendent
West Hawaii Complex Area

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Testimony for Item V

Leanna Agcaoili <leanna.agcaoili@gmail.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 1:37 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Chairwoman Payne and Hawaii State Board of Education,

My name is Leanna Agcaoili, and I am a third grade teacher at Mayor Joseph J. Fern Elementary School. I am submitting testimony for Item V on Thursday's agenda.

First of all, I believe it is imperative for all students across the state of Hawai'i to be provided 100% distance learning instruction, including special education. It should not be decided on a "case by case basis." I am fearful for the lives of our neighbor island and SPED educators. Their lives matter just as much as O'ahu general education teachers, and even though their COVID-19 case counts are significantly lower than O'ahu, they deserve to feel safe teaching and learning in their school environments as well. Even though distance learning has been a challenge for many, our healthy and safety should be of utmost concern to our employers.

Secondly, I would like to thank my school administration for being understanding as they address the needs and concerns of our faculty and staff. They care about the health and safety about our school community. With that said, I am frustrated that our DOH and HDOE are wanting for school to be held face-to-face in any capacity without providing enough guidance and triggers that we need to look for when our students arrive on campus. Even after watching all of my training videos (yes, the ones on YouTube), I do not feel ready nor prepared to teach and provide a safe learning community for my students. Could we ask DOH to inspect every school, every classroom, and every common/shared room, to see if it is up to par with meeting social distancing guidelines? Our concern is for the health and safety of our school community, and I would hope that our state departments can collaborate to ensure this concern is addressed before we reopen.

Lastly, I believe our contract should be honored by allowing telework as an option for our schools. My school is associated with the largest public housing cluster, and I learned from my families this week that there continues to be little to no assistance for these families. I am terrified that I am putting my family's lives in jeopardy by reporting to work, and am nervous to walk to the middle of campus to the school office. If cases continue to rise, I would like the option to telework to ease my fellow colleagues' and personal anxieties.

I would like to invite all of you, and the superintendent, to come to my school for an entire day, learn the entire day wearing face masks in a non-air-conditioned classroom, and keep track of classes being socially distant apart at all times.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Leanna Agcaoili



Testimony

Deborah Bond-Upson <deborah@learningbond.org>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 1:40 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

For the General Business Meeting

I am writing to comment on Agenda Item V, A report on implementation of reopening schools, specifically in regards to District virtual learning systems and approaches.

My name is Deborah Bond-Upson and I am writing from my knowledge as a leader of online learning/education technology non profit and for profit organization, summarizing some information others have asked me to provide. I am responding to confusion about virtual learning terms and to how systems do and can work to support teacher mediated enriched education. Whatever we do to improve our electronic systems supporting learning now for the pandemic, can and should support teachers, students, and families going forward. Please see my attached article and the 5 charts attached.

Mahalo,
Deborah Bond-Upson

Deborah Bond-Upson
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2 attachments



How Should We Learn.pdf

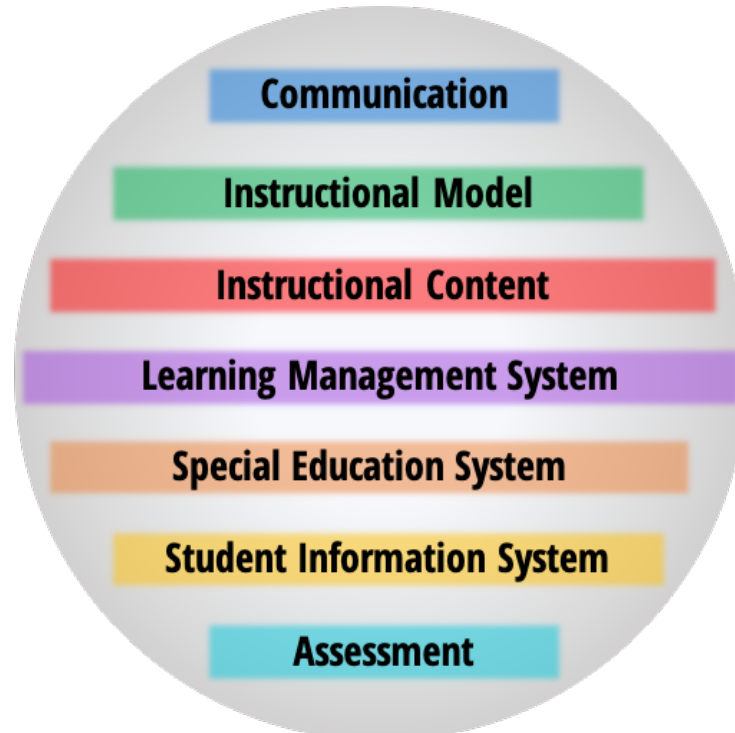
211K



Guide to Elements of Virtual _ Distance Learning Solutions.pdf

418K

How Should We Learn & Teach Now and What Tools Can Help Most?—Deborah Bond-Upson



See also:

- [TimeLine of Learning Technologies 1436-2020](#)
- [Compare School-based, Distance Learning, Blended Learning](#)
- [Learning Elements of Our Digital World](#)
- [The Complexity of Today's K-12 Learning Systems](#)
- [Simplifying and Integrating Learning Systems](#)

First, let's talk about the point of education and the capability of today's learning management systems to support that process.

Children enter our world loving to learn. It is our job to support that love of learning and to remove obstacles. Each child should have an education of equity and excellence. Each child needs to be supported, seen, heard, and valued. When they are seen by teachers, parents, mentors, and peers, they can see their own unique gifts. In this way they can develop their abilities and

contribute to the community. The ability to contribute brings happiness, satisfaction, and financial stability. All of this nurtures our community to flourish in peace.

We have not been doing so well in meeting those objectives. Frequent testing interrupts learning and brings many students anxiety and shame. Our very testing to ensure that they not be “left behind” can be an obstacle. We need common, advanced, effective, simple-to-use systems that let our teachers reach each child individually so the magic of learning and happiness can emerge.

Parents for Public Schools of Hawaii began 11 years ago, and I have served on the board since its founding, usually leading communications for the group. When we ask parents what they love about our schools they almost always smile and say “the teachers”. When we ask them what distresses them the most about our schools, the answer is usually accompanied by visible discomfort as they say “testing”. Parents often explain that their children are anxious during testing times, come home upset, and do not want to go to school. Some kids love tests, but the ones who do not love tests are often hurt and discouraged by them.

How can we help all of our students and ensure that school is a productive enjoyable place to be so that they continue to love learning?

Over the past two decades, many of us have worked to leverage technology, and its related partner, assessment, to increase engagement, effectiveness, personalization, and equity. It has been a tough and frustrating struggle. Overworked administrators have frequently balked at trying new approaches. Or, if they have chosen innovative systems or tools, often they have been unable to invest adequately in teacher professional development, planning time, bandwidth or devices needed to be successful.

So it is with mixed feelings that we, who have been carefully crafting tools, see this this pandemic-driven rush to virtual learning. Many districts are using old systems or not using systems at all, perhaps not knowing that there are better options. Other districts do not understand the importance of interoperability (systems working together) or integration (systems actually

married to deliver results.) In some districts, schools are left to decide whether to use learning management system at all or to pick their own. This creates inefficiency, wasted money, an inability to gather district-wide detailed learning data, and frustration by parents in dealing with multiple systems in different schools. While the schools and teachers should be seeking empowerment and freedom to localize content and instructional approach, energy and time are wasted when each school makes decisions on systems that should be district-wide.

We do not just need these systems because of the pandemic. Districts and schools would have benefitted from using learning management systems effectively for years. Effective implementation of integrated systems protects our student's time and success, our teacher's time and success, and delivers ease of information to our families. This work can save money, make teaching more enjoyable retaining more of our great experienced teachers. Now, in this pandemic, we realize we need virtual learning and that we need systems to manage and deliver that learning. We need these systems for this emergency, but we also need these systems for the pre-existing non-pandemic emergencies and the post-pandemic critical requirements of 21st century careers and families.

No business would let different departments choose different management systems when they have objectives that must be met. We have learning objectives for each child that must be met. Each child must be supported to realize their own unique gifts. We cannot waste time or funds in setting up rival management systems. Great freedom and creativity can be wielded if all accept the best state of the art interoperable systems now. Then we can innovate, individualize, and localize those systems.

So what are all these systems and tools that need to be coordinated? I will describe the main types with some examples below. I will note what the District/State of Hawai'i is using now, and what I think the district should consider.

Student Information Systems (SIS) — enable enrollment, finance, school buses, cafeterias, class scheduling, grades- and some deliver special

education IEPs and manage assessments, Community (family/teacher/student) Portal, etc. (Some of the leading student information systems are PowerSchool, Grade Link, Infinite Campus, Skyward, QuickSchools, Alma, and Focus)

— The Hawai'i DOE uses Infinite Campus which has many functionalities—some of which may not be fully used at this time.

— I think HI DOE could continue to use Infinite Campus, seeing if it can get more performance and value from it. But it may want to move to PowerSchool or another provider after the current emergencies.

Learning Management Systems (LMS) — class set up, instructional plans, lessons, grades, classroom and teacher to home communications, etc. (Examples are Canvas, Blackboard, Desire2Learn, Google Classroom, Edmodo, Atlas, Schoology)

— Some schools within the HI DOE have used Blackboard Learn (Bb) for professional development and some classroom use. So now, in response to the pandemic, the HI DOE is offering the Blackboard Learn LMS to schools who wish it. We understand from the DOE that this is an interim decision as a team with members from the Information and Instruction departments. Bb was founded to serve universities, later developing K12- versions. However, elementary schools do not use Bb and Bb is not seen as desirable for middle school students or even many high school students. It is regrettable that teachers will spend time learning the Bb system, when we hope they will soon move to a more appropriate LMS.

Meanwhile, many teachers have begun using Google Classroom for their classes even though they have to enter student information themselves. (I have just heard that the district is populating the Google Classrooms for the teachers, that they were going to integrate the classroom content into the current district SIS, Infinite Campus. Then I heard that plan has been changed and there will be no integration this year.) These rumors and changes are an example of the confusion many parents and teachers describe.

It is good that the DOE has acquired Gmail accounts for all students so that they can use Google Classroom (and other benefits.) As of this writing, Google Classroom is not a full LMS, however, Google has been continuously

expanding their education applications. Google Classroom is needed by the HI teachers now, since Bb does not provide the same easy student interface or support teacher elementary level lesson creation. In a few years, our Hawai'i schools might be able to manage learning through free Google applications, but we are not there yet.

Since many other apps/software need to be integrated with the LMS, using Schoology's LMS (which was bought in 2019 by the leading SIS provider, PowerSchool) makes sense. Schoology has easy to use standards-based learning tracking as well as grading, rubric support for project-based learning, and is more interoperable than other LMS's. It is IMS Global certified and LTI and QTI compliant. It is automatically integrated with Google Drive, YouTube, Ck12, Khan Academy and other useful apps. Should the district decide to move off Infinite Campus, it would be easy to use Schoology with its parent company SIS, PowerSchool. ***Perhaps the HI DOE should consider moving to Schoology or Canvas to avoid wasted transitional training on Blackboard Learn.***

Special Education Management Systems— manage, generate, track IEPs (Individual Education Plans) such as EdPlan, SpedTrak, Frontline, PowerSchool Special Programs, and eCSSS. The HI DOE uses the eCSSS system which was reviewed in the 2018 Special Education Task Force Report concluding that a replacement tool for eCSSS should be adopted. The PowerSchool "Unified Classrooms Special Programs" appears to be an easy to use manager for IEPs, 504, ELL, Gifted, RTI, and more all translated into over 60 languages. ***The HI DOE could consider the PowerSchool Special Programs manager application.***

Virtual Learning Tools — Synchronous video conferencing: (Webex, Zoom, GoToWebinar, MS Teams, Google Meet, etc.)

Currently, the HI DOE uses Webex. I do not know if teachers are finding it easy to use Webex. The BOE uses Webex without video for its meetings and the lack of video reduces the effectiveness of the meetings. Zoom has an expansion license that enables 1000 synchronous video users. If Webex has the same, it should be used. If not, Zoom should be considered. Zoom is easily integrated into Schoology. Adobe Connect is another highly scalable

video conferencing alternative. ***The HI DOE should have easy to use synchronous and asynchronous video conferencing for teacher, admin and BOE use.***

School Community Family Teacher Student Portal — Portals enable districts to reach teachers, students, and families with essential messages and to give dashboards to each user that gives them access to the appropriate student and learning information. Most SISs have portals and there are standalone portals. Infinite Campus offers a portal which is used by the HI DOE. However, from our PPS-Hawai'i survey, it seems few families use it. The HI DOE website does not clearly feature it. Each school has their own website. Families seem to get lost between the messages on the HI DOE website, their school website, emails, and texts. The HI DOE website site map shows no pages under "G" for Guardian, no information under "F" for Families, and under "P" for Parents, few resources show up and no referral to a Parent Portal is made.

Despite district website, newsletters, flyers, and video interviews, in addition to school websites, principal and teacher communications, the district does not seem to be succeeding in communicating effectively with families. ***I hope that HI DOE redesigns its communications strategy using the existing SIS Infinite Campus (or PowerSchool's or another provider's Unified Portal). One simplified portal could provide two way communication to all parties. School websites could be connected- but the portal should be the easiest, clearest, simplest link to each student's educational experience- for teachers, students and families.***

To summarize my current thinking on Hawai'i learning and education management systems:

Learning and education management applications have been developing quickly. Some SIS and LMS systems have been shuttered. It is appropriate to reevaluate existing systems given breakthrough new idea and solutions to old problems.

Guiding principles, systems should be:

- 1) Easy for teachers to use so that teaching time and flow is not interrupted and they are not frustrated learning codes or rules.
- 2) Engaging to students with a user interface they can relate to, delivering interactive, synchronous, asynchronous media and tracking learning in a way that is encouraging and motivational to them.
- 3) Effective solutions for special programs — SPED, RTI, Gifted, ELL — maximizing quality data and faculty attention to students – not record keeping.
- 4) “Interoperable”— meaning that systems can easily connect, sharing data through APIs, with other applications.
- 5) Inclusive of families, students and teachers— bringing easy, clear two way communication to all — linked to the instructional access and student progress details.

This summer, the HI DOE offered “Blackboard Learn” LMS to all schools- but made it optional. Blackboard Learn is widely known not to serve elementary or middle school students well. Investing teacher time on learning it now may be wasteful. We should rush to find the best LMS solution, preferably integrated with the SIS. Schoology appears to be a better LMS solution than Blackboard Learn or Google Classroom. We should develop an integrated SIS/LMS solution and train teachers to use it now. That will satisfy #1 and #2.

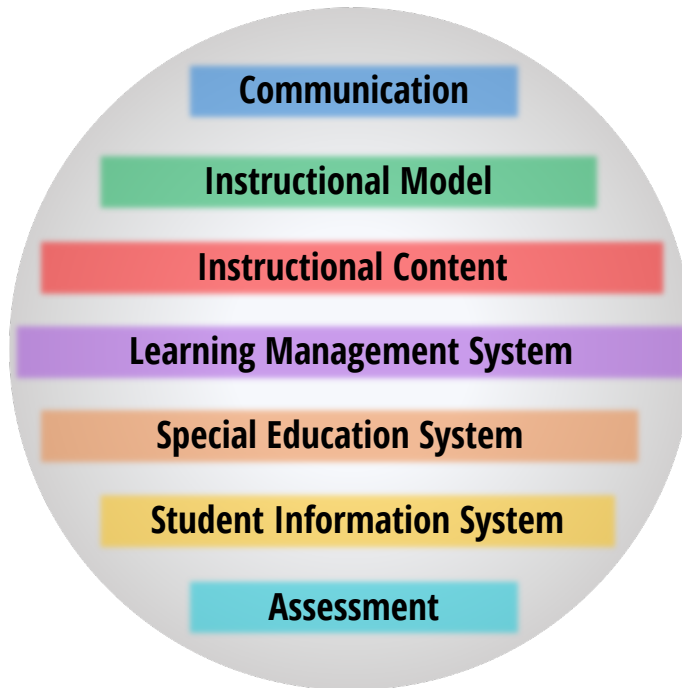
We should see if Infinite campus can provide solutions for SPED and if its portal, the HI DOE website, and communications strategies can be redesigned to better include two-way communication with families and students. Infinite Campus interoperability should be analyzed. If Infinite Campus cannot meet these #2, 3, 4 needs, HI DOE should consider moving to PowerSchool or another SIS.

LEARNING TECHNOLOGY TIMELINE

1436 - Johannes Gutenberg built the first printing press, opening knowledge beyond clerics.
1455 - The Bible is published.
1664 - Pierre Petit develops the “magic lantern”, precursor to slide projector, used in education into 1900’s.
1690 - The New England Primer used to teach reading, 3m copies printed.
1728 - Shorthand correspondence courses were offered by a Boston
1806 - Lancastrian system of master teachers, monitors, and sand boxes--eventually replaced with slates.
1841 - Horace Mann champions chalk boards in schools.
1888 - Thomas Edison made 341 films with a “kinetoscope” proclaiming the end of books in education.
1890 - Typewriters begin to be used in secondary schools.
1918 - Chicago public schools used 8,000 magic lantern slides.
1923 - Radio is used for instruction in schools starting at the Haaren High School in NYC.
1931 - Twenty five states had media or film departments
1938 - My mother wrote and performed radio plays to teach home economics for the Dept. of Agriculture.
1930-1957 - Radio, film, typewriters gains fail to cause growth due to cost and lack of teacher training.
1957 - The launch of Sputnik sparked a strong flow of investment in instructional television.
1959 - PLATO computer based learning software is developed at the University of Illinois.
1960 - Development of the overhead projector using clear film.
1967 - Stanford's Patrick Suppes learning research leads to Computer Curriculum Corporation (CCC)
1969 - Taught animated filmmaking in a Philadelphia public high school while in college.
1971 - Ivan Illich develops the concept of "learning webs" as a model for people to network learning.
1972 - Seymour Papert develops Microworlds, children become mathematicians via programming.
1980 - Video conferencing systems begin to be developed.
1982 - SIS- First student information systems developed, NCS- SASI, Eagle, Aeries, etc.
1983 - Apple computer introduces lie into schools achieving greater implementation due to ease of use.
1984 - First accredited distance learning University, National Technology University
1984 - Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT) shortens testing, individualizing learning in over 30,000 schools.
1987 - TERC innovated with elementary Inquiry-Based Learning networks, probeware and data collection.
1987 - Interactive whiteboards support computer and video integration into classroom instruction.
1988 - 3 million computers in schools are used by students for an average of 30 minutes each per day.
1989 - ChannelOne News satellite school network launched bringing TVs and connectivity to schools.
1990 - LMS- First learning management systems developed, EKKO in Norway, Softarc in the U.S.
1995 - Project- Based Learning initiatives begun by Autodesk.
1994 - Open educational resources (OER) freely accessible openly licensed text and media begin.
1999 - GalaxyClassroom STEM teacher-led, videos, hand-so-kits, online labs, and online communications.
1999 - IMS Global supports integrate based on LTI (Learning Technologies Interoperability) standards.
2002 - Moodle free open-source LMS launches, now used by 220k in 241 countries
2002 - AssessOnline - Georgia statewide adaptive assessment of teacher technology integrations skills
2009 - Common Core Standards launch.
2011 - PBS Learning Media, NBC Learn, AwesomeStories.org and other OER and freemium media launch.
2011 - 160,000 students enroll in the first MOOC (Massively Open Online Course) at Stanford.
2011 - Chromebooks offer cloud-based inexpensive option for schools and families.
2014 - Google Classroom launches delivering classroom, teacher, managed lessons.
2015 - Smarter Balanced and PARCC assessment state consortia launch requiring more school computers.
2019 - Leading web-based SIS, Powerschool, acquires and integrates Schoology, rapidly growing LMS.
2020 - COVID-19 spurs the spread of online systems causes increase in virtual learning, shortage of chromebooks, likely to cause greater lasting integration into learning.

SITE BASED LEARNING	DISTANCE LEARNING	BLENDED LEARNING
Onsite - delivered in a school or other facility.	Online - video, book, independent study Instruction.	Mixed Online and Onsite Instruction.
Instructor-Led	Instructor-Mediated or Self-Contained	Instructor-Led
Synchronous live in-person instruction and asynchronous Instruction (homework, labs, study halls, independent study) and	Asynchronous lessons and resource work and synchronous instruction and group work live via video or audio.	Synchronous live in-person instruction and group work via video, and asynchronous lessons and resource work.
Digital media lessons and resources including computer assisted learning in labs, at home, or in class-- video, audio, text, coding, typing, AI.	Digital media lessons and resources including computer assisted learning at home- video, audio, text, coding, typing, AI.	Digital media lessons and resources including computer assisted learning in labs, at home, or in class-- video, audio, text, coding, typing, AI.
Games – in class live games, CB video games. Interaction tools e.g. Top Hat, Kajeet, SeeSaw.	Gamification, CB video games. Interaction tools e.g. Top Hat, Kajeet, SeeSaw.	Gamification, CB video games. Interaction tools e.g. Top Hat, Kajeet, SeeSaw.
Teacher contact in person	No teacher contact if self contained. If mediated, teacher contact through email, LMS, or video.	Teacher contact in person, through email, LMS, or video.
Onsite Assessment: teacher/district/or publisher created tests-- linear computer based, adaptive, essay, authentic portfolio.	Online Assessment: teacher/district/or publisher created tests-- linear computer based, adaptive, essay, authentic portfolio.	Online and Onsite Assessment: teacher/district/or publisher created tests-- linear computer based, adaptive, essay, authentic portfolio.

Learning Elements in our Digital World



Communication – multiple one way channels– district and school websites, newsletters, emails, texts, phone, social media delivering policy, processes and changes are potentially confusing and obscure to teachers, students, and families.

Instructional Model – Face to Face, Virtual, or Blended learning-- Synchronous, Asynchronous, define the chosen models.

Instructional Content – District-defined, teacher- created content, external core and supplemental content offer a wide range of opportunities for diverse student needs.

Learning Management System - A District level learning management system enables efficient delivery of learning and assessment, leverages content, delivers analysis. Classroom learning management offers teacher control but may not enable aggregated data or leveraging of resources.

Special Education System – Development of IEPs and learning tools to support special needs are supported in these systems.

Student Information System – District class scheduling, student demographics, cafeteria, bus, technology resource management are provided by the SIS.

Assessment Management – teacher-created, district, and external formative, interim, and summative tests may be managed in a separate system or a module of the SIS or LMS.

Digital Learning Solution Elements

Communication

Face-to Face

Email

Phone

Text

Online

Press

Students in Class

Student Gmail

School Calls

School Texts

Portal

Online-Print Newspapers

Parent Teacher Conferences

School Emails

District Calls

District Texts

District Website

TV and Radio

Groups- SCC, PTSA

District Emails

Teacher Calls

Teacher Texts

School Website

School Events

Teacher Emails

'Ohana Tech Help

Social Media

District, School Facebook pages + videos

Instructional Model

Onsite
face to face

Hybrid/Blended
online + onsite

Virtual
Instructor-led

Virtual
Self-contained

Remote

A/B two day rotation

Synchronous
Video or Audio

Asynchronous

Packets

Hybrid (Face-to-Face/
Blended Rotation)

Mixed Synch + Asynchronous

Correspondence

Asynchronous

Learning Management System

Classroom-Based
Teacher-led

District/School/Class
Enterprise

Lessons, Assignments, Resources

Lessons, Assignments, Resources

Rough Attendance Solution

Attendance

Grading

Grading

Assessment Management

Data Management

Assessment

Teacher-Created Tests

Interim

Survey

Summative

Formative

Authentic

Adaptive

Special Education System

Standalone IEP Management

LMS or SIS Module

Instructional Content

External Content

DOE Curriculum
Teacher- Created

**Curriculum + LMS +
Grades**

Face to Face

Curriculum

**Teacher-led
Synchronous**

Learning Media

Instructional Tools

Learning Games

Student Information System

Demographics

Special Education

Attendance

Scheduling

Messaging

Cafeteria

Buses

Family/Student Portal

SOLUTIONS THE HAWAII' DOE CURRENTLY PROVIDES TO SOME OR ALL SCHOOLS/CLASSROOMS/STUDENTS

Smarter Balanced Assessment

Florida Virtual Learning

Acellus

Webex

Google Classroom LMS

Panorama Ed

MAP Assessment?

Jupiter Grades

Infinite Campus SIS (Portal?)

Blackboard LMS

Suggested Modernization, Integration, Simplification

Instructional Model– Use a Rich Mix of Instructional Modes and Resources

Blended – Onsite and Online Teacher-Led Instruction

Synchronous – Onsite, Video and Audio Instructor-Led Instruction

Asynchronous – Packets, Video Instruction, Online Resources, Independent Study,

Instructional Content

HI DOE Curriculum – Teacher Created Lessons

External Supplemental Resources- media, tools, games.

External Full Solutions including instruction – eg. Acellus.

External Content delivered with district teachers and learning management system.

Communication

Set up an Integrated Portal to Connect our Community
with Easy Updated Access to Information, Instruction, and Progress.

Face-to Face – continue all possible onsite instruction, parent, and committee meetings.

Email, Phone, Text – deliver information via all channels- pointing to the portal for

Social Media – connect to the portal for video conferences, information, feedback.

Integrated Management Systems

District/School/Class learning management system supporting classroom based management
(One K-12 designed system district-wide system– integrated classroom support)

Full Student Information System integrated with Learning Management System
Including Special Education Management.

Integrate NWEA MAP or iReady Interim Adaptive Assessment System
with LMS and in place of Summative and progress Assessments



Options for school

Patricia Aholelei <plaholelei@hotmail.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 1:48 PM

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

I'm deeply disappointed in the current choices available to students. The Acellus program being offered instead of in school learning has been void of facts and critical thinking. Aside from being dull, dry and boring, the online school program is old and outdated. While watching with my daughter, I was appalled at the lack of true principles being taught and the lack of proper communication between teacher and student. I also witnessed Math lessons that are incorrect in their modeling with wrong answers on the part of the instructor. They are so outdated, they don't have the means to understand new math techniques and shortcuts, so the answers are deemed incorrect. When put up against Math Help Apps they are 100% correct.

I'm deeply concerned as well with the founder and means by which he obtained his credentials to produce such a widely used program. How was this vetted and who made the decision to implement this in our schools? I have an AP student struggling with this newfound way of school, whose craving a classroom environment and the social aspects of live teaching with the common student teacher discussion. Please, PLEASE review this travesty of an online school academy and make a necessary change for the betterment of Hawaii's children.

Regards
Tricia Aholelei

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony--Item V. -- RE: Health of Individuals in School Settings During Pandemic

Susan Owens-Delucchi <owensdelucchisusan0@gmail.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 1:50 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear School Board Members:

If your time is limited, I write to urge you to do these three items.

- 1) Make sure that students are taught with distance learning;
- 2) Develop a metric (using scientific data such as the *Johns Hopkins Corona Tracker site) for when it's safe to open up schools or close them down again which uses the current science data (which can change quickly);
- 3) Teachers should be able to choose to work from home or their classrooms during this entire time.

If you have time, you can read on for details explaining my concerns.

I have been a DOE elementary teacher for the last 20 years. I am on extended sick leave this semester, but I write out of concern for my former students and colleagues who are in class for four hours today (on the third day with 1/3 of their students) as I write this note. The administration and teachers and support staff have diligently followed all the guidelines for opening school these three days. However, since they developed their plan, new research came out that 16 feet is safer than 6. {Personally, I will probably retire due to still being high risk after my current illness resolves. Also, I live in the community where I teach and where my own son attended Gr. K-5 years ago.} On the weekend of Aug. 1-2, two different households in my neighborhood had large parties that created crowd noise I could hear rumbling from inside my house. These weren't parties of 10 people. So I wonder about others in our extended neighborhood as well that have created the possibility for exposure. And, now groups of students have been in class at my school from Mon. to Wed. this week (w/ 1/3 of each class attending one day only).

I remain concerned for my immediate and our larger community with the rise of positive tests since they broke above 5%. I have watched Hawai'i's positivity rates soar since your last two meetings--per the Johns Hopkins Corona Tracker site (*see link below). This is a marker for community spread which indicates that we should be severely limiting contact with others. While our total cases have been low, our positivity rate has increased compared to other states. The graphs give you a quick way to compare all 50 states. I know that businesses and employees out of work are hurting, but if we overload the hospitals and those workers as well as EMT workers get sick we'll reach a whole new level of concern. If our hospitals fill up, sending patients to other hospitals is a long plane flight to the mainland. When their hospitals filled up, Arizona sent patients to New Mexico, Nevada, and California. One of my doctors had to purchase PPE from Korea. When we first shut down, I knew of three individuals who still travelled here from the mainland. My own mother's doctor who was not available to her when she was hospitalized in Reno, Nevada, twice in a week! When she had a third health issue, her doctor was still not available due to having been quarantined from travelling here. So I had to call my own doctor so that I could advise her.

While I was relieved to hear the superintendent announce a 4 week closure of in person teaching to shift to online, I was very alarmed that she dictated that teachers provide in person coaching for the online programs that would be offered during the shut down. I believe her intent to make sure that students were prepared for distance learning was good. Yet, how can in person coaching of students by their teachers be justified when the positivity rates remained above 5%? She should be making these decisions with informed medical professionals using scientific metrics...not on her own. This is a heated issue that even experts don't agree upon. Yet I know of a superintendent on the mainland who didn't open schools simply because the teachers were too afraid with all the uncertainty. In Hawai'i, we are in a unique position because the superintendent runs the entire school system, but she needs support to make informed decisions that are agreed upon using current scientific data and best practices. There are other districts on the mainland that have come up with metrics for how to know when it's safer to do in person teaching as well as when and/or how to shut it down. I have not heard of any such plan by our leaders. Nor have I heard of the intention to make one. The orders that were announced by Mayor Carlisle today seem minimal. I heard that Lt. Gov. Josh Green called Dr. Fauci and will publicize an interview next week. I encourage all of you as well as our government leaders to get their questions answered so that a plan for our State and the schools can be developed that is informed by our best scientific data.

I know that we live in a contentious time with all of us facing so many issues. Personally, I face serious health issues with concerns as I receive treatment every 8 weeks at Queens where many of their workers have tested positive. I can no longer count on one hand the number of Covid positive cases in my friend and family network on the mainland. Two of them had ICU extended hospitalizations and barely survived. A third is in a nursing home under hospice care and became positive. So I have heard what their caregivers are living through and I can only imagine how lonely they are

when they can't have visitors. I DON'T WANT THAT TO HAPPEN IN THESE ISLANDS! We have to try and work together so that all feel safe and supported which is so hard during these contentious times.

So, I urge you to do the following during this difficult time:

- 1) Make sure that students are taught with distance learning;
- 2) Develop a metric (using scientific data such as the *Johns Hopkins Corona Tracker site) for when it's safe to open up schools or close them down again which uses the current science data (which can change quickly);
- 3) Teachers should be able to choose to work from home or their classrooms during this entire time.

I would hope that we can work together so that all parties feel supported and that we build unity during these trying times so that our children are educated in the best possible way. Thank you very much for listening to our concerns to serve our children.

Sincerely,

Susan Owens-Delucchi
Gr. 2 Teacher

*Johns Hopkins Corona Virus Tracker by State
<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/tracker/overview>



Testimony for BOE meeting 8/20/20

ahuntemer@aol.com <ahuntemer@aol.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 1:56 PM

Reply-To: ahuntemer@aol.com

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

Aloha Board Members,

I am a special education teacher with 25 years experience in education. 100% distance learning for all students across the state, including those in special education, is the only sane option for us, at least for the first quarter.

Special Education - Remote vs In-Person, Chaos and Risk

As a special education teacher I am being required to teach some students face to face as of August 17th and this situation is set to continue for the duration of "distance learning". Because of the lack of clarity/ guidance from the DOE schools are all implementing different plans to offer and provide services. Our school offered face to face learning for all special education students for the duration of their IEP minutes. This would seem, on the face of it, quite a reasonable proposition however no consideration was given to whether the students could or could not productively learn in a Distance learning environment with support from our special education department. So now we have some students coming face to face who could learn online. I love having quality time with my students but I do not appreciate being put at risk for contracting COVID when we could easily be doing teaching and learning - from a distance.

Option to Telework

Options to work remotely make sense. Commute times and expenses are eliminated. I work faster and am more focused and relaxed at home. The DOE must honor HSTA's contract by allowing teachers the option to work from home (telework) for as long as distance learning remains in effect..

No Metrics Yet

DOH and DOE must provide clear metrics on when school campuses are safe for students' return. Many states and cities have specific triggers already in place for when schools should be open or closed based on COVID-10 cases, but Hawaii does not.

Thank you,
Angela Huntemer MEd
Special Educator
Windward District

Late Testimony

August 20, 2020



Aloha Chair Payne and Members of the Board of Education,

This is testimony for the BOE Meeting discussion Item V. A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.

We need ALL HANDS ON DECK to engage and support our young people. Community partners that provide youth development opportunities can and must be part of a new collaboration that includes youth, parents/families, and community members in support of schools. Through collaboration, a new vision is possible for this partnership to implement unique and innovative approaches to the unprecedented crisis presented by COVID-19, and in doing so, make lasting changes that will rebuild learning to accelerate success for students with particular emphasis on making educational opportunities more equitable.

Afterschool programs are eager to be a resource to schools and teachers to help supplement the learning process and provide a safe environment for kids in remote learning hubs. To do so, we ask the following:

- Encourage principals and complex areas superintendents to work together with **afterschool programs** to support students during the distance learning days, in particular students whose parents are working, whose parents are English learners, and students who don't have enough resources at home.
 - Afterschool are critical for helping students catch up and keep up by:
 - Providing in-person support for students.
 - Connecting with students at home to help with online assignments, homework and tutoring for trouble areas.
 - Coordinating with teachers to address specific areas of learning loss and to help students who are struggling.
 - Afterschool can keep students safe, engaged and learning by providing a safe place for students to go while parents are working, help with remote school requirements, and opportunities to engage in enriching activities that give them a chance to lead, explore and create without stress.
 - Afterschool can provide social and emotional supports that students need to emerge from this crisis strong, resilient and hopeful by:
 - Identifying community resources and partners who specialize in trauma-informed care.
 - Developing caseloads of students so staff can conduct informal check-ins.
 - Developing online learning modules and activities.
 - Afterschool can help families overcome technology challenges and ensure students have access to learning platforms by:

- Providing internet connectivity and a place where students can focus on their remote school requirements.
 - Connecting with families to help ensure they can access remote learning.
 - Providing support to parents to help them track and support students' online school assignments and homework.
 - Providing remote learning at-home tips and guidance.
- Continue **inviting afterschool programs to schools' planning discussions**. The most successful school reopening plans are developed jointly by school leaders, afterschool programs, community-based organizations, parents and teachers, so that together we can ensure our children are learning, safe, engaged, and building academic, social, and emotional skills during the hours their parents are at work.
- Allow afterschool programs to **use school facilities** to provide enrichment hubs for our most needed student population.
- Work together to provide **flexible funding** for schools to partner with afterschool programs to provide a safe learning environment for students. Below are some of the federal dollars that can be used to support a redesigned learning day that includes supports that extend beyond the classroom:
 - CARES Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER Fund)
 - CARES Act Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund
 - Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) for school-age care
 - Nita Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Center funds
 - Perkins - Career and Technical Education (CTE) funding
 - ESSA Title I and Title IV Part A funds
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act youth employment funding
 - Corporation for National and Community Service AmeriCorps and VISTA
- Help students access meals during the distance learning days, allowing students to:
 - Pick up grab-and-go meals from a school that they are not enrolled at (this is especially important for families that have children enrolled at multiple schools, as well as for students who are enrolled at schools far from their homes, in particular in rural areas).
 - Allow students to pick up more than one meal at a time (this would reduce the number of trips that students would have to make to pick up meals, also in particular in rural areas).

Mahalo,

Paula Adams, Executive Director
 Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance
www.hawaiiafterschoolalliance.org



TESTIMONY

Nellwyne Young <nellwyneyoung@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 2:11 PM

I am testifying on item V. **A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.**

I am strongly asking you to please ensure 100% distance learning for all students for the State of Hawaii, to include those in special education until at least the first quarter.

Before we are asked to be back fully on campus I ask that the DOH and HIDOE provide CLEAR metrics on when school campuses are safe to return.

Finally, please guarantee that the HIDOE HONORS HSTA's contract by allowing teachers to work from home (telework) for as long as distance learning remains in effect.

YOUR teachers are working really hard. This has not been an easy end or start of the school year and I am asking that you work to ensure a SAFE working environment for ALL educators and support staff until this pandemic is over. It is not easy for us to have to come to campus knowing that we are in a hot zone. Nor does it seem fair or equitable to leave it up to our Principal to allow for telework. It is disheartening to hear that some colleagues are approved, but others in similar situations are not. What do you think this will do to the morale of our educational community? I frankly do not feel safe coming to school. I have two underlying conditions and live with my elderly parents.

I am ASKING you to do right by your teachers.

Sincerely,

Nellwyne Young
Counselor
James Campbell High School



Telework From Home

Kristen Kimura <akikohoku@hotmail.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 2:16 PM

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

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Kristen Kimura and I am a 7th grade teacher at Washington Middle School as well as a mother to a 1st grader at University Laboratory School.

I am writing to request that teachers be allowed to telework from the safety of their homes. Since we are teaching using synchronous learning, all teachers will be able to be accounted for and held to teaching their students to the best of their ability online. Both administrators and parents will have access to everything that is happening in the virtual classroom.

The rise in COVID cases have shown many clusters that were attributed to the workplace despite social distancing and mask wearing. There are common areas in the workplace that cannot be avoided and teachers will cross paths. There are also a few staff members that do not adhere to the CDC guidelines and could potentially spread the virus if they are carriers.

Mayor Caldwell has stated that if we can work from home then we should be working from home. I don't understand why schools and teachers are not considered a part of this guideline.

The teachers' contract also states that if a campus is considered unsafe for students, then teachers should not be forced to be there. There have already been multiple instances of teachers contracting the virus and possibly bringing it to the campus.

Please advocate for teachers to be allowed to work from home.

Kristen Kimura



Fwd: Testimony on item V

Francine Silva <pigfishing1951@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 2:20 PM

Testimony on item V

I have been a special education teacher for 19 years, and have taught everything from preschool to twelfth grade.

Working in a fully-self-contained classroom with the most vulnerable children can be satisfying, but during this break in instruction I miss my students. If not for concerns about their and my own health from the effects of covid-19, I would gladly greet them at our classroom door.

I asked to do teleworking so as to be safe due to concerns that my physician voiced, and was told by admin that is not an option. Luckily, another sped teacher offered to switch grade levels with me so that I could do distance learning in another grade level.

Now, she is vulnerable, the setting in a fully self-contained classroom is not conducive to social distancing; a non-verbal five year old that is not potty trained and children on the autism spectrum can not be taught without a hands on approach. Wearing masks, practicing distancing, and proper hygiene cannot be done in a group setting.

Sadly, I admit that I do have concerns for my own health. I am 61 years old, have asthma and rely on daily use of an inhaler, and that is on good days. In the past I have acquired bronchitis at least once per school year. My doctor has advised that due to my increased risk of infection, I should not be working with a population of students who are not cognizant of the dangers of germs and the spreading of the virus. As such, I am asking that face to face instruction be put off until the threat has lessened or a cure is discovered.

I am not a healthcare worker, and even if I was, healthcare workers do not spend 6 hours a day in a single setting with multiple patients.

I want to work with my students and will do everything within my power to use technology to reach them safely.

Sincerely,

Francine Silva



Hawai'i
Children's Action Network Speaks!
Building a unified voice for Hawai'i's children

Late Testimony

To: Catherine Payne, Chair
Brian De Lima, Vice Chair
Board of Education

Re: BOE General Business Meeting
Agenda Item V- Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020
1:30 PM, 8/20/2020

Chair Payne, Vice Chair De Lima, and committee members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, we write with comments on Agenda Item V- Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020

There are two specific areas that still need to be addressed; care for children on distance learning days and food access.

Care for Children During Distance Learning Days

Distance learning has been adopted for the first four weeks of school and will continue in some form for the remainder of the school year. While distance learning is considered the safer option to prevent the community spread of the coronavirus, it will put some students in harms way. The majority of our students come from a working household, where all available parents are working. What are the working parents to do when their child is scheduled to be home? At a time when families are facing unprecedented income and employment loss, the thought of a parent having to reduce their working hours or quit their job to care for their child on schools days is unfathomable. The pandemic has not changed Hawaii's high cost of living. We encourage the Department of Education to become **fully engaged** in helping coordinate for children on distance learning days. There are community groups, like YMCA Honolulu, who are trying to provide safe and nurturing programming for all children, regardless of ability to pay. We must move forward with a coordinated effort to ensure no child falls through the cracks.

Food Access

On a typical school day, nearly 65,000 students in our state rely on free or reduced-price school breakfast and lunch. For many, these are the only nutritious meals that they eat regularly. For their families, these meals help relieve financial stress by reducing their food budgets. Since March, families with children in Hawaii increasing report food insecurity. That is why we urge you and the DOE to do all you can to help students access these meals. Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs (HCNP) has applied for and received waivers to give schools the flexibility to get meals to students as efficiently as possible. We recommend:

- 1) **Allowing students to pick up grab-and-go meals from a school that they are not enrolled at.** This is especially important for families that have children enrolled at multiple schools, as well as for students who are enrolled at schools far from their homes.
- 2) **Allowing students to pick up more than one meal at a time.** This would reduce the number of trips that students would have to make to pick up meals. Over the summer, School Food Services Branch successfully piloted [Emergency Meals to You](#) to provide shelf-stable meals to students in rural areas of

our state, so they have experience in providing meals that do not have to be consumed soon after receipt.

3) **When students move to alternate-day schedules, send students home with multiple shelf-stable meals for their distance-learning days.** This not only would make it much easier for students and their families, but it would also enable schools to better maintain social distancing on their campuses and reduce the amount of work in the cafeteria. Here are the key USDA waivers that will allow the above model practices to be implemented. You can find a list of them on [HCNP's website](#), with details in their spreadsheet titled "[HCNP Waivers SY 2020-21](#)."

- **#1 Non-Congregate Feeding:** This waiver allows SFAs to provide meals in a non-congregate setting to meet social distancing and reduce exposure of the participants. In addition, consuming meals on site has been waived.
- **#2 Meal time waiver:** This waiver allows school districts to serve more than one meal at a time thus limiting people to people contact. This allows schools the ability to distribute more than 2 meals a day. It allows schools the ability to handle staff shortages by limiting the number of pick up days in a week.
- **#21 Offer vs Serve Flexibility for High Schools:** This waiver allows the schools to prepack meals and not allow the students at the HS level a choice of what they can take to make a reimbursable meal. OVS is required at the HS level, so this was needed for the "Grab and Go" and "Multiple Meal" scenarios which could happen when B2S occurs.

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire
Director, Public Policy and Research

Late Testimony

My co teacher came into our classroom today and found out there her boyfriend has a fever, and other COVID symptoms. Her boyfriend went to get tested. My co teacher reached out to our grade level VP to find out what she should do since she has possibly been exposed. It took more than a half hour for the VP to get back to her to tell her she needed to home and telework until the test results come in. She was also told not to tell any other teachers that she was possibly exposed. I work in the same classroom as her, she lives with another teacher, she has been in a fourth grade classroom working with another Sped teacher (who happens to be my roommate). I asked if myself, my roommate, my roommate's co teacher, and my co teacher's roommate should all go home as well to operate in an abundance of caution. It took nearly an hour to hear back from my admin. They said that they contacted the public health nurse for West Hawaii, who is also working as a contract tracers. They said that she said that because my co teacher does not have symptoms that they do not worry about the people she came in contact with unless her boyfriend were to test positive. I was also told by the admin to not tell anyone else that my co teacher was possibly exposed because we don't want to violate HIPPA. We are currently in a Webex staff meeting and nothing was said that a possible exposure happened with our school. They simply reminded us to make sure we are socially distancing and wearing masks.

This week so far we have had seven families come into our classrooms. The students came in with their parents, many came with siblings. We have 5 more families scheduled to come into our classroom tomorrow. Yes my co teacher is teleworking but if I have been exposed then I will possibly expose five more families. My roommate will possibly be exposing more families. My co teacher's roommate will also possibly expose kinder families.

Why are we not operating in an abundance of caution. Why do we wait and possibly expose hundreds more people. This is unacceptable.



Allow Us To Work From Home

Philip Eugenio <philip.eugenio@k12.hi.us>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 2:31 PM

Sir/Madam,

I am a teacher at Washington Middle School in Honolulu. I drive from the Westside everyday for 3 years and I have no qualms about it until this pandemic. With our current rate of infection, I am so worried to bring home the virus which will impact my partner who has a weak immunity not to mention my personal health. I am 50 and I am taking medication for cholesterol and anxiety. Today we started working at home and it went well. Please allow us to continue working from home for our safety and peace of mind.

Mahalo,

Philip R Eugenio
Washington Middle School

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Allow Remote Working Option

Rebecca Arlander <rebecca.arlander@k12.hi.us>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 2:36 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha BOE Members,

I am writing asking you to please allow teachers to work remotely.

Yesterday in a joint press conference held by Governor Ige and Mayor Caldwell, Caldwell stated, "If you can work from home, we want you to work from home" and repeated "If you can work from home, we want you to work from home". Teachers can work from home and some have even been allowed to prove it. There is no logical reason to exempt teachers from this, especially at this time, at the height of the pandemic here in Hawaii.

Teachers are coming to school with all different types of health concerns personally and related to their loved ones. There have already been positive COVID cases at multiple DOE campuses. Please show compassion to this population who gives so much to their students but should not be asked to sacrifice their health or emotional wellbeing during this crisis.

There is no reason to mandate that teachers work in their classrooms while students learn remotely. It really feels that we don't have your confidence to do our jobs and honestly that just feels insulting at this point. Please, treat us like the professionals we are and with the humanity that we deserve. Give teachers the option to work remotely while students are learning remotely.

Mahalo,
Rebecca Arlander
President George Washington Middle School

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Testimony on Item V

Neal Takamoto <neal.takamoto@k12.hi.us>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 2:36 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony on ItemV

A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.

To the Board of Education,

My name is Neal Takamoto and I'm a teacher at Washington Middle School.

I'm writing this testimony pertaining to item V, in support for teachers working from home due to the unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 virus. Even though our classrooms may be safe environments, there are still many areas of school that we may have to access and share which could become potentially unsafe. That is why I'm urging you to follow Mayor Caldwell's advice, "If you can work from home, we want you to work from home." This action will demonstrate that you care for the safety of your workers in the educational system. Thank you.

Neal Takamoto

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"If you can work from home, we want you to work from home." - Mayor Caldwell

Diana Wan <diana.wan@k12.hi.us>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 2:39 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha, BOE,

The mayor addressed the City of Honolulu yesterday: "If you can work from home, we want you to work from home." Today, our school had our first day of virtual meetings with students. We had a successful day given teacher feedback and showed that we can work from home and make working from home work!

Previously, Governor Ige urged employers to be flexible with parents and allow them to telework due to childcare needs. Teachers are parents. The DOE is an employer. The DOE needs to align with the plea of Governor Ige to be in service of all efforts to make this situation work for working parents.

Finally, forcing teachers to go on campus when it is not safe for students to be on campus is a violation of teachers' contract. The state and the DOE have agreed to go full distance learning for safety reasons. The issue of safety applies to anyone on campus as there are a multitude of ways in which people on campus interact face to face and share spaces. Unfortunately, not everyone on campus abides by mask-wearing policies and that jeopardizes the safety of all those who are in proximity. The lack of mask-wearing is seen in our community and in our schools; schools are no exception. Let us abide by Governor Ige's and Mayor Caldwell's restrictions and urgings as we are all working to control the currently uncontrolled spread of COVID-19 in our city, island, and state.

Thank you for your continued care and listening to the needs of the community,
Ms. Diana Wan

--

Diana Wan, M. Ed.
Dance and Drama Teacher | Washington Middle School
[1633 South King Street](#)
[Honolulu, Hawaii 96826](#)
Phone: (808) 973-0177

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work from home

Constance Wickware <constance.wickware@k12.hi.us>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 2:46 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Personally, I prefer working from my classroom, but many teachers are perfectly able to effectively work at home, and why shouldn't they? It's REMOTE learning right now. Working from home minimizes the chance that someone will contract Corona Virus. What difference does it make to the DOE? All teachers communicate, as much as possible, remotely. It's not logical to force all teachers to physically come on campus. What is the justification?....surely not being more safe.

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Testimony

Betsey Strauss <betseyann05@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 2:58 PM

Aloha, my name is Betsey Strauss and I'm a concerned parent of two children attending a Hawaii DOE elementary school. I've been hearing and have witnessed accounts of inappropriate responses to questions presented to children as part of the Acellus curriculum and concerning the founder of the Acellus Academy, Roger Billings.

Roger Billings has questionable education credentials. Billings goes by the title of 'Dr.' but this is a title he has awarded himself based on a degree that he created (a 'doctor of research' degree) at an institution that he founded called the International Academy of Science, which is not accredited. It also seems that Billings has awarded a number of these 'doctorates' to others designing the Acellus curriculum. While Acellus is accredited, the International Academy of Science is not. This raises serious questions about whether or not there are any primaries involved in the designing of the Acellus curriculum who have an actual background in education. We would never hire a public school teacher who had invented their credentials, so it is unclear how Billings' credentials as well as his associates' were vetted and approved by the DOE.

Friends of mine from my children's school have shown me screenshots of some of the questions and possible answers that have been presented to their children through Acellus. They were deeply disturbing and outright racist and prejudiced.

I urge you to make changes in the curriculum being offered to our children of Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Betsey Strauss



August 20, 2020

Aloha Chair Payne and Members of the Board of Education

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit comments today. My name is Lara Bollinger and I represent Together For Our Keiki (T.F.O.K.), which is a non-profit 501(c)(3) Hawai'i organization whose mission is to advocate and create a diverse and inclusive community for our keiki by empowering parents and caregivers, and educating local stakeholders.

- We recognize the need for prioritizing in-person instruction for our students with special needs as well as other vulnerable students. We believe when it is safe to do so, these keiki should be among the first to receive in-person instruction; or when there is a choice between in-person or hybrid learning, they will be prioritized for in-person instruction.
- Until then, we support having distance options for keiki with special needs, as well as their general education peers. As we have requested in previous letters submitted to this Board, we again explicitly ask that guidance specific to special education be developed and disseminated to students, their families, and all members of their teaching teams.
- In the past month, families we support have reported to us they have been told if they choose distance learning, their keiki will not be able to access the related services (e.g., speech, occupational therapy, counseling, etc.) listed on their individualized education plans (IEPs). Similarly, parents have been told if they choose distance learning they will be waiving their right to all special education services in the future. These statements illustrate to us the pervasive need for clear and explicit guidance, which details the procedures teams should follow when making individualized decisions for students with specialized educational (social-emotional, behavioral, and academic) needs.
- We applaud the thorough and candid reflection of areas of current deficiency, as outlined by Chair Payne in her 68-page document to the BOE, dated 8/20/2020. While it is alarming that as a state we still have so many questions left unanswered, it is refreshing to read what feels like the first honest and transparent account of our current situation.
http://boe.hawaii.gov/Meetings/Notices/Meeting%20Material%20Library/GBM_2020-08-20_Update%20on%20Reopening%20of%20Schools%20Resolution.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0HIG0PO13XQIyK8rMEduCrEY3VHFw_labrsTOq1UQXI_fx--Xm3Qtdivc

Lastly, we want to express our deep support for our teachers and all school staff, including our bus drivers, cafeteria workers, janitors, and office staff. We appreciate the difficult decisions they are being forced to make. We believe what our schools, keiki and teachers need most are support and love --and PPE. On behalf of the families and special needs keiki we represent, mahalo nui loa for their courage and commitment.

Mahalo,

Lara Bollinger, JD, BCBA, LBA
Vice President, Together For Our Keiki
www.fourkeiki.com



safety first

Corinne Shinn <cyscokids@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 3:26 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I am one of those teachers that decided to retire on August 1st, 2020 due to the unsafe condition that the Governor and DOE are imposing on teachers. We have often stated that we love the students and face-to-face is the best way to build a relationship with students. However, it is fruitless to build a relationship when our innocent keikis and dedicated teachers are put in danger.

As I stated before, I retired due to the neglect of teachers' pleas to allow distance learning and teleworking for teachers. It appears that the Governor and DOE refuse to believe that teachers are responsible adults and therefore will not allow teachers to use their professional judgment in whether teleworking will be effective for their students. Do they not know that teachers are one of the hardest and most dedicated professionals in our country. Teachers work for little pay and their hours do not stop when they go home. As a former teacher, I took work everywhere I went, and worked whenever there was a spare moment...the doctor's waiting rooms and on the doctors' examination bed, the hairstylist chair, at athletic games, anywhere and anytime.

Right now, I am appalled with the lack of concern for the health and safety of those on campus. These individuals are not limited to students and teachers, but also cafeteria workers, custodians, educational assistants, office clerks, secretaries, administration. These workers are all on campus at one time. Is it not a concern?

My daughter works at a school where she was sent home twice with the threat of COVID infestation within just one week. She was contacted two days after the supposed infected person canvassed her school. Unsat! I am not only fearful of myself but also for my daughter who has no choice but to abide by the Governor and DOE command of working from school with numerous other personnel.

Today, I watched the news as 24 prisoners are targeted to be released due to the number of COVID cases in that institution. The Governor and DOH knew that there was a great possibility of COVID spreading into the prison walls. Yet, preventive measures were not taken. The Governor and DOH are REACTING to this infestation. Yet the Governor, DOH, and DOE are willing to put our most precious resource, our keikis, into situations of high risk.

Are the Governor, DOH, and DOE waiting to again REACT to an infestation within the school system? What is it going to take for one of these leaders to stop and be PROACTIVE and prevent an outbreak in schools? When the outbreak happens who are they going to blame? Teachers? Parents? Custodians? Educational Assistants? Administration?

Please reconsider in making our schools safe by allowing total distance learning for ALL and allowing teachers to telework. As a recently retired teacher of special needs students, I know that telework requires more planning and implementing, basically more work for the teachers. However, I know that students can learn through distance learning and teleworking. Right now, it is the safest means to teach. Please make safety the priority for all.

Sincerely,

A former teacher and concerned community member



August 20, 2020

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board of Education,

Discussion Item V. A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication

We are commenting on Discussion Item V. A.

We appreciate the BOE having a discussion matching policy via the Reopening Resolution to school level implementation and concerns. We look forward to hearing the department's explanation on how the system is addressing these concerns.

HE'E Coalition members would like to highlight a couple of family and community concerns *vis a vis* Lines 154-172 in the Resolution, regarding the transitioning between instructional delivery modes to address scenarios potentially requiring full or partial rolling school closures, **specifically, "criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes."**

Students, families, community members, teachers, and administrators have had an incredibly hard time with adjusting to the constantly changing school situation. While we understand that the COVID-19 situation is fluid, we are asking for system level guidance and clarity on changes, and an information roll out that is timely. The August 7, 2020 announcement about the sudden shift to full distance learning on Oahu and the subsequent August 11, 2020 announcement to full distance learning on the neighbor islands days before the start of school caused a lot of confusion and anxiety. At the last moment, families are scrambling for child-care and adjusting their work schedules to accommodate the sudden changes.

As the Resolution directs, we ask that there be **clear, objective criteria** or triggers to let families know when school will be in full distance learning or back to in-person models. With clear, objective criteria families can at least anticipate how they might adjust to changing circumstances, and they will have a better understanding of why decisions are made.

For example, back in the Spring, there was guidance which stated that schools would not reopen unless COVID-19 was no longer spreading in the community, defined as four weeks with no new cases.¹ If we had this kind of objective standard, at least the community would have a sense of what to expect, be able to plan accordingly, and understand why a change would be made.

¹ <https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/09/hawaii-news/hawaii-public-schools-to-remain-closed-until-state-goes-4-weeks-without-new-covid-19-cases/>

Additionally, we ask **for clarity on all the terms referencing distance learning**. Families are struggling with the myriad definitions around distance learning. What is “distance learning” exactly? Is it a total virtual model without any teacher intervention? Is it A/B rotation through synchronous and asynchronous instruction? Is it a teacher instructing via a videoconferencing platform? Is it assignments provided through Google classrooms? It would help to have this language defined and an infographic by the state so that that everyone can have a common language.

Again, we understand that educational leaders in Hawai'i are facing really difficult issues. These difficulties may be overcome with very specific answers and a real focus on clarity of purpose. We humbly offer these recommendations to you.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

HE'E Coalition Members and Participants

Academy 21

After-School All-Stars Hawai'i

Alliance for Place Based Learning

American Civil Liberties Union

Atherton YMCA

*Castle Complex Community Council

*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS

*Education Institute of Hawai'i

*Faith Action for Community Equity

Fresh Leadership LLC

Girl Scouts Hawai'i

Harold K.L. Castle Foundation

*HawaiiKidsCAN

*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance

*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and
Economic Justice

*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists

Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars

*Hawai'i Children's Action Network

Hawai'i Education Association

Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition

* Hawai'i State PTSA

Hawai'i State Student Council

Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Hawai'i P-20

Hawai'i 3Rs

Head Start Collaboration Office

It's All About Kids

*INPEACE

Joint Venture Education Forum

Junior Achievement of Hawaii

Kamehameha Schools

Kanu Hawai'i

*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council

Keiki to Career Kaua'i

Kupu A'e

*Leaders for the Next Generation

Learning First

McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds

Native Hawaiian Education Council

Our Public School

*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

*Parents and Children Together

*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i

Punahou School PUEO Program

Special Education Provider Alliance

*Teach for America

The Learning Coalition

US PACOM

University of Hawai'i College of Education

YMCA of Honolulu

Voting Members () Voting member
organizations vote on action items while
individual and non-voting participants may
collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*



work from home denials

Peter Webb <pwebb001@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 4:05 PM

Why are Complex Area Superintendents being allowed to deny work from home requests that have been approved by the school principals? The CAS has zero personal experience with the teachers, while the principal knows the teachers and how well they can handle remote work. It looks very much as though the Honolulu CAS is simply denying all work from home requests. Please stop this sort of mismanagement and allow principals to make these decisions.



Testimony

Melissa Kreutner <mauimelissa@aol.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 11:43 AM

To Whom it May Concern,

I am testifying on http://boe.hawaii.gov/Meetings/Notices/Meeting%20Material%20Library/GBM_2020-08-20_Update%20on%20Reopening%20of%20Schools%20Resolution.pdf

as a classroom special education teacher. Due to school being in-person, last week I had my asthma assessed as moderate, which makes me high risk for complications/hospitalization due to covid. I submitted my application yesterday for leave or telework due to high risk medical status.

Thank you,

Melissa Kreutner



BOE Testimony

Jolyn Lee <jolyn.lee@k12.hi.us>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 4:06 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: senfevella@capitol.hawaii.gov, senkidani@capitol.hawaii.gov, senkeohokalole@capitol.hawaii.gov, repkitagawa@capitol.hawaii.gov, repperruso@capitol.hawaii.gov

Aloha BOE Members,

I am writing asking you to please allow teachers to work remotely. Yesterday in a joint press conference held by Governor Ige and Mayor Caldwell, Caldwell stated, "If you can work from home, we want you to work from home" and repeated "If you can work from home, we want you to work from home".

Teachers can work from home and I have done it during the fourth quarter of last year and during our distance learning summer program. We held remote classes, went on virtual field trips, hosted guest speakers, and hosted community/family celebrations all via WebEx. Please do not think that I am the exception to the rule. Many teachers did this and are already invested in continuing to do these activities with their students & families remotely. Teachers need training in how to coordinate these kinds of activities. Fortunately, at my school we have a committee of teachers who stepped up and are willing to help teach others the skills they need in order to create a fun, engaging, interactive learning environment for our students. And trained other teachers REMOTELY. We do not need to be in the same room or on a school campus to do any of it.

There is no logical reason to exempt teachers from this, especially at this time, at the height of the pandemic here in Hawaii. Teachers are coming to school with all different types of health concerns personally and related to their loved ones. I am in the highest risk of severe illness from COVID19 category. I'm scared. I help care for my elderly in-laws who have their own health issues. Please help keep us safe.

I have had three family members and four family friends who have had COVID19. Two teenagers were asymptomatic. They only got tested because their parents did. Otherwise, they would not have known that they had it. They may at some point develop some of the lasting residual effects but at this point we just do not know. One of their parents ended up in the hospital with pneumonia and spent two weeks there under doctors care. That parent still has residual symptoms after recovering and being released from the hospital. The other parent and two of my family members had the worst flu-like symptoms of their lives, all three of them still have the dry cough. My third family member was in intensive care on a ventilator for two months. No one thought she would survive. She did. She's still in recovery in a rehab facility. She had to relearn many of the essential tasks that we take for granted like talking and eating. She still cannot walk and has muscle weakness throughout her body. She also has permanent lung damage. Don't tell me this disease is not dangerous. I know for a fact that it is. Look at the suffering among my family and friends. Please do what you can to help protect our teachers and their families from the same suffering my family has gone through. Allow teachers to work remotely.

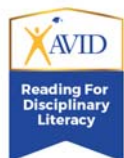
Please also address the issue of Special Education students, their teachers, and aides who are required to be in their classroom daily. According to a colleague, our fully self contained Special Education student classes may have as many as 18 or more people (students, teachers, and aides) in a class. This is well over the 5 person limit that both the governor and mayor both recommended. They are in close contact daily with each other and all of them risk exposure due to the challenges of working with students with severe disabilities who may not be able to control their behavior and/or bodily functions. I have also been told that they have not been issued appropriate PPE. How is this safe?

Our Superintendent testified today in front of a legislative committee that there is a process for teachers to be allowed to telework. However, many teachers who have applied have been denied despite our ability to meet her two criteria. One: that we can teach effectively remotely. Two: that we have all the technology and equipment that is needed to do that teaching. We can meet that criteria but we are still being denied. She said that principals are allowed to make that decision, our principal told us that our Complex Area Superintendent is the one who makes the final decision. Who is really in charge? Why are teachers being denied by the Complex Area Superintendents (not their principals) when they can meet the criteria to work remotely? How would the Complex Area Superintendent know what teachers can or cannot do when they do not know us or have not seen us teaching remotely or otherwise?

There have already been positive COVID cases at multiple DOE campuses. Please show compassion to this population who gives so much to their students but should not be asked to sacrifice their health or emotional wellbeing during this crisis. Please allow us to protect ourselves and our families from this horrible and deadly disease. There is no reason to mandate that teachers work in their classrooms while students learn remotely. It really feels that we don't have your

Mahalo,
Jolyn Lee
President George Washington Middle School

Mrs. Jolyn M. Lee
English Language Arts Teacher
AVID Coordinator & Elective Teacher
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On Instagram @wmsavid158



"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."
~ Mahatma Gandhi

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 **Work From Home.mov**
5472K



Teleworking

Katiana Furey <katiana.svechak@gmail.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 4:07 PM

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

Good Afternoon,

I am writing in hopes BOE will approve teachers to telework if they choose to. In yesterday's news conference, Caldwell encouraged all of Oahu to telework if they are able to. Teachers are able to create lesson plans, grade, attend virtual staff meetings, communicate with parents, and hold live virtual lessons from home. Yet we are still being required to go onto campuses with several other teachers and staff. I am a teacher at Keoneula Elementary school and our school employs almost 90 teachers, admin, cafe staff, and custodians. How is having this many in one place sharing communal bathrooms and lunch areas keeping us safe? I am urging you to understand that a teacher can virtually teach from home just the same as from their classroom. Please consider for teachers to telework while their students partake in distance learning.

Katiana Furey



Testimony

Heather M. <hnmoselle@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 4:07 PM

To members of the Board of Education, whom it may concern:

My name is Heather Moselle and I am a parent of two elementary school children at Hickam elementary. I am wondering how the individual schools vetted the distance learning options provided, as I have found that the Acellus option has left both of our children wanting, in terms of stimulation and interaction. The two main issues I have with the program are: 1.) the lack of interaction on the part of the student (seems like 85% or more of the content is video, and 15% or less of student quizzing or interaction) and 2.) the age-inappropriate content for my kindergartener (the Physical education introduction video is the same for third grade and kindergarten, terms like "cardiovascular system" and "fatigue" are used. My kindergartener does not know what any of those words mean. On another note, the videos are, for lack of a better word, pretty creepy (I will explain that briefly below). We have requested to be reenrolled in Hickam's distance learning option, based on our disappointment with the quality of education provided through Acellus. Parents had to choose and commit to the Acellus program for at least 6 months in, site unseen, if they wanted to use that option for their children to have a fully-virtual curriculum. For many families, exhausted from the constant (yet understandable) changes coming from school administration, prompted by booming COVID19 case numbers on the island, this seemed like a more consistent, simpler option at first glance. However, as parents have been flexible, so too should school administrations, in allowing changes like re-enrollments in the school-provided distance option (with local teachers) for families who find that certain distance learning modalities simply will not work for their children, based on learning style or lack of challenging content, etc.

We understand the administration had to make a quick decision to provide families a number of options; everyone is doing their best amid the pandemic, teachers and staff. But just a quick, cursory search revealed a number of potential issues with the foundation of the Acellus program, which exhausted and frustrated parents may have missed, but certainly administrators choosing the program should be aware of. For one, many of the videos provided are creepy. Creepy is subjective, however this has been discussed in local homeschooling groups (including Hawaii Distance Learning Ohana, and many other local Facebook discussion groups parents use for distance learning support) and that prompted many parents to look into the foundations of the academic program more deeply. An investigative journalist has highlighted some of the unsettling information which includes Roger Billings' founding of the International Academy of Science (and then awarding himself a PhD through said academy) and his association with a polygamist cult (his own prerogative, but the videos definitely give off a cultish vibe, which is unsettling for parents like myself). I am grateful for school administrators, teachers and the BOE working hard to provide solutions in a time of uncertainty for our kids' education. As a parent, we simply ask for flexibility from administrations in choosing our children's learning path. We are discovering new information daily as well, like the information above, as well as information about our children's primary modes of learning.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my opinion and personal experience as a parent of two elementary school children, graduate student, and military spouse, learning to educate my children at home day-by-day. Thank you for your efforts in this challenging time to ensure our kids have access to the best education possible, given the circumstances.

Respectfully,
Heather Moselle



Testimony

emiri iwasaki <koamai@hotmail.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 4:10 PM

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

I am testifying on item V. **A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.**

I am a special education teacher in a special education preschool classroom. When working with preschool students with special needs, it is not possible for staff to social distance from students. They have various disabilities that require physical contact for safety of the students, such as stopping them from running away or protecting them to ensure their safety while having a violent tantrum. Some may not even have awareness of what is safe or not in the first place, let alone understand how to be safe during a pandemic. They are not able to keep face masks nor face shield on, and will sneeze or cough right at others, often unaware of what they are doing.

Yes, I do understand the importance of face to face instruction for all students, especially students with special needs. However, students and teachers of special education are not immune to this virus. I don't understand how it is ok to risk the health and safety of our special population, allowing them to come onto campus for face to face instruction in a classroom! There is no professional guidance to say if any of our classrooms are meeting the safety guidelines, and decisions are left up to the teachers, who are not experts. Although the numbers of children dying from this virus is small, we should not be gambling with the lives of anyone at this time. If it's not safe for the general school population to come to school, then there should not be an exception to anyone, just because they have "difficulty distance learning." Yes, education is important, but the health and safety and wellbeing of students and teachers should be the most important factor. Even with the safety precautions, there is no 100 percent way of protecting these students and teachers if they are being exposed to people other than their household members inside a classroom for hours at a time. Right now, with the amount of Covid cases rising, it is necessary for 100-percent distance learning for all students across the state, including those in special education, until at least the end of the first quarter.

Although teachers are willing to report to campus, HIDOE needs to honor HSTA's contract by allowing all teachers to work from home (telework) for as long as distance learning remains in effect, including special education teachers.

I am very concerned that the safety and well-being of special education students and teachers of Hawaii are being jeopardized by allowing this exception to continue. It is not a matter of "if", but a matter of "when" that a student or teacher becomes infected with the disease and cause unnecessary heartache and sadness to families affected.

Thank you,
Emiri Iwasaki
Preschool Special Education Teacher
Sent from my iPhone



educating our keiki

Rick Enright <etcm13@yahoo.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 4:11 PM

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

What the teachers and DOE are doing to our students is a travesty. To completely destroyed over a year of education is a disservice to the students. Students need to be in school learning from their teachers and if the HSTA thinks distant learning is the answer then we should create more charter and private schools and do away with their power. Mr. Rosenlee does not care about the student, his only concern is to ensure that the teachers are safe and don't have to teach. Engineers solve problems by thinking outside the box and looking for original solutions, the HSTA and DOE are led by people who can only think inside the box, guess what the answer isn't there. I know you do not control th HSTA but the DOE needs new leadership from someone who has an imagination and can talk about what is possible and not about what is not. I am so discussed with the HSTA and DOE that I am seriously considering retirement rather than put up with their incompetence, the only reason I haven't is I love teaching my students, maybe they have lost the love for the students!!!!

Mahalo,

R. Enright



Testimony for meeting on Thursday, August 20th, 2020

Mei <marakaki45@gmail.com>

Tue, Aug 18, 2020 at 8:47 PM

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

I am testifying on item V. A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.

During this pandemic, the health and safety of both students and their teachers should be a top priority, and yet that is something that is not happening right now, despite pleas from educators -- the very people on the ground with students.

Too many teachers are continuing to be told to report to campus, despite being able to do their jobs from home. They should be allowed to make their own choices, and in order for that to happen, there needs to be clear and orderly guidance from the BOE.

In addition, Special Education teachers and support staff are being forced to essentially ignore all CDC guidance and put themselves and their students at risk, all because these students are not being included in the collective Distance Learning practices. This should not be happening. They should be participating in Distance Learning from home, just the same as their typically developing peers -- at least until the end of the first quarter.

The latest order for O'ahu, "Act Now Honolulu" has mandated that all gatherings are limited to five people, a number that is far surpassed at my school, just within the FSC classroom, where our five students all have at least one support staff, plus the classroom teacher, plus a nurse that accompanies one of the students, and that isn't even taking into account the additional student that is scheduled to come onto campus once a week, as well as the new student we are due to have join us.

Another teacher that runs an FSC class has up to 21 people in the classroom at once, unable to socially distance due to space constraints. Teachers and support staff are being put at unnecessarily high risk, and at the same time, putting their vulnerable students at risk by having them in overcrowded rooms. This is unacceptable.

Taking into consideration the needs of our special education students, I can understand why some might think that it is best for them to continue coming onto campus for schooling, but I cannot in good conscious support such a decision. They are no less susceptible to COVID, and are often at higher risk than their typically developing peers, and if the GenEd students are being kept at home to ensure their safety, our SpEd students should also be at home. An exception must be made amidst this global pandemic to allow them to be included with the students who participate in the safer full Distance Learning.

Yes, Distance Learning may not be as effective for them as it is for their GenEd peers, but if it is a toss-up between their education and their lives, I believe it should be their lives we are protecting. Skills can be relearned and retaught, but there will be no getting back lives lost, nor

will there be coming back from the physical damage COVID can do on even the healthiest human body.

The teacher of my FSC classroom has expressed many times that she would prefer to be fully online as well, because of the success she's had over the summer with her students in ESY. She has also said that many students were more receptive to meeting virtually, and that it worked well for our students. It's very much feasible that it would work again for the duration of the first quarter at the very least.

As an Educational Assistant that falls into Category B for exposure during a normal school year as I am in an FSC classroom whose students are medically fragile and puts me in close contact with bodily fluids, I still have a great many concerns about adequate PPE. I have been given two masks, one disposable and one washable, two face shields, and a disposable surgical gown that I am supposed to reuse despite being unable to wash or disinfect properly. It is alarming to think that I am supposed to make these last a whole year, and somehow keep myself and my students safe with these items.

Both of my parents fall into the high-risk category, and I would never be able to forgive myself if I brought COVID home and infected either of them. I take every possible precaution, from sanitizing frequently, to keeping my laundry elsewhere away from them that I set aside as soon as I get home, but with the wide community spread, I can only think that it's a matter of time before it's at our school, and making its way into my home. I loathe the thought of being asked to choose between my family or my students, but that is essentially what is happening at this very moment. In other states, teachers have written out their wills in anticipation of having to return to schools face-to-face, and some have even written their own obituaries, knowing that their memory may be misconstrued to further the narrative their states are pushing about heroic teachers whose loss was simply inevitable. They are not inevitable – COVID deaths are preventable, so long as we take the proper precautions and preventative measures, and that is exactly what Hawaii needs to be doing right now.

Serious and sound preventative measures must be taken immediately, and that starts by truly going into Distance Learning, for ALL STUDENTS, including those in Special Education and Fully Self Contained classes.

Acting after we lose a student or educator to COVID will be too late.

And in order to ensure the safest environment for all teachers and students alike, we must have guidance to look to and have metrics in place for when schools can reopen, based on COVID case numbers, backed by science. Recklessly tossing our children back onto campus like the mainland will only give us the same results -- multiple students needing to quarantine after just a few days of school, and a total shutdown of the school as a whole. To keep from that happening, we need clear rules and regulations in place before we can even consider reopening schools to welcome students back onto campus.

At the beginning of the onset of this pandemic and restrictions coming down back in April, we were told that schools would only reopen after four consecutive weeks of no new cases, which was supposed to indicate that there was no community spread. That is clearly no longer the case, despite our current case numbers rising through what is purely community spread, as we have reopened schools for our most vulnerable learners.

"Playing it by ear" is not acceptable, and it never was. We cannot tolerate this delay of a clearcut plan as to what specifically indicates that schools are safe to reopen, as well as when they'd need to be shut down again, if and when case counts should begin to rise.

Our keiki deserve to be safe, and that means ALL of our keiki, and we cannot keep them safe if we as educators are not kept safe. Allow educators to telework, and allow our Special Education students to be included in Distance Learning.



Testimony

Janet Sandison <janet.sandison@wheelermiddle.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 4:19 PM

Please honor HSTA's contract to allow teachers to telework.

I'm efficient at my job with every resource I need at home. I have reliable internet, a school issued computer, all meetings can be done via webex or google meet, and calling/emailing parents will continue to be the norm for my students. I have adapted my curriculum to support remote learning for all students and am confident that they will receive a top quality distance education.

I love and appreciate where I work. I live in town and commute to Wahiawa daily. It would not only help the environment and ease traffic congestion but would also save me around 2 hours a day, time that I could better use working or caring for my own child. Another big concern is that my mother provides child care for my toddler, at home. I don't want to risk passing COVID-19 to my mom. A colleague could pass it to me if teachers are forced to go to campuses.

Doors at schools, sinks in the bathrooms, handrails, and elevator buttons are all common touch/ high potential transmission areas. Keeping students and teachers at home will eliminate a vector for COVID-19 transmission, while continuing to provide quality distance learning education.

Thank you for your consideration,
Janet Sandison
Wheeler Middle School



Testimony

Julia Chong <julia.mi.chong@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 4:55 PM

Dear BOE Members,

I am writing to testify on item V. **A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.** I am kindly asking you to please allow teachers to work remotely and to have a clear metric for opening and/or closing schools to ensure the safety of teachers, faculty, students, and the community.

In a joint press conference by Governor Ige & Mayor Caldwell, the Mayor stated, "If you can work from home, we want you to work from home." Teachers should not be exempt from this recommendation. We have done it during the 4th quarter of Enrichment learning, if students can learn from home, teachers should be able to teach from home. The cases are increasing daily, and Hawaii is now the worst in the state!

Just by looking at an individual, you would not know what they have to deal with. For example, I am "young" in the category of under 40. However, I have asthma, severe allergies, and borderline diabetic, amongst other things (the list can go on). I have a husband who cares for his father and has to currently live with him not just to care for his dad, but so we can limit any opportunity for me to pass the disease to him or his father. If my husband is to get sick, NO ONE will be able to care for my father in law. At this time, trying to hire home care, would cause anxiety as well since we don't know what those nurses would be bringing in. Just him receiving therapy as required from his discharge causes anxiety in us.

Therefore, if teachers are really "respected," they should not be exempt from having the opportunity to work from home. Can you guarantee that as long as 100% distance learning statewide is in effect, that HDOE will honor HSTA's contract to allow teachers to work from home (telework). We are just as vulnerable as anyone else to become victims of this disease.

Another issue I have is that there is no clear metric on how or when school campuses are safe for students' return. Why does Hawai'i not have one, when education is so important? Why does Hawai'i not have one, when many other states and cities have specific triggers already in place for when schools can open or should be closed?

In closing, I ask again, please, treat us, educators of Hawaii with the respect, appreciation, and humanity we deserve. Give teachers the peace of mind to know that our safety is important just as much as it is for people of other professions, our students, and their families. If people in the Board and the Department of Education can easily have the opportunity to telework, so should teachers.

Thank you for your time. Please continue to stay healthy during this scary time.

Sincerely,
Julia Chong
Pearl Harbor Kai Elementary School



Allow teachers to telework

Sheri Falls <sheri.falls@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 5:57 PM

Aloha BOE members,

I am writing to you to please allow teachers the option to telework, without all the red tape from the superintendent's protocol to keep ourselves and our 'ohana safe.

In yesterday's press conference held by Governor Ige and Mayor Caldwell, Caldwell stated, "If you can work from home, we want you to work from home" and then repeated it again. There is no logical reason to exempt teachers from this, especially at this time, at the height of the pandemic here with 261 cases today. The virus does not discriminate.

Christina Kishimoto was at a conference today with our senators on 'Olelo and mentioned she has allowed this to occur from a memo dated July 24th, though our principal mentioned today that we are not allowed to per our CAS. It's clear that there's miscommunication going on. Teachers would also need to fill out a lot of forms which we'd need to get our principal's approval and also the CAS's approval to be able to telework. There are a total of 31 handouts with instructions or forms to fill in for teachers who want to telework.

There is no reason to mandate teachers to work in their classrooms while students learn from home. It really feels that there's a sense of authoritarian control without respect for being a professional and our health/safety. Please, treat us like the professionals we are. This is a time for flexibility, grace, and empathy. Teachers are scared. Please allow us the option to telework while students are also learning from home.

Thank you for your time.

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Late Testimony



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

Testimony on Accelus/Roger Billings

Terra Daniel <happierwhentraveling@gmail.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 6:37 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha -

Thank you for taking time to address this serious issue.

Our children attend Sunset Beach Elementary. We became aware that they would be using Accelus, and heard the things being said about the founder and program. We did our own research and were horrified at what we discovered and even more so, knowing teachers are aware of the history and still want to move forward with using it.

One teacher even told me that "sometimes bad people do good things and we reap from those good things". What?!?

Accelus was created by Roger Billings - a cult leader and child predator. Billings created a University and gave himself and his wife PhD's. His program is accredited but the university upon which he built his credentials is not. I watched some of the videos created by Accelus. I did not see any red flags with the videos. I know there are many other emails addressing the fraudulent activity with Billings so I will speak to the personal connection this has on me.

My [REDACTED] cut all ties from [REDACTED] and joined this cult. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] have since escaped and now live with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]). I have spoken with them and verified all of the information being shared. This is a very real and personal issue for [REDACTED] family. Roger Billings believes he is a prophet. He tells his cult members who and when they are to take on multiple wives. While he is legally married to one woman, it is well known that he has multiple wives. My [REDACTED] [REDACTED] used Accelus and "hated it. The lessons were never explained well and we always felt confused."

There is also a [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] who was sexually abused by this man as a [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] has shared [REDACTED] experience with [REDACTED]. Because he was never convicted, [REDACTED] is referring to them as "allegations". We know they are FACTS and not allegations.

We have seen first hand how dangerous this man is and refuse to allow our children to have anything to do with him or his program.

We have shared our concerns with SBES and they have given us the option to use the program or leave. Morally, we cannot support this program or allow our children to be involved in his program. It is infuriating and incredibly sad to us that our children are losing their right to education because we are standing up and supporting victims of abuse.

Please, do the right thing. Pull the Accelus program from the schools. Our children deserve so much better!

Terra Daniel



Teleworking

Michal O'Neal <michaloneal@yahoo.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 6:20 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: "michaloneal@yahoo.com" <michaloneal@yahoo.com>

Aloha BOE,

I am sending this late. So I don't know if it counts. I've been busy.

Construction work is going on and lots of dust is building up again. Workers come in and out of the room when I'm not there (I put my foot down when I am in class there.) . The room I work in because I'm not allowed to telework (even though I have an 11 year at home alone for at least 7 hours) is 90 degrees by mid-day. The construction is loud. I already had to clean and disinfect my room myself, with my own supplies because our administration keep telling us to use liquid ozone. Is the room being mopped everyday? No. No custodian signs the cleaning paper that administration gave me either.

When I go to the library to work at the end of the day, people are not wearing masks.

Why can't I be at home and work? Administration won't let us. They give us an unsafe environment and want us to be there. I'm so confused.

I got tonsillitis already within the first week of work.

Please help! Please.

Please,

Michal O'Neal

Aiea High School



Testimony

Lynn Otaguro <lotaguro@yahoo.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 6:30 PM

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

I am testifying on item V. **A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.**

Please take action on the following items:

- Ensure 100-percent distance learning for all students across the state, including those in special education, until at least the end of the first quarter.
- Require the DOH and HIDOE to provide clear metrics on when school campuses are safe for students' return. Many states and cities have specific triggers already in place for when schools should be open or closed based on COVID-10 cases, but Hawaii does not.
- Guarantee that the HIDOE honors HSTA's contract by allowing teachers to work from home (telework) for as long as distance learning remains in effect.

I don't know who is pressuring principals not to approve teleworking requests, be it the superintendent, complex superintendents, or whoever else, but not allowing teachers to telework is counterproductive and detrimental to students. When teachers are denied the ability to telework, we are offered various LEAVE options. The message they are sending, is that they would rather have substitutes than have HIGHLY QUALIFIED teachers who WANT to teach.

In my situation, taking leave would place my department under further duress to cover my AP Calculus and Trigonometry/Precalculus classes, and then find a substitute for the remaining classes. I have seen the damage an under-qualified, long-term substitute can do to several sections Algebra 1 students. It's a hard climb for students to overcome deficiencies at the foundation of their math journeys, if they even try. If a school couldn't find a qualified substitute with advanced notice, schools won't find enough now, especially since recent high school graduates are now being allowed to forgo the qualification process to become substitutes. And this is preferable over allowing highly qualified teachers teach at home rather than in an empty classroom?

It boggles my mind that this is even an issue. I have a friend who has been teaching her students remotely in her empty classroom this week, while her sons, the older who just turned eleven, are home alone. Both parents are teachers. Both have been denied telework. I have no words to describe the lack of empathy and compassion shown to these teachers.

But what about being equitable? Being equitable is allowing everyone, who is CAPABLE of performing their duties from their homes, the choice to telework, not just some of those who are capable. The key is, those who have the ability to do their jobs at home as they would in their empty classrooms.

Again, why is this an issue? Governor Ige stated in a news conference as far back as August 7, 2020, "employers need to be flexible in dealing with employees and working with them as the child care situation, their students, their children being in school or not being in school, will be different virtually every single day as we work through what the new school year would look like." Again in an August 8, 2020 Khon2 news report, Governor Ige reiterated, "I've asked employers to be flexible in dealing with their employees, to be supportive with tele-work if that's an options[sic]."

I implore you to extend Governor Ige's call for compassion to teachers. It's simple. Allow teachers in empty classrooms to telework from home. Done. Let's move on to other matters.

I am hoping that logic prevails and principals are allowed to approve telework requests.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard. I understand that I missed the deadline so this may not be read. I haven't checked my personal email this week but I will for future opportunities and resubmit if needed.

Mahalo,
Lynn Otaguro
Farrington High School teacher



Testimony

hari messer <harimarc@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 6:47 PM

Aloha,

I am testifying on item V. **A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.**

If you didn't think it was safe for ANY students or teachers to be on campus this past spring, then why on earth would you think it is safe now when the number of positive test results has exploded exponentially?

If we go to 100% distance learning, then why would you force teachers to be on campus to teach our online classes. Why force us to be around dozens (hundreds?) of other teachers and staff members when we are perfectly capable of teaching our online classes from home?

Isn't it common knowledge that the best way to stop the spread of COVID 19, is to stay home as much as possible and limit social interaction? Last spring you didn't want to reopen schools until we had gone four weeks without any new cases. That seems like a sound and safe metric to keep in place.

Thank you,

Hari Messer
Teacher
Waimea High School



Testimony

Tony Young <yynot@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 2:15 PM

TESTIMONY

I am testifying on item V. **A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.**

I am strongly asking you to please ensure 100% distance learning for all students for the State of Hawaii, to include those in special education until at least the first quarter.

Before we are asked to be back fully on campus I ask that the DOH and HIDOE provide CLEAR metrics on when school campuses are safe to return.

Finally, please guarantee that the HIDOE HONORS HSTA's contract by allowing teachers to work from home (telework) for as long as distance learning remains in effect.

YOUR teachers are working really hard. This has not been an easy end or start of the school year and I am asking that you work to ensure a SAFE working environment for ALL educators and support staff until this pandemic is over. It is not easy for us to have to come to campus knowing that we are in a hot zone. Nor does it seem fair or equitable to leave it up to our Principal to allow for telework. It is disheartening to hear that some colleagues are approved, but others in similar situations are not. What do you think this will do to the morale of our educational community? I frankly do not feel safe coming to school. I have two underlying conditions and live with my elderly parents.

I am ASKING you to do right by your teachers.

Sincerely,

Anthony Young



Testimony

mtsukayama@hawaii.rr.com <mtsukayama@hawaii.rr.com>
To: "testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 7:54 PM

Dear Board of Education Members,

I have listened to your BOE meetings and appreciate you hearing everyone's concerns for many many hours. Thank you for another opportunity to share our thoughts about the reopening of schools, now that it has happened.

I am testifying on item V. [A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.](#)

I am asking that you ensure 100-percent distance learning for all students across the state, including those in special education, until at least the end of the first quarter. At this time there are just too many variables. Living on Kauai, I have told myself that we are lucky to have such a small number of "presumed active cases" however we know that there may be others who have not been tested and that even one case is too many as it can easily multiply to unmanageable numbers. We have seen this happen on Oahu and sadly see it starting to happen on Maui.

Before the 100% Distance Learning was put in place I had decided to have my own children learn from home due to the many uncertainties and worries I had about in school learning. One of my fears was that I would be afraid of my own children after they spent their days with 100s of others on campus, not knowing who had gone where and done what. Today my husband and I, both elementary school teachers, are the ones at work and I now worry for my children who have to be in contact with us. At the same time, I cannot stay "quarantined" from them at all times. This is no way to live. While being at home for many months was not always easy, it was safe.

Over the first few weeks of working at the school, I have also seen my many fears about on campus learning for my own children realized. Students and faculty members sometimes without masks and often wearing them incorrectly...students and staff still using neck gaiters and bandannas which were proven to be more harmful than protective...sharing of common spaces with no cleaning in between. Presently, there are no rules for mask quality and the rules for masks wearing are not consistently enforced. Cleaning and disinfecting are not happening as the MOU stated despite the best efforts of a 4 person custodial crew. Students cannot always stay social distanced. Staff do not always choose to be social distanced and have had masks off. This is no one's fault. Many of these rules go against the natural social behaviors of human beings. That is another reason that only by implementing a true 100% distance learning model will we keep everyone as safe as possible.

Having students in school also places teachers in awkward and uncomfortable positions that have them choosing between helping a student and their own health and safety. Teachers are teachers for a reason and often in the moment put themselves at risk. Teachers have been opening car doors as student enter and exit school, opening ketchup packets that students have already tried to open, sometimes with their teeth, helping students put their masks on and assisting with work and other needs that place them in very close proximity to students. Six feet can quickly be reduced to less than one when students require their help. It is unfair to have teachers choose between helping their students and protecting themselves. 100% Distance Learning would remove this from the equation and teachers would be able to concentrate on student learning without fear and anxiety getting in the way.

Additionally after two days there have been actual scares for health and safety. Already we had at least 2 students with running noses whose parents at the end of the day when notified, said they had colds, "just a cold". Colds that were not checked by the doctor. Colds that could be COVID because they were never tested, who knows. What about students who have a member of their family quarantining after traveling from the mainland? Students who live in the same household as a person in quarantine are allowed to attend school because only the traveler is required to quarantine. The chances that there is no sharing of spaces within a home is highly unlikely. This policy needs to be updated for schools and work places. A traveler could be positive, infect other family members who then go to school and work and infect others. This is exactly how community spread happens. Schools could easily become super spreaders. Anyone who disagrees should go to any campus and see all the "mistakes" that are being made that can inadvertently cause spreading if someone in the school has the virus.

On requiring the DOH and HDOE to provide clear metrics on when school campuses are safe for students' return, many states and cities have specific triggers already in place for when schools should be open or closed based on COVID-10 cases, but Hawaii does not. There was once a requirement for a 2 week period showing decrease in cases for things to move forward. The opposite has been happening and yet schools remain open for some. It is disconcerting to know that many places are being shut down while schools continue to stay open. At our school, students returned using the blended model for the first week without any changes. Teachers had up to 12 students in their rooms for the whole day and students ate lunch in the cafeteria (spaced 6 feet apart) and played on the playground (in their Ohana Bubbles). Yes, we have made every attempts to keep safety at the forefront but many things are beyond our control. Teachers and staff who supervise these spaces were not able to keep their distance all of the time

and students often let their masks fall below their noses while playing. In the cafe, students must remove their masks to eat so there is much greater risk to everyone. We also have another week of every other day, all day, for K and 1st graders and nearly 40 students returning every day, all day, for the entire 4 weeks. The 100% distance learning is nearing 90% in our case with others still being offered full in person learning. There were no clear guidelines for this as we have seen is more often the case than not with schools, and principals are doing their best to figure it out on their own. Every school that I have asked is doing this differently. This can only cause problems. Please have everything clearly stated and in writing and be consistent across the state regarding implementing the decisions made and the decisions themselves. There is too much confusion.

Please also guarantee that the HDOE honors HSTA's contract by allowing teachers to work from home (telework) for as long as distance learning remains in effect. As an SSC, I worked during the 4th quarter and all summer running meetings and continuing to do my work effectively and efficiently. While it took a lot of learning and adjustment, I was able to do all my tasks required from home with the exception of in person testing which I scheduled as needed. The contract states that teachers should not be required to be in school when students are not due to safety. If 100% of students are supposed to be at home, 100% of teachers should be too. That also further supports the argument that all students should be at home. Our mayor stated that distance learning can be done and will actually provide students with important tools and skills I believe this is so and that we should not prevent some students from developing these skills by having them in school all day, everyday. Like with all learning, some students will have more difficulty than others. Teachers too! But everyone needs to try and do the best. Like in school learning, some students will require more help and that can be provided by teachers and other staff members as well as the Ohana Help Desk. The state put a LOT of money into creating that assistance for families...I hope it is used and is a worthwhile expenditure. For the very few that need mask-to-mask instruction, teachers should be asked to volunteer and be provided with hazardous pay. These children often need a lot of physical care that is definitely putting a teacher at risk. That needs to be considered.

Thank you again for your time and efforts to provide safe learning environments for students. While we all hope for normalcy sometime in the not so distant future, we know that now is not the time to take chances. We can only learn and teach if we are alive and well enough to do so. Please take action to support HSTA's requests which I believe are reasonable and necessary.

Sincerely,
Misty Tsukayama, Mom, Wife, Daughter, Granddaughter and Teacher



Acellus Accountability

Jodi Stein <steinl001@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 7:58 PM

To the members Board of Education,

We are parents of a third grader and we are very concerned about this Acellus Academy. We have concerns that it was started from a cult and the doctorate degrees that these so called teachers have are fake. We will not have our child, nor do we want any other child to have to succumb to this type of curriculum. Please DO NOT require our public school children to learn from this "Academy".

Sincerely,
Lee and Jodi Stein



Testimony

Sienna Makarewicz <ohanamaka@gmail.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 8:03 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Hawai'i Board of Education,

I am writing today to let you know this opening of school has been a disaster. I do not know if Kishimoto really believes what she says or is about right liar. We did not receive the trading we needed. We are still scrambling to train and figure things out. I second grade we are going to one to one devices for safety for the first time. We were supposed to get Chrome books but our order has been delayed until the end of the year so our tech has been hunting down iPads. She has to inventory, update, push apps, delivery them. There is not enough time in the day. She has been working around the clock with a few others. They are working 15 hours a day to get the students into to programs and getting all of their passwords and login information. Then we are all trying to help parents that are confused beyond measure. Parent are confused by the different terms and schedules. The paperwork is daunting for a large school. I had one student that forgot his back pack on the bus so he couldn't get his paper work done so he wasn't able to take his device home. He will have to wait until his mom can get the paperwork back to the school. It just goes on and on. I had a student come today for her first day and she was sick with a fever and cough but her mom didn't want her to miss the first day. Who knows what she is sick with? This could have all been avoided with a drive by pick up and trained teachers to lead the s on line. There is no protocol for our health so as you sit in your zoom meetings think about the teachers that have just spent 4 days exposed to hundreds of people. Please do not keep dragging out your decisions. Just take us out for the first quarter so we can have some consistency and safety. This is getting tiring, all the changes, the last minute changes, the lack of communication, the attacks on our leader. Enough!!! Please protect us and give us some stability.

Thank you,
Sienna Makarewicz
Second Grade Teacher
Kapa'a Elementary School

Sent from my iPad



testimony: keep us safe

Sarah Smorol <sarah.smorol@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 8:41 PM

Hello,

I am writing in connection with item V. [A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.](#)

I am in support of and add my voice to the requests listed below.
Please take action on the following items:

- Ensure 100-percent distance learning for all students across the state, including those in special education, until at least the end of the first quarter.
- Require the DOH and HDOE to provide clear metrics on when school campuses are safe for students' return. Many states and cities have specific triggers already in place for when schools should be open or closed based on COVID-10 cases, but Hawaii does not.
- Guarantee that the HDOE honors HSTA's contract by allowing teachers to work from home (telework) for as long as distance learning remains in effect.

Looking at sad examples around the country and world it is clear to me that these requests are in the best public health interest at this time.

Thank you,
Sarah Smorol

--



Sarah Smorol, PhD
ELA 9-12
Ho'ola Leadership and Natural Resources Academy
Kapolei High School

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Testimony for BOE

Karla Rowan <karlarowan@hotmail.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 10:00 PM

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

I am a teacher on the island of Kaua'i for 30 years in public elementary school and 2 years in private school. The stress on families, the stress on teachers, and the disruption in children's education is a far greater problem than the threat of COVID on Kauai. If Covid were to occur, return to online learning for two weeks and then return clear kids and teachers back to the classroom. Children of all ages need social interaction, collaboration, and art, music, Hawaiiana, and P. E. Please return children and teachers to the classroom where learning can take place in an enriched environment set apart for their complete learning.

Sent from my iPho



Acellus Program

Suzy Bowen <nblattberg@hotmail.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 10:43 PM

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

Aloha,

I have concerns about the Acellus program being used for distance learning in Hawai'i.

Roger Billings is the creator of Acellus and have himself a PhD from a university he created. He is a polygamist and a cult leader. I do not think he should be teaching our kieki. I have included a link to an article below about Roger Billings. I am very concerned with our children's well being as I work part time in an elementary school here on Oahu. I ask that this program be banned from Hawaii public schools.

. Please See: <https://www.thepitchkc.com/dr-hydrogen/>

Mahalo nui,

Suzanne Bowen



Acellus testimony.

Jon Hayes <jonnyhayes@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 11:51 PM

I have concerns about the acellus program, and it's founders. Whilst the found is clearly quite intelligent, I don't believe he IIS qualified to create an education program. Having listened to my child's intro to math, I am already skeptical. Having heard and seen other lessons too vile to repeat here, I want the board to rethink its usage of acellus.

I am a taxpayer in Kailua Kona.

Thanks

Jon Hayes



Testimony on Item V. A.

Matthew May <maym@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 7:13 AM

Aloha,

My name is Matthew May, I am a new hire SPED teacher at Stevenson Middle School.

I am submitting testifying on Action Item V. A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.

Given the continuing and unprecedented surge in Hawaii's COVID-19 infection rates during this pandemic, I urge the board to take action in the following ways:

- Ensure 100-percent distance learning for all students across the state, including those in special education, until at least the end of the first quarter.

- Require the DOH and HIDOE to provide clear metrics on when school campuses are safe for students' return. Many states and cities have specific triggers already in place for when schools should be open or closed based on COVID-10 cases, but Hawaii does not.

- Guarantee that the HIDOE honors HSTA's contract by allowing teachers to work from home (telework) for as long as distance learning remains in effect.

We cannot leave our the safety and well being of our educators to chance and compromise everyone's safety as well as the overall goal of providing students with a stable and safe means of continuing their education for the rest of the school year by continuing to react late to impending rises in COVID-19 infections. Please take these proactive measures to ensure the safety of all.

We must have clear measures in place set by the DOH and HIDOE, we must plan now.

In beginning of this pandemic, schools were shutdown first as they posed an immediate danger to the safety of students, staff, and the community, we are now right back in that place but with worsening numbers, fewer resources at the hands of the state to help bring us all together on the issue of safety.

I don't believe it is safe to write off the potential for harm that this virus can cause when we know so little about it, and the research is still being settled on the long term effects. What we do know is that students, teachers, and faculty can all catch and transmit this virus. Those with adult physiology doing so with the greatest potential for harm to themselves and others. We cannot pair adults and children together in classrooms without considering that the risk is not only from the student to the teacher but also from the teacher infecting the child.

So yes, it is essential that teachers be able to work from home, as this separation from physical space with the students protects both, and the gathering of just adults on campus is also not safe. We can teach from home, technology has proven that, and it is furthermore necessary for many teachers who have young children of their own, my co-teacher of which is one of them, who will be leaving the school on paid time off to be with his children as required by law to provide child care to his own children.

Health and safety must come first, and we must plan for it. Please act on these items and bring the leadership we need to confront this pandemic fully.

Mahalo,

Matthew May, Stevenson Middle School, Honolulu



Testimony

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

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 7:23 AM

Testimony on item V. **A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.**

I honestly don't know where to even begin.

I am early childhood sped teacher and was told last Thursday that fsc and sped prek would begin in person instruction on Monday 9/17. I began asking questions that are still unclear as to why it is safe to have these classes resume on campus when everyone else has been instructed to go full distance learning. I understand and agree that in person instruction is preferred method but not at the cost of the health and safety of students and staff.

Schools were closed in March with small numbers of cases and now with weeks of daily tripple digit cases we are to return to teaching with students w/ special needs in classroom. Is this the "metric" we have been waiting for to reopen safely?

Low numbers = closed Surge= reopen

Thank you DOE for not caring about ALL Students and staff.

8/16 pm

Plank time is drawing near... let me run blindly
I am feeling so uncomfortable about tomorrow...

Monday 8/17 8:15 am. Welcome back
Our first students wearing their tiny masks
on are waiting outside .
As the hand sanitation stations sit empty and
we still do not have the any thing in classroom
to clean or disinfect materials and
surfaces that have we have asked for and
been assured that we will have . We were told
get a “spray bottle and microfiber cloth”
What is in “bottle” and how is it to be used ? 🤔
hmm we do not have and now kids are walking
into classroom. I make another call to ask for
supplies.

9:20 am ding ding ding we have a winner!
First student to go home with fever and sniffles

Tuesday 8/18 am

Upon entering classroom this morning we that
our rooms were not cleaned from yesterday .

Scary that only 6 rooms with kiddos on campus and there was food on floor , trash in cans and urine in toilet from yesterday.

8:45 mystery cleaner arrives

We are working with students when a bottle of “mystery” cleaner delivered to room and we are told that :

It's made by some machine on campus ,it's colorless and odorless but kills 100% on contact with no wait time, it's safe for kids, adults ... but it only lasts for 2.5 hours . So we will need to choose when we want our bottle delivered and we have to share bottle with adjoining classroom ;(Well I guess there goes that infamous bubble... POP POP as we pass a spray bottle back in forth)

WHAT?

What surfaces? what product?

Response: All surfaces . A green product EPA approved

I asked why sharing is there not enough bottles or the magic water?

Response: Not enough spray bottles but more have been ordered

This is not practical or safe! We need 1 per room for the entire time kiddos are present and also after they have left to clean materials .

How can we wipe down tables between activities , if kiddo sneezes etc w/ sharing 1 bottle and needing refilled 3-4 times to maintain effectiveness.

If they can't get it straight with 6 classes..just imagine logistics for whole school.

8/19 What to do Wednesday?

I want off this death roller coaster. We may have already been exposed due to the poor coordination, insufficient and improper cleaning and disinfecting. This is gross negligence . I do not feel safe and neither are the kiddos. Morally I feel duty to tell parents we are not [ready.it](#) is not safe.

This should have been the the one thing done right! No room for error or practice.

How could you welcome kids back to classroom and mandate us to teach them in person without protecting us?

My decision is made. I care more about keeping my students , myself and my EA safe than I do teaching them face to face .

Please BOE.. support our health and safety above anything else!

Sent from my iPad

Testimony

Kahanu Nguyen <kahanunguyen@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 7:39 AM

My name is Kahanu Nguyen. I am a 1st grade, dual-certified teacher at Waiakeawaena Elementary School in Hawaii District on the Island of Hawaii. I have taught for 14 years here in Hawaii. I am submitting testimony for Action item V. **A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication.**

I implore you to please take action on the following items:

- Ensure 100-percent distance learning for all students across the state, including those in special education, until at least the end of the first quarter.
- Require the DOH and HDOE to provide clear metrics on when school campuses are safe for students' return. Many states and cities have specific triggers already in place for when schools should be open or closed based on COVID-10 cases, but Hawaii does not.
- Guarantee that the HDOE honors HSTA's contract by allowing teachers to work from home (telework) for as long as distance learning remains in effect.

I am fully prepared to work remotely from home with the same high-quality instruction necessary to keep moving our students forward. I was able to show that when we closed our schools and went full distance learning at the end of last year. I think it is the safest route for all of our school community, please put our keiki, families, and teachers first.

Mahalo,

Kahanu Nguyen, Hawaii District, Island of Hawaii



Testimony

Elijah Medeiros <elijahmedeiros@yahoo.com>

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 7:49 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Elijah Medeiros/ parent of public school students;

General business meeting;

Discussion on public school curriculum;

I am in strong opposition to the public school system using the Acellus program. It's founder is not credentialed. The materials of the program do not teach history correctly. There is much information that is construed. I have been a fire fighter for the County of Hawaii for over 13yrs. Look at the true numbers about COVID-19. It is SAFE for children to attend school in person without the use of face mask. Over 600 people have died in the state this year from the common flu/influenza. How many have died from COVID-19 less than 10. The majority of those reported to have died from COVID forcibly placed on ventilators and in doing so, those doctors caused their deaths. They died because the body was unable to recover from being in the ventilators not from COVID.

Sent from iPhone



Late Testimony

August 19, 2020

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Aloha Chair Payne and members of the Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning the provision of school meals to DOE students during this new school year.

Hawaii Foodbank understands the need and importance of increasing food access to students and their families. We currently work with our food partner agencies on Oahu and Kauai to provide supplemental food assistance to over 3,000 DOE students through the School Pantry Program every month.

Due to impacts of COVID-19, our organization has seen an 85% increase in food distribution on Oahu and 102% increase on Kauai through our regular distribution channels. We have pivoted our services by providing mass food distributions in the community, serving an additional 50,000 children and their families. We know that the needs will continue to grow and that increasing food access to students and their families is vital.

Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs (HCNP) has applied for and received waivers to give schools the flexibility to get meals to students as efficiently as possible. Hawaii Foodbank supports HCNP's recommendations to:

1) Allowing students to pick up grab-and-go meals from a school that they are not enrolled at. This is especially important for families that have children enrolled at multiple schools, as well as for students who are enrolled at schools far from their homes.

2) Allowing students to pick up more than one meal at a time. This would reduce the number of trips that students would have to make to pick up meals. Over the summer, School Food Services Branch successfully piloted Emergency Meals to You to provide shelf-stable meals to students in rural areas of our state, so they have experience in providing meals that do not have to be consumed soon after receipt.

3) When students move to alternate-day schedules, send students home with multiple shelf-stable meals for their distance-learning days. This not only would make it much easier for students and their families, but it would also enable schools to better maintain social distancing on their campuses and reduce the amount of work in the cafeteria.

Mahalo for your consideration of this testimony.

With much respect and aloha,

Ron Mizutani
Hawaii Foodbank
President and Chief Executive Officer

Marielle Terbio
Hawaii Foodbank
Director of Community Engagement & Advocacy





Testimony

Ryan Link <ryanlink98037@hotmail.com>

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 10:00 AM

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

I am testifying to Item V, the reopening of schools.

While I applaud the HSTA efforts to keep teachers safe, I fully disagree with the position of going virtual for the entire state. What's good for some is not what's good for all. We are in a unique situation here in Hawaii. Being separated by the ocean, all islands are different. And not all are Oahu having an outbreak.

I work at Kualapuu Public Conversion Charter School on Molokai. We have been having students since August 3rd. We had a 'soft opening' inviting parts of our classes over the course of a little more than a week, to get acquainted with the new policies and procedures. Our first official day of school was Wednesday the 12th of August.

It has ran extremely smooth. Our administration has done a phenomenal job of getting ready for this school year with lots of plans. Our rooms are extremely sanitized and spaced apart. The kids are happy and parents too. We've received emails from parents exclaiming how happy they are that our school is open for the mental health of their children. Being open has been amazing. The kids are happy.

Molokai has not had cases since March. Lanai has had ZERO! Why should we be treated like Oahu with outbreaks when we are so different. I feel extremely safe going to work due to the planning that went into opening our school year.

So please, do not make the state go all virtual. It is not needed and it definitely is not what is the best for students. Face to face learning is better and since we have the precautions in place, we should stay doing what we are doing here at Kualapu'u on Molokai.

Thank you,

Ryan Link
5th / 6th Grade Teacher
Kualapu'u School
Molokai, HI



Testimony

Daniel Tavares <danielpktavares@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 10:03 AM

Aloha,

I am testifying on item V. A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication

I am a teacher at Keaau High School. Last week I learned from family, parents and colleagues that 3 schools on our side of the island have needed to quarantine faculty/staff due to potential exposure on campus due to COVID-19. This was before we had students on campus. If we had students on campus then that would have exposed hundreds of students and possibly their families to COVID-19. Because of this I believe it is important that we continue distancing learning for at least the first quarter of school.

In this past week, during which parents & students came for materials & device pick-up we also had additional issues that came up. As parents drove up, faculty and staff were there to meet with them and introduce themselves, talk about their tech needs, and distribute classroom materials. At that time socially distancing and properly wearing PPE became difficult to practice as teachers and staff would both approach cars and even sit at their tables together and sometimes would need to be reminded to keep their masks on properly. We ended up needing additional structure to our grab n go process in order to socially distance properly. If teachers who are educated and aware of the threat of COVID-19 still need guidance and practice in order to properly wear PPE and socially distance then how much more difficult will it be for our students when they return? As of now we have no protocols to ensure PPE is worn properly (covering both nose and mouth) and students are socially distancing adequately outside of class. This means that before and after school, transitioning between classes, on bathroom breaks, and during both recess times students may have contact with anyone within the school grounds without being properly protected.

We understand that these are not easy things to figure out. Through collaboration we have made progress on many of the safety concerns expressed so far, but it does take time. I also see the need here to be able to tele work from home. I understand the Superintendent's position of allowing access to the school for those teachers that need the resources at school in order to properly carry out their job duties, however this should not prevent teachers that can do their duties at home from doing so. We have already had quarantine scenarios occur that may have been avoided if faculty & staff were allowed to work from home and I believe that is a strong argument to allow telework for those who are able. Why should we require more faculty & staff to put themselves at risk when there is no need to do so.

Mahalo for your time and consideration!



Testimony--NOT 100% Virtual Statewide

Kim Link <kimmee611@aol.com>

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 11:13 AM

Reply-To: Kim Link <kimmee611@aol.com>

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

Testimony on item V. the reopening of schools.

Dear BOE,

While I applaud the HSTA efforts to keep teachers safe and appreciate everything they do, I disagree with the demands of going 100% virtual for the entire state. What's good for some is not what is good for all...as long as Molokai avoids a COVID outbreak. If Molokai sees an outbreak, then things may have to change.

I work at Kualapuu Public Conversion Charter School on Molokai. We have been having students since August 3rd. We had a 'soft opening' inviting small groups of our classes over the course of a seven days, to get acquainted with the new safety policies, procedures and complete assessments. Our first official day of school was Wednesday, August 12th.

Our administration has done a phenomenal job of getting ready for this school year with lots of safety plans and protocols in place and offering ALL THREE MODES OF LEARNING:

- 1) full day, every day
- 2) 1/2 day option, every day
- 3) virtual option

Our rooms are routinely sanitized twice a day and desks are spaced 6 feet apart. I teach an AM 5th grade group with 9 students for three hours and a PM group with 6 students for three hours. I feel safer this year with smaller classes and safety protocols than I did last year when I had 29 kids crammed into a classroom. This year the kids are happy and parents are too! I have received email from parents expressing how happy they are that our school is open for the mental health of their children. The parents have seen their children change both mentally and physically for the positive being more animated and talkative at home. The kids are happy and excited to be back.

Molokai has not had cases since March. Lanai has had zero confirmed cases. Why should we be treated like Oahu with outbreaks when we are so different? I feel extremely safe going to work due to the planning that went into opening our school year.

Again, as long as Molokai does not have an outbreak...please, do not make the entire state go 100% virtual. It is not needed AT THIS POINT and it definitely is not what is the best for ALL students. Face to face learning is better and since we have the precautions in place, we should stay doing what we are doing here at Kualapu'u on Molokai.

Thank you,

Kim Link
5th Grade Teacher
Kualapu'u School
Molokai, HI



Testimony

Spencer Gill <spencergill918@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 11:40 AM

Dear Vice Chair Uemura and members of the Board of Education,

Mahalo for the opportunity to be heard.

Over the past five months the decision making, planning, and developments from the Department of Education have been short sighted, lacked leadership, and void of strategy. I implore you to hold the Superintendent accountable for poor leadership and make this year “aloha oe”, the final year of poor leadership in Hawaii’s schools.

Hawaii has the luxury of watching 49 other states take action. We can simply take good strategies from other states and customize them to make it work for Hawaii schools. Instead, Kishimoto does things piecemeal, says things in the media first then makes her staff run around to deliver on what she just promised.

Distance learning has begun, but because Kishimoto lacked foresight and did not make distance learning an option in the reopening of schools, teachers were not provided professional development for teaching online (which should have happened in the 4th quarter). The expectation to teach live is non existent. Instead, put children on Acellus or online curriculum from ASU. Computers should not be replacing live teaching. What is the expectation for teachers if schools decide to put the students on Acellus or ASU curriculum? Will a teachers job be checking to see if students login? (Will there be a need for teachers if this is the case?) How are teachers checking to see if students are learning the content? How are Principals monitoring the progress of every student? How are vulnerable students benefitting from one size fits all programs? This only confirms the apathy of the DOE system, making excuses for why children aren’t performing, Hawaii doesn’t expect much. It’s time to get someone vested in the state of Hawaii, who cares about Hawaii’s children.

The HSTA has been running the show and the DOE’s human resources leaders and offices are not equipped, or lack the experience, expertise, and thinking skills to predict and mitigate HSTA’s next move. It is either a lack of care from the ivory towers of the HR office that do not deal with front line operations or simple incompetence on their part. The complaints from the HSTA have been predictable and still your HR department is unable to advise Kishimoto. HSTA is running the show and pretty soon, teachers will be relegated to clerical tasks while students are taught by computers through a shortened school day.

There is still an opportunity during the pandemic. Live teaching is a must, kids need the human contact and teaching. Discontinue making decisions for a few weeks at a time. Take responsibility and have a strategy with the students in the center. Live distance learning should be decided on for the rest of the semester.

Malama Pono



August 19, 2020

Testimony Re. Educational Quality and Educational Equity During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Dear Board of Education,

The Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) can and should offer all students a fully online learning option during the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, I have concerns about the HIDOE's selection of Acellus to deliver the HIDOE's 100% online curriculum. I find it disconcerting that parents allege that the Acellus social studies curricula includes racially biased and culturally insensitive social studies content. These criticisms of Acellus are visible in online parent support communities and reflect the opinions of actual parent whose children have utilized the Acellus curriculum.

A second concern is the manner in which the HIDOE had created educational inequities by offering one program of study for student who *can* attend a hybrid learning model and a separate, inferior program of study for students who *cannot* safely attend a hybrid program during this pandemic - due to their own health risks or the health risks of a household member.

All students must have equitable access to school resources, including instruction, regardless of whether students' school engagement is through a hybrid learning pathway or via a 100% virtual learning pathway. The absence of educational equity across the hybrid and 100% virtual learning pathways renders the HIDOE vulnerable to future student complaints to the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights.

At my child's high school, students who opt into the Acellus fully online program are *not* allowed on campus, *cannot* participate in school activities, *cannot* access learning supports from DOE teachers, and *cannot* participate in virtual classroom peer collaborations. The Acellus program offered at my child's high school does *not* include access to any teachers at all. It is self-paced, independent study, and all assessments are computer-scored. The absence of teacher-scored assessments means no teacher feedback on any assignments, not even Language Arts.

I suspect the selection of the Acellus curriculum is largely driven by the DOE's goal of minimizing costs. Yet this cost savings comes at the expense of equity and quality. At present the HIDOE's hybrid learning pathway and the Acellus pathway do not provide equitable access to instruction.

According to an Acellus sales representative, the cost to enroll my child as a fulltime student in their Acellus virtual academy is \$250 per month. That is approximately \$1250 per semester or \$2500 per school year. I expect that HIDOE pays even less per pupil for Acellus, since their contract with Acellus appears to only include the online curriculum, without Acellus teacher supports, assessments, or feedback.

However, according to the HIDOE website, the HIDOE per pupil spending on instruction is approximately \$8300 per pupil. In light of this \$8300 per pupil spending on instruction, it is unnecessary for the HIDOE to purchase the least expensive online program, at the expense of equity and curriculum quality. For instance, Advantages Virtual Academy costs a parent approximately \$2000 per semester and \$4000 per school year – yet it includes a high quality curriculum and instruction by qualified teachers. This amount is less than half of the HIDOE per pupil spending on instruction.

Another low-cost online curriculum is the University of California’s widely used “UC Scout Plus” virtual curriculum for high school students. In this flipped classroom model available to public schools across the nation, schools provide their own teachers and pay just \$49 per student for each semester course. The curriculum was developed by professors in the University of California system.

In my opinion, the most logical solution is to permit the fully online students to participate in the same academic curriculum and instruction as the hybrid students, albeit with virtual delivery of the same face to face instruction received by hybrid students. Indeed, this is the approach used by the Myron B Thomson Academy, a public charter school. I encourage the Board of Education to contact Myron B Thompson Academy to learn how this high performing public charter school has successfully provided equitable instruction to outer island student who cannot attend on-campus face to face experiences.

Personally, I abhor the idea that my 9thgrader would learn from a substandard curriculum that has not carefully examined their content for gender or racial bias. The fact that the HIDOE had used Acellus for credit recovery for 10 years is not a sound rationale for its continued use. Parents experienced with the curriculum have alleged that Acellus puts forth a “whitewashed” history of the United States that downplays the horrific impacts of US Slavery, and allege that the American History course is rife with historically inaccuracies.

For instance, in a Facebook post dated July of 2020, a parent critiqued the **Acellus Middle School American History unit on Slavery in Colonial America (Step 57)**. She wrote: “I don’t appreciate the slide that minimize the horrendous experience of slaves.” She shared a quote from the Acellus lesson slide to highlight her complaint: *“they [enslaved persons] were introduced to Christianity and really found solitude in faith and that life would be better on the other side. And that they learned many new skills. And in some limited cases, slaves could buy their freedom or were given their freedom depending on the property owners.”* I hope the BOE will recognize and agree that the contention that “learning skills” or “gaining Christianity” are so called “benefits” of slavery is expressly rooted in racist ideology. Enslaved Africans were

already skilled farmers before they were subjected to dehumanizing slavery in the US; they did not learn such skills from their oppressors in the U.S. And the suggestion that conversion to Christianity is a “benefit” of oppression and slavery is inappropriate content in a public educational setting. A thoughtful presentation of content could instead highlight that the oppressors *enslaved* Africans and *denied* enslaved African Americans their freedom and *forced* enslaved persons to pay for their freedom. There are other examples of racial and gender bias presented by other parents in the support group. Please contact me if you would like to join the parent support group to view parents’ criticisms of the Acellus content.

As consumers of for-profit curricula, the Board of Education and HDOE has an obligation to recognize the harm that racial and gender-bias imparts upon students’ school engagement and post-secondary aspirations. The vetting and selection process for a fully online curriculum should include measures of cultural appropriateness, accuracy of content, accessibility to diverse learners, and instructional quality (among others). I have viewed the Acellus demo videos and I find that much of the Acellus demo content is lacking on these quality dimensions. For instance, most of the demo videos appear outdated and use brightly colored geometric print backgrounds that could be distracting for students with attention deficits or visual impairments.

As the Fall semester is commencing on Monday, I urge the BOE to act now to ensure that all students (both hybrid learners and fully virtual learners) have equitable access to qualified teachers, a culturally relevant curriculum, and opportunities for joint production of knowledge through peer collaboration.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Acellus

Maki Morinoue <maki@pogg.net>

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 12:21 PM

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

Aloha HIBOE,

I found this out today and it seems too late....as you are discussing this very issue today. Yet I find it important to address my concerns still.

As a parent and active community member I am deeply concerned at the basic principle and moral value of this company Acellus.

I hope you roll out and support another platform. I understand this is free and our white colonial suppressors makes their Koolaid cheap and palatable for us to keep taking in their racist rhetoric. Not only it is racist it is sexist, strongly suggesting women's role in society that dates us back to the 1940's. I know it is difficult but I feel it is important now more than ever to raise compassionate and humane future adults by showing leadership that is inclusive and has no tolerance for this type of education. Principles shouldn't have to bare that responsibility and financial responsibility. It comes from the top.

I hear racism and bullying in Hawaii schools against white and against colored people. It is here in Hawai'i as well.

I would like to see Hawaii Board of Education support a new online platform and in the near future make mandatory; arts, culture, civics and cursive a part of our Curriculum again. These are the building block to critical thinking and empowering our next generation to make good choices as active citizens. We have done a disservice living without these in our DOE system for decades and having every school fight and fundraise to keep it going!

Please kokua for our future.
Malama Pono!

Aloha
Maki

--

Maki Morinoue
www.PolarityBalance.com
www.StudioSevenFineArts.com

Share your ALOHA

"Aloha Spirit" is the coordination of mind and heart within each person. It brings each person to the self. Each person must think and emot good feelings to others. In the contemplation and presence of the life force, "Aloha,"



ACELLUS concerns

Kyli Arford <kyliarford@gmail.com>

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 12:34 PM

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

Aloha Hawai'i State BOE,

I realize that this may be too late as I just learned that you are discussing this matter today... But I felt it very important to raise the issue about ACELLUS being offered to all of our children. I have a kindergartner and a third grade student and from what I've seen so far, which is very little and VERY early on, the content is racist, misogynistic, and even seemingly filled with propaganda. I don't know if there was any vetting process whatsoever but I do know that the program was gifted to the schools here on the Big Island because Aloha MAP wrote a grant for it. I love and support Aloha MAP and all that they do for our community, but I do feel like not everything free is valuable.

I also realize that the DOE has no money right now and anything they could get their hands on may have seemed to be better than nothing at all. I don't blame The schools or the teachers. In fact I feel like everyone is rushed and is trying to just do the best for our kids. That being said, there may not have been enough time to thoroughly look through and see if this would make sense or be appropriate content for Hawaii, especially during such incredible times that we are facing as a country and world.

However; There are much better programs and platforms out there including Khan Academy kids. I, like many other parents, am struggling to design curriculum for my kids that is timely and relevant while also trying to work from home and balance everything else.

Thank you for taking a concerned parents voice into consideration.

Respectfully,
Kyli Lyn Arford

--

Sent from Gmail Mobile

Testimony

Denise Cady <northwest0325@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 1:14 PM

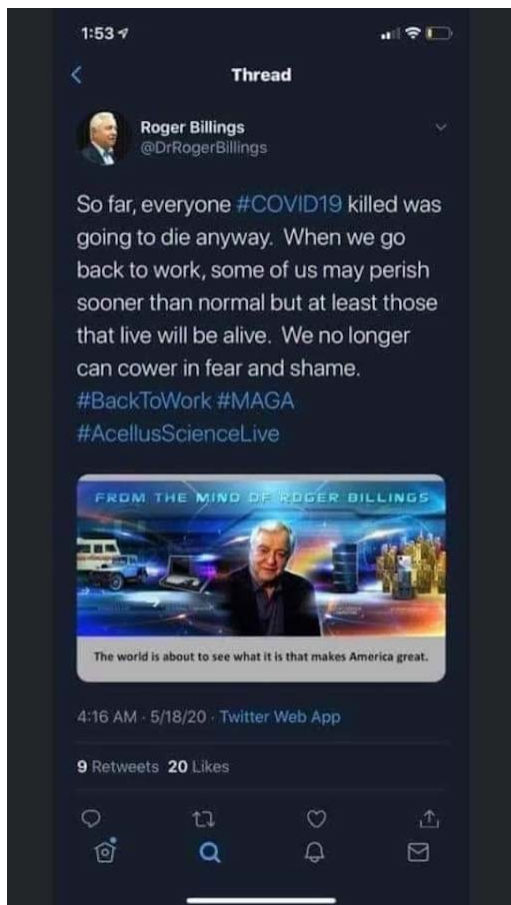
Good Afternoon,

My name is Denise Cady (Last name pronounced: Kadee) and this is a general business question regarding the Accelus Distance Learning option.

I'm very shocked and saddened that this program was selected for our keiki and I'm seeking for better alternatives for distance learning (IE: Blackboard, Google Classrooms).

Robert Billings, who oversees the program, received his doctorate from an non-accredited institution that he co-founded called the International Academy of Science that is located in Independence, MO. He received his degree as the first student at the institution. Mr. Billings isn't even a doctor, but only has a BA degree in Engineering from Brigham University.

Mr. Robert Billings was quoted in a now deleted tweet:



During my son's pre assessment for Social Studies, he was given a list of names of Supreme Court Justices and was told to pick which one was black, and nothing else. Several other parents have testified that there is a video on the platform where a character is referred to as "Sweet Lips". When asked how she got her name, the girl blushes and giggles, then replies, "Don't ask, we're not even going there." This is overly sexualized content for Elementary school children.

As an active duty single parent, I question the material in this program along with the morals of Mr. Robert Billings. Do these morals match with the board's morals? If not, can the board please seek an alternative distance learning option that doesn't cheapen our keiki's education but instead, adequately invest in it? Thanks



Testimony

Anderson Mail <andersonmrz@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 1:19 PM

I would like to question the use of ACELLUS academy as the only accepted distance learning option approved by the HIBOE. I just sat through my 7th grade student's Social studies lesson and was shocked at the content. Where is the separation of church and state that prohibited religious studies in schools? The title of this weeks lesson was "The Christian Scripture and Birth of Jesus." The next lesson is "Basic Beliefs of Christianity."

Was the HIBOE aware of this? I haven't been able to preview my other child's lessons as I haven't received their login info yet. I would like to know if Christian religious studies have been inserted in the curriculum for all social studies/history lessons?

I would like to state that I object to this and don't see the relevance. I would urge the HIBOE to look closer at other options for distance learning for our students and allow parents that unknowingly committed to this type of instruction to cancel the ACELLUS program and try another option.

Mahalo, Scarlett Anderson



Inappropriate Acellus Content

Amanda O <amandaona85@gmail.com>

Thu, Aug 20, 2020 at 4:54 PM

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

Hello,

I am writing in regards to the distance learning options selected for our keiki. I have an autonomic nervous system disorder and heart condition. Since my son has asthma, we will have to continue distance learning until our COVID-19 numbers locally are under control. As a mother to a young brown boy, I cannot accept some of the content Acellus is providing our children. Parents locally are sharing racist content they have found on the platform while homeschooling.

In addition to this and on further research it turns out that Roger Billings who created the program received his doctorate at unaccredited institution that he himself was a cofounder of. Upon further investigation he held a BA in Engineering from Brigham University. He has no training or education related to teaching. All of this information is a simple google search away and I cannot believe the school board did less than a google search when considering program options. The man's own son posted multiple articles about escaping his father's religious educational cult. Some instructional videos are led by some "educators" who were given honorary doctorates. This pandemic is not recent and I do believe there was time to vet institutions prior to implementation. Our Keiki deserve a curriculum created by true educators who will honor their very diverse range of cultures while providing correct educational content.

I hope that we will be provided otherwise our family and many others will be homeschooling through other means.

Regards,
Amanda Ona

1:53



Thread



Roger Billings
@DrRogerBillings



So far, everyone [#COVID19](#) killed was going to die anyway. When we go back to work, some of us may perish sooner than normal but at least those that live will be alive. We no longer can cower in fear and shame.

[#BackToWork](#) [#MAGA](#)

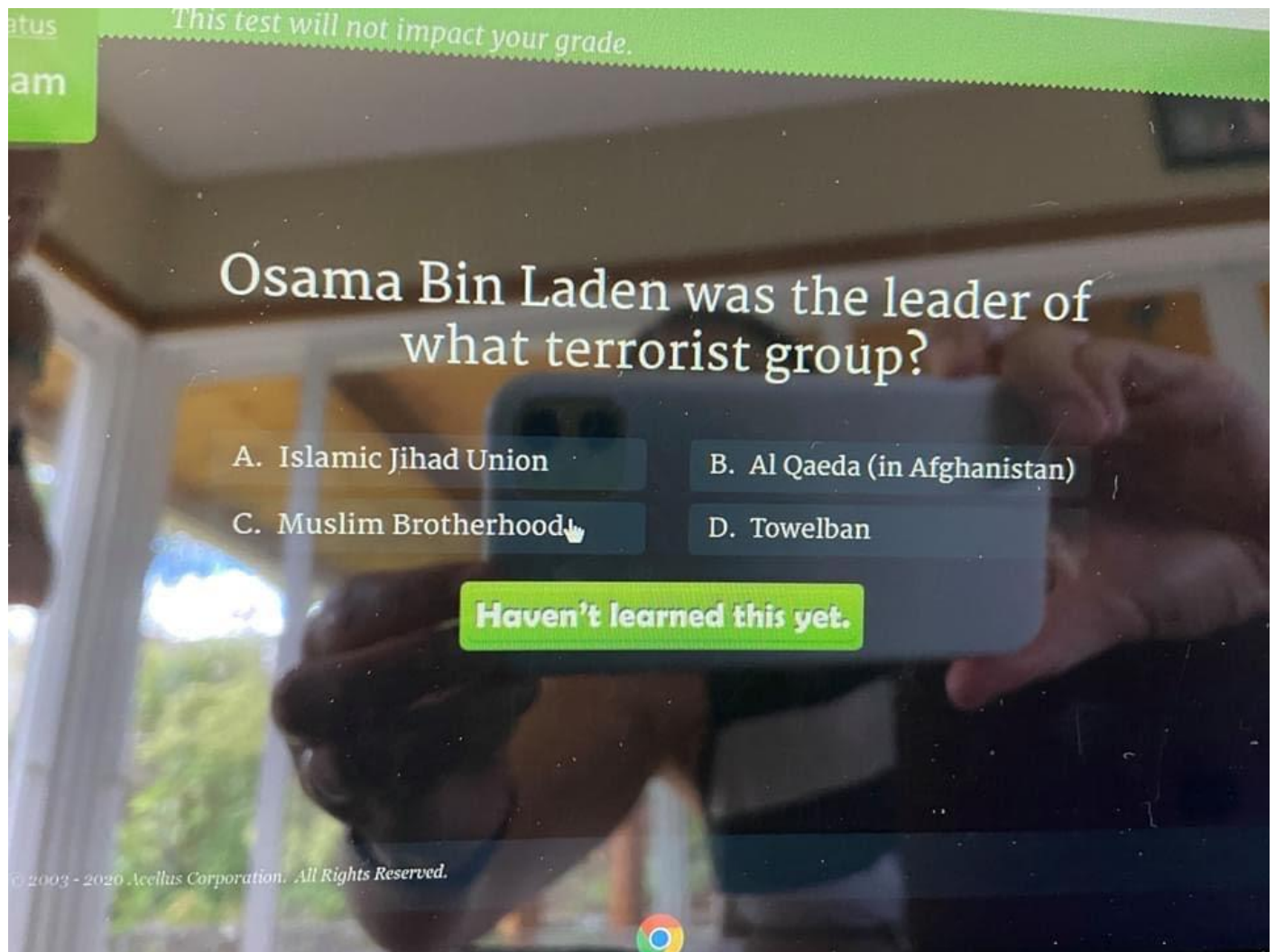
[#AcellusScienceLive](#)



4:16 AM · 5/18/20 · [Twitter Web App](#)

9 Retweets 20 Likes





<https://web.archive.org/web/20130510043645/http://breatheforoxyggen.com:80/rog-billings-cult/>

https://www2.ljworld.com/news/2004/apr/27/cloud_of_controversy/

<https://www.facebook.com/840862/posts/10110168970258889/?extid=NhfjMRw0dUSIdDql&d=n>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/onlinelearningcollective/permalink/631148927515809/>

Late Testimony

Thursday, August 20, 2020.

Aloha State and County Government Officials, Council Members, and Representatives,

I am writing to request that our Government Officials urgently address the mandate outlined in Hawaii's Department of Education's section §302A-251, requiring our public schools to meet the typical standards of instructional days and student hours amidst our state's Covid-19 State of Emergency. Hawaii Superintendent Dr. Christina Kishimoto made the decision to postpone the motion to "grant a general waiver" during last month's "Special Business" meeting held virtually on July 30.

This week my family has done our best to adhere to our school's requests in the soft launch to this year's virtual learning program, with the expectation to begin full time next week. Let me state first, my children attend Pu'u Kukui Elementary in Wailuku, Maui; the administration and my children's teachers have been outstanding! I cannot rave enough at how thorough, resilient, communicative, and resourceful they have been. They truly have given everything to find, learn, explain, and offer new programs and systems and ways to support their students and families during this time. But as I've begun sifting through schedules, syllabus' and outlined expectations, trying to download programs, clear time and space, and login to daily class times it has become overwhelmingly apparent to me that the expectations simply are not realistic.

Even as a stay-at-home mom, who's not needing to work right now, attempting to hold class virtually for two young children in different classes, while caring for a toddler, all five weekdays, each for five hours a day is inconceivable. With our income suffering like most families in Hawaii right now we must find extra finances to re-install internet in our home (as we had eliminated that in response to financial cuts, and sending my kids to the school's gymnasium to use their wifi while I wait in the car for 5 hours is ludicrous), we have no home printer even though the school has informed us we'll need one, and we've had to borrow school devices like many others to "attend" school. These are just the issues my family is encountering, I shudder to think of students who have both parents working, or no shelter, or who lack a quiet environment, or space and resources to set up school, or food, or someone to assist with the day's assignments, who don't have the option to pullout and homeschool.

I absolutely realize the unprecedented effects of this world's pandemic which is why I think it is of utmost importance we address this issue immediately. To mandate immediate Proclamations responding to: travel, economy, gatherings, leisure activities, and workplaces; ensuring the health and safety of *residents*, but fail to realize the grave effects of government's unwillingness to waive typical standards of education is appalling. These are our most vulnerable people—our children—and our teachers and school administrators are stuck, required to enforce "typical" school standards to a school year that is anything but "typical".

Please grant, immediately, our public schools the opportunity to adapt appropriately to this horrendous problem. Funding for education should not be tied up in how many instructional days or student hours are clocked this year. Families should not have to labor over how or if they'll provide education to their children. The current requirements demand far too much on families and educators amidst the cultural, social, mental, political, and emotional toll we're all enduring right now. Please reconsider what you are requiring of students, teachers (who are also parents), and families, surely education is able to exist with resiliency in a way that gives heed to our humanity.

And if I may humbly submit a viable option for public education to resume virtually: allow teachers to pre-record weekly/daily lessons for students to view, allow funding to send home (pickup or mail) work-packets to each student containing their assignments for the week that they could return at the end of the week or submit online, and allow teachers to virtually meet with students individually or in smaller groups to assess progress weekly. This would allow for families to prioritize education within their own restrictions, and would alleviate the huge ask you have required of parents & care givers to supply or assist in instruction, and would allow teachers the opportunity to instruct their students effectively. We love our teachers and our schools please support them in their profession, don't make this harder than it has to be on top of all the difficulties we're facing in the world currently.

Mahalo for your time, sincerely,

Nicole Gniffke (Concerned parent of two elementary students)



Acellus Academy

Bella & Lilly The sistahz <kellymbernier@gmail.com>

Fri, Aug 21, 2020 at 8:36 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern:

The choice to use Acellus Academy is not acceptable, I would like to know who led the research behind choosing a raciest, inaccurate & sexually inappropriate program to educate our children. We need this to be rectified immediately, we will be forming a group and will peruse our children's safety and best interest. I understand these are trying times and apparently the vetting process for choosing this program has shown to have fallen short of its duty. To be clear this needs to be addressed immediately.

Thank you

Kelly

Sent from my iPhone



Acellus is detrimental to our children!

Valerie Hicks <photosbyval@cox.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Fri, Aug 21, 2020 at 2:08 PM

My children currently attend Aliamanu Elementary. This morning it has been brought to my attention on how detrimental this Acellus program that Hawai'i DOE is having our schools use across the state.

I have to say I was already disgruntled about the fact that my 2 children who we chose to be 100% distance learning for at least the first semester would only "see or check in" via Webex or google meet once a week with their class. I know and understand that the all the teachers here in Hawai'i (& across the world) are doing the very best they can with the devastating circumstances. But to only check on the distance learning children once a week to makes sure their apps are working right is so beyond irresponsible to say the least. Here on Oahu each principal was given the authority to choose their own model. And the results are so vastly different & unfair for students who's school "chooses less".

We have friends that have their children going to Hickam Elementary just down the road from us. Their children are also 100% distance-learning students. Unlike our children only meeting once a week. Their children are meeting with their teachers and classrooms daily, 4 times a DAY! Each time for a different subject! The school is supplementing some learning with apps I ready, wonders, go math, and using Google classroom with teacher made assignments. This is what a distance-learning classroom should look like. Not how our children are sitting on an app for only 20 mins per subject with no interaction from an actual person or excitement with the want to learn because there is feedback & interaction from their teacher and classmates.

Now with that & what I'm now aware to with Acellus I call for the BOE to not only remove Acellus from being used for our children's education but they need to make a very basic outline that all schools can easily follow. Attendance can be taken daily with google classroom. Most of all, every single child needs to have interaction with their teacher(s) and peers more than just a check in, show and tell or when they need to troubleshoot a problem. Apps shouldn't be the foundation, parents and teachers need to be the foundation for teaching our children. Apps and other programs can help supplement for our children the way it's ment to be.


The BOE needs to seriously look into "Dr." Billings. He not only founded his own university, I gave himself his doctorate... He also gave his "Celestial Wives" their "doctorates" and these women helped build Acellus. The program is grossly inappropriate for children with sexually suggestive & grooming. It's also been pointed out that the program is wrong with proven facts of history, spelling & the ways children view people in every day life.

Ex. women are ment to be in the kitchen, this was in regards to math & learning fractions

Are police important, if so are the food or bad?

Please choose the black Supreme court justice(multiple choice to choose from)

Below I have attached videos & pictures from Acellus.

** This is how our 100% Distance Learners should be educated! Even with the Face to Face option the teacher should be seeing their students daily, to go over what they are learning at home for the day. Let the Distance Learning teachers teach 

Valerie

7 attachments

Billings founded the unusual, unaccredited, underground institute 20 years ago and dreamed up its curriculum as well as the degree it offers — the “doctor of research.” Billings himself became the school’s first graduate.

image9.jpeg
136K

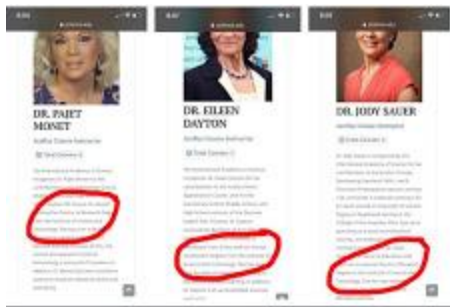


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Our kids are virtual at Hickam, so far, so good. Our kids get three check-ins a day with instruction. They get Go Math, Wonders, iReady and teacher made Google docs assignments. I was anxious after the 4th quarter, but my kid's teachers are doing an excellent job so far.

20h Like Reply



Video.mov

1488K



Video_1.mov

1677K



Late Testimony

August 20, 2020

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board of Education,

Discussion Item V. A. Update on implementation of Board Resolution adopted on June 18, 2020, directing the Department of Education to prepare for the reopening of public schools for the 2020-2021 school year amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, focusing on concerns regarding: health and safety, distance learning, personnel, food service, student transportation, reconciling multiple guidance documents and collective bargaining agreements, and communication

We are commenting on Discussion Item V. A.

We appreciate the BOE having a discussion matching policy via the Reopening Resolution to school level implementation and concerns. We look forward to hearing the department's explanation on how the system is addressing these concerns.

HE'E Coalition members would like to highlight a couple of family and community concerns *vis a vis* Lines 154-172 in the Resolution, regarding the transitioning between instructional delivery modes to address scenarios potentially requiring full or partial rolling school closures, **specifically, "criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes."**

Students, families, community members, teachers, and administrators have had an incredibly hard time with adjusting to the constantly changing school situation. While we understand that the COVID-19 situation is fluid, we are asking for system level guidance and clarity on changes, and an information roll out that is timely. The August 7, 2020 announcement about the sudden shift to full distance learning on Oahu and the subsequent August 11, 2020 announcement to full distance learning on the neighbor islands days before the start of school caused a lot of confusion and anxiety. At the last moment, families are scrambling for child-care and adjusting their work schedules to accommodate the sudden changes.

As the Resolution directs, we ask that there be **clear, objective criteria** or triggers to let families know when school will be in full distance learning or back to in-person models. With clear, objective criteria families can at least anticipate how they might adjust to changing circumstances, and they will have a better understanding of why decisions are made.

For example, back in the Spring, there was guidance which stated that schools would not reopen unless COVID-19 was no longer spreading in the community, defined as four weeks with no new cases.¹ If we had this kind of objective standard, at least the community would have a sense of what to expect, be able to plan accordingly, and understand why a change would be made.

¹ <https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/04/09/hawaii-news/hawaii-public-schools-to-remain-closed-until-state-goes-4-weeks-without-new-covid-19-cases/>

Additionally, we ask **for clarity on all the terms referencing distance learning**. Families are struggling with the myriad definitions around distance learning. What is “distance learning” exactly? Is it a total virtual model without any teacher intervention? Is it A/B rotation through synchronous and asynchronous instruction? Is it a teacher instructing via a videoconferencing platform? Is it assignments provided through Google classrooms? It would help to have this language defined and an infographic by the state so that everyone can have a common language.

Again, we understand that educational leaders in Hawai'i are facing really difficult issues. These difficulties may be overcome with very specific answers and a real focus on clarity of purpose. We humbly offer these recommendations to you.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

HE'E Coalition Members and Participants

Academy 21

After-School All-Stars Hawai'i

Alliance for Place Based Learning

American Civil Liberties Union

Atherton YMCA

*Castle Complex Community Council

*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS

*Education Institute of Hawai'i

*Faith Action for Community Equity

Fresh Leadership LLC

Girl Scouts Hawai'i

Harold K.L. Castle Foundation

*HawaiiKidsCAN

*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance

*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and
Economic Justice

*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists

Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars

*Hawai'i Children's Action Network

Hawai'i Education Association

Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition

* Hawai'i State PTSA

Hawai'i State Student Council

Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Hawai'i P-20

Hawai'i 3Rs

Head Start Collaboration Office

It's All About Kids

*INPEACE

Joint Venture Education Forum

Junior Achievement of Hawaii

Kamehameha Schools

Kanu Hawai'i

*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council

Keiki to Career Kaua'i

Kupu A'e

*Leaders for the Next Generation

Learning First

McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds

Native Hawaiian Education Council

Our Public School

*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

*Parents and Children Together

*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i

Punahou School PUEO Program

Special Education Provider Alliance

*Teach for America

The Learning Coalition

US PACOM

University of Hawai'i College of Education

YMCA of Honolulu

Voting Members () Voting member
organizations vote on action items while
individual and non-voting participants may
collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*



Put Teachers and the Community FIRST

Mo H <livealoha808143@yahoo.com>

Wed, Aug 26, 2020 at 7:53 PM

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

Only essential businesses should be open. I totally agree! However, there are many essential businesses/jobs that can be done from home. One obvious one is public school teachers who are teaching via Distance Learning.

They are essential, of course! But can they do their job from home? Is it safer? Didn't the Mayor and Governor say we need to limit the number of people going out and encourage everyone whenever possible to work from home?

Why are public school teachers required to report to empty classrooms to distance teach? How is this putting safety first? How do students benefit?

Some teachers are teaching high-needs students face to face. They are essential workers who CAN'T do their job from home. But because of this, schools have dozens of students and support staff like PPTs and Skills Trainers on campus. Custodians and Health Aides need to be on campus for health and safety. Cafeteria staff needs to prepare meals. With all these essential workers on campus, why have people there who don't absolutely need to be? Why put unnecessary lives at risk? How does that go along with, "If at all possible...work from home!"

According to Dr. Kishimoto:

- Teachers need to be in school to collaborate. They already do it via Google Meets. They can do that from home.

- They need tech support. Yes...for some, but not for others.

- They need to be able to gather resources to teach. Again, for some yes, others no.

How is the above any different from any other profession allowed to work from home? Don't they need to collaborate, have tech and other professional issues, and need to bring home things from work? Name me one job that can work from home without any of that.

Distance learning teachers need a better explanation than they are essential. Come on... be consistent. Put the health and safety of all above everything else. We are in the RED! How can they say they are putting the health and safety of the public above all else, and yet, demand teachers to report to their EMPTY classrooms to teach? There's absolutely no logical reason for this.

Melanie Matsumoto

Late Testimony

Courtney C. Sweeney
PO Box 2942
Kailua Kona, HI 96745
(808) 987-0980
konaccsween@gmail.com

August 27, 2020

Superintendent Dr. Christina Kishimoto
Office Curriculum and Instructional Design, Alisa Bender
Janette Snelling, Kealahou Complex Area Superintendent
Principle Jeff Takiue, Holualoa Principle
Board of Education – Testimony

christina.kishimoto@k12.hi.us
alisa.bender@k12.hi.us
janette.snelling@k12.hi.us
jeffrey.takiue@k12.hi.us
testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Hawaii Department of Education Leaders,

Did you know that Acellus' math curriculum does not teach regrouping/common core math within their instruction? Did you know that Hawaii State Schools have previously instructed math to their students using regrouping/common core? I ask these questions very seriously to you because I am absolutely confounded as to why my children's educational leadership chose such an outdated, ridiculous learning platform for them to learn on while homeschooling. I say ridiculous because today, as I was looking over my 3rd grader's shoulder for math I witnessed the instructor explain a “snowman holding a backwards banana so it looks like a 7!” to equal 56. For real? This is quality education? I should also mention that multiplication within the Acellus program for my 3rd grader BEGAN at 8x7. There was zero foundation building beginning from 0x1 up through the multiplication table. Acellus just started at 8x7! I know for a fact the wonderful teachers at Holualoa School would begin instruction from a solid, confident foundation, not at 8x7.

My next serious question. Did anyone at the District or State level take any time at all to vet and examine the Acellus curriculum? We have used this program for a total of 4 days (approximately 8 hours for my 3 kids time combined) and I've realized what a complete disaster the math curriculum is for my kids. There is no reason that any one of you named in this letter, or an assistant could not have taken an afternoon to step into the shoes of a student or parent to quickly examine the Acellus platform and see how atrocious it is.

I feel most frustrated because for the last 5 years, the Hawaii DOE has taught my children's math using common core. These are standards that you set yourselves for Hawaii keiki under your guidance. I feel you went back on that dedication to education and have left parents and your students in the lurch. I am now having to research and find an alternate math curriculum for my kids to keep your standards in place and to keep any confusion under control.

It's clear you are all passionate about education, you've dedicated your lives to the betterment of our children. I urge you, as our leadership to the keiki to take a good look at Acellus. Put yourselves in the children's shoes, the parents shoes! How would you feel if this were to happen to you with your keiki?

I look forward to further communication and viable solutions to the Acellus problem we are in right now and I hope that there is no hesitation in choosing a learning platform that meets the requirements that you already have in place within our schools in Hawaii.

Mahalo for your time,

Courtney C. Sweeney
Mom to Veronica, 4th Grade
Noah, 3rd Grade
Ronan, 2nd Grade



Acellus

Noe's <noenoe.wong@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 1, 2020 at 11:42 AM

I am an extremely concerned and upset parent of 3 children in 3 different public schools in Hawaii. I am appalled at the content I have found online and am very upset that the DOE accepted and disseminated this learning platform throughout our school system! Who is responsible? I am beyond mad, and would like to know what the DOE/BOE will be doing about this. At this point, I am preparing to remove my children from the school system!!

Mahalo,

Noelani Wong