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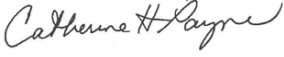
STATE OF HAWAII  
**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**  
**(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)**

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DATE: May 31, 2016

TO: Patricia Halagao, Chairperson  
Student Achievement Committee, Board of Education

FROM: Catherine Payne, Chairperson   
State Public Charter School Commission

SUBJECT: Committee Action on Charter School Requests for Waivers for Board Policy 104.1,  
Graduation Requirements and Commencement, for School Year 2016-2017 for the Following  
Schools: Hakipu‘u Learning Center, Hawaii Technology Academy, and Kanu o ka ‘Āina New  
Century Public Charter School

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1. RECOMMENDATION

The State Public Charter School Commission (Commission), at its general business meeting on May 26, 2016, unanimously passed the following motion in regards to the request from Hakipu‘u Learning Center (Hakipu‘u) for a waiver from the high school graduation requirements as set forth in Board Policy 104.1:

**“Moved that the Commission, based on the information available at this time, is unable to support the request from Hakipu‘u Learning Center for a waiver from the Board of Education high school graduation requirements as set forth in BOE Policy 104.1.”**

2. POLICY CONTEXT

Section 302D-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), includes in the definition of “organizational viability” that a charter school “meets appropriate standards of student achievement as defined by the board (of education)” pursuant to the board’s responsibility to determine state educational policy. In line with this responsibility to meet the standards set by the Board, the State Public Charter School Contract (“Charter Contract”) requires charter schools with a high school program to meet the state high school graduation requirements that have been determined by the Board.

Specifically Section 3.4 of the Charter Contract, entitled Graduation Requirements for High Schools, states:

The School shall comply with BOE Policy 4540, as the same may be amended from time to time, which shall apply starting with the incoming ninth graders for the school year 2013-2014, and shall provide evidence of such compliance; provided that the School may request a waiver of this Policy from the BOE.

To clarify, the Charter Contract states that charter schools must comply with the Board's policy on graduation requirements—referred to as BOE Policy 4540 in the Charter Contract and renumbered as BOE Policy 104.1—for the incoming ninth graders from school year 2013-2014. These ninth graders are now expected to be graduating seniors in the 2016-2017 school year.

The Charter Contract also allows for charter schools to deviate from the Board's graduation requirements, contingent upon the Board granting the charter school a waiver from the requirements. It should be noted that one charter school, University Laboratory School, has already been granted a waiver by the Board. In the case of University Laboratory, the school requires its graduates to earn 33 credits in order to graduate, compared to the Board's required 24 credits, with additional credits for performing arts, math, science, and college and career seminars, to name a few.

### 3. BACKGROUND

Hakipu'u is a start-up Hawaiian culture-focused public charter school that offers a student-centered, project-based learning environment as an alternative to the traditional education model. The school is located on the campus of the Windward Community College and serves 64 students primarily from Windward Oahu, ranging from Kahuku to Waimanalo.

The school's mission is: "Hakipu'u Learning Center – an innovative, community-based school rooted in the traditional wisdom of Hawai'i – utilizes a student-centered, place and project-based approach to build an 'ohana of life-long learners who apply critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills to achieve success now and into the future."

Hakipu'u's academic program involves the development of annual personal learning plans for each student to assist in facilitating student learning and participation in staff- and student-driven projects. Students earn credits toward graduation through the completion of these projects and a presentation of evidence of the student's learning.

The chair of Hakipu'u's governing board confirmed in a letter, provided as **Attachment 1**, that the governing board has approved the proposed graduation requirements and supports the request for a waiver from the Board. Charter school governing boards have the statutory responsibility to serve as the independent governing body of the charter school which has oversight over the financial, organizational, and academic viability of the charter school. The governing board also has the authority to determine the organization and management of the school, including the curriculum of the school.

### 4. DISCUSSION

In reviewing these graduation waiver requests from charter schools, the Commission's deliberations were guided by BOE Policy 104.1, which states: "The purpose of high school graduation requirements is to establish rigorous standards of learning that will enable all public school students to meet the vision of a Hawaii public school graduate...Students who demonstrate proficiency in the

State Standards and General Learner Outcomes in the required courses or proficiency based equivalents shall receive a Hawaii High School Diploma.”

Hakipu’u seeks a waiver from the Board that would allow the school to depart from BOE Policy 104.1 by requiring students to earn more credits for graduation than required by the Board. The school’s proposed graduation requirement proposal is provided as **Attachment 2**. The Commission is unable to support Hakipu’u’s request for a waiver from the graduation requirements set forth in BOE Policy 104.1 due to the following concerns:

1. The Commission was unable to determine the correlation between Department of Education (“DOE”) high school credits and Hakipu’u high school credits. Furthermore, the school did not provide an explanation of what constitutes “documented and validated active learning time on content and evidence of learning new knowledge/skills.” **Figure 1** provides a side-by-side comparison of the definitions of a DOE credit and a Hakipu’u credit.

**Figure 1: Comparison Between DOE’s Credit and Hakipu’u’s Credit**

DOE Credit	Hakipu’u Credit
<p>A credit is awarded for each course meeting formally for approximately 200 minutes per week, and successfully completed by the student during the period of one year.</p> <p>This calculates to approximately 120 hours per credit course (or 60 hours per 1/2 credit course).</p>	<p>A credit is awarded for 100 hours of documented and validated active learning time on content and evidence of learning new knowledge/skills.</p>

2. The Commission was unable to determine how the school awards high school academic credit. In a response to Commission inquiries, Hakipu’u stated that “students are awarded credit based on documented and validated time on active learning of content and learning new knowledge and skills. Credit is awarded based on evidence of learning assessed at a rubric-determined Satisfactory or better developmental level for the student.”

The school did not provide rubrics, evaluation tools, or assessments that clearly demonstrate that credits are awarded for student mastery of grade level-appropriate content, the Hawaii Common Core, and Hawaii Content and Performance Standards. The school provided the Post Evaluation & Credit Rubric that is used to evaluate high school student projects and is included as **Attachment 3** of this memorandum. This rubric does not include any measures or performance targets specifically focused on the standards and content covered by the project, yet it is used to award standards-based credits.

3. All students develop student-driven projects for high school credit regardless of whether they have the knowledge and skills required to design a grade-level appropriate project that demonstrates achievement of the relevant learning targets, standards, and benchmarks.
4. Hakipu’u personnel who award high school academic credit are not appropriately licensed teachers with subject-matter expertise in all relevant core subject areas and are therefore

unqualified to assess whether students have demonstrated mastery of the content and the achievement of the relevant learning targets, standards, and benchmarks.

These concerns raise serious questions regarding the school's proposed graduation requirements and whether they fulfill the purpose of the Board's high school graduation requirements by "establish[ing] rigorous standards of learning that will enable all public school students to meet the vision of a Hawaii public school graduate."

Until these concerns are addressed, the Commission is unable to support Hakipu'u's request for a waiver from the Board's graduation requirements as set forth in BOE Policy 104.1. The Commission appreciates the Board's consideration of this recommendation.

ATTACHMENT 1



# Hakipu'u Learning Center

A Public Charter School

*Ma ka hana ka 'ike* Knowing is in the doing

March 28, 2016

Catherine Payne, Chairperson, State Public Charter School Commission  
Yvonne Lau, Acting Executive Director  
Beth Bulgeron, Academic Performance Manager  
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Request for review and approval of the Hakipu'u Learning Center Graduation Requirements

Dear Chairperson Payne,

This letter communicates the Hakipu'u Learning Center (HLC) Graduation Requirements in relation to the Hawai'i Board of Education approved Class of 2016 Graduation Requirements. On behalf of the HLC Governing Board, I respectfully request approval of the HLC graduation requirements as documented.

HLC offers a student-centered, place- and project-based learning environment that helps students set long-term goals and establish annual targets to reach those goals. Students are guided to explore life options through research and experiential learning options. As such, HLC incorporates four essential elements to support student growth and building habits for life-long learning. These elements are excerpted below:

- **“Student-centered:** Each student annually develops or updates his/her personal-learning plan (PLP); this plan builds on the interests, life goals, and educational needs of the student and sets her/his credit and standards goals for the year. These goals guide the design and development process for both staff and student-driven projects. Each PLP is unique to the student. The process empowers learners to build knowledge, skills, and aptitudes to meet their individual life challenges successfully.
- **Project-based Process:** Students learn through both staff-driven projects in multi-age classrooms, as well as through student-driven projects developed and guided with support from the student's and educational support team. Both types of projects may be accomplished on and/or off campus, strive to integrate the expertise and resources of the community and family, and require the student to demonstrate his/her learning through authentic, real-world assessments.
- **Place-based:** Emphasis on the importance of knowing and using the contributions of the past - values, practices, and attributes of Hawaiian systems of knowledge - to inform the present and to inspire the future in ways that are positive and culturally appropriate. Students also explore aspects of the values, practices, and attributes of Hawaiian systems of knowledge and apply this knowledge to addressing today's challenges.
- **Community Impact and Contribution:** Projects challenge students to create sustainable communities that honor diversity and steward relationships between each other and our natural resources as active contributors to the well-being of self, family and community.

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hakipuu\_hlc@yahoo.com

Student contributions to the community are required and documented in annual research projects.”

In your review of the attached Graduation Requirements comparison, you will note that HLC graduates complete more credits and have more documented and validated time in their course studies than are required by the BOE. As HLC prepared for its first graduation class in 2006, the Board, administration, and staff reviewed the processes of a number of student-centered project-based programs across the nation. HLC strives to engage students in on- and off-campus learning experiences and encourages all students to participate in the University of Hawai'i Community Colleges Running Start Program to earn dual credit and to experience college level learning expectations. To enable students the flexibility to explore these options and to meet Hawai'i State course requirements, HLC adapted the format of the nationally recognized Minnesota New Country Charter School graduation requirements format. Guided and advised by staff and families, HLC graduates have successfully met these requirements each year since 2006.

HLC would also like to go on record to express its disappointment in the Commission's choice to work with schools under threat of deficiency verses collaborative effort. Over the last several weeks, HLC staff has been working directly with Commission staff on two significant items in what we understood was a collaborative process. Both efforts are important to the individuals involved and to the school; both have received considerable time and focus from HLC staff not only during this period but also over the year. We apologize if our time frame has not coincided with the optimal timeline for the Commission but please recognize that HLC staff members contribute far and above the hours of their contracts to meet all of the demands of running a charter school in Hawai'i.

HLC also recognizes the considerable effort and contributions that our volunteer Commission members have given to their work and are genuinely sorry to have these concerns rise to this level of discord/dissonance between us.

We offer our mahalo for your consideration for our request for approval of the HLC Graduation Requirements and will contact Sylvia Sylva to confirm scheduling.

Respectfully yours,



Kylee Mar  
Hakipu'u Learning Center, Chair

ATTACHMENT 2





**Hakipu'u Learning Center to HDOE Graduation Requirements  
GRADUATION REQUIREMENT COMPARISON  
9-12 GRADES**

	HLC Graduation Requirements		DOE Requirements: Policy Effective Class of 2016	
<b>General elements</b>	An HLC Credit = 100 hours of documented and validated active learning time on content and evidence of learning new knowledge /skills Credit Award toward standards: based on evidence of learning as assessed at rubric-determined Satisfactory or better quality for the developmental level of the student		A DOE Credit = 120 hours generally delivered through five/week, 40 minute class sessions equaling =200 minutes x 36 weeks to achieve 120 hours Credit Award toward standards: based on passing grades: all grades - "A, B, C, or D" – receive the same credit award	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>HLC credit</b>	<b>HLC hours</b>	<b>DOE credit</b>	<b>DOE hours</b>
<b>Art</b>	3.0	300	2.0*	240*
	Credit may be earned through exploration of various fine arts fields and/or in depth exploration of a single field			
<b>College/Career</b>	1.0	100	*	*
	This credit includes college and career exploration, planning, and preparation for post high endeavors		*Note: requires 2 credits in one of the following disciplines – World Language, Fine Arts, or Career and Technical Education (CTE)/JROTC	
<b>Foundations</b>	2.0	200	0.5	60
	Foundations credit includes: PBL skills, cultural and personal values and practices, tech use, ethics, annual Personal Learning Planning		Note: called "Personal Transition Plan"	
<b>Health</b>	1.0	100	0.5	60
	1.0 credits including: - Building habits for lifelong wellbeing, and - Understanding strategies for personal and family health		0.5 credit include: - Health Today and Tomorrow (0.5 credit)	
<b>Language Arts</b>	8.0	800	4.0	480
	8.0 credits including: - English Language Arts (1.6 credit); and - Communication Arts (1.6 credit); and - Writing (2.4 credit); and - English Language and Reading (2.4 credit) Note: LA component includes World Language option		4.0 credits including: - English Language Arts 1 (1.0 credit); and - English Language Arts 2 (1.0 credit); and - Expository Writing** (0.5 credit); and - English Language Arts basic electives (1.5 credits)	
<b>Math</b>	5.0	500	3.0	360
	5.0 credits including: - Mathematics: Common Core Math, Algebra I and Geometry (3.0 credits); and - Applied Math Explorations (2.0 credits)		3.0 credits including: - Algebra 1 (1.0 credit); and - Geometry (1.0 credit); and - Mathematics basic elective (1.0 credit)	
<b>PE</b>	2.0	200	1.0	120
	2.0 credits including: - Life Fitness, and - Sports league participation		1.0 credit including: - Physical Education Lifetime Fitness (0.5 credit); and - Physical Education basic elective (0.5 credit)	
<b>Science</b>	6.0	600	3.0	360
	6.0 credits including: - Scientific Process and Field Study (0.6 credit), and - Life Sciences (2.7 credit), and - Physical Sciences (2.7 credit)		3.0 credits including: - Biology 1 (1.0 credit); and - Science basic electives (2.0 credits)	
<b>Social Studies</b>	7.0	700	4.0	480
	7.0 credits including: - History: Local, National, and International (3.2 credit), & - Political Science (1.0 credit), and - Cultural Anthropology (2.0 credit), and - Geography (0.4 credit), and - Economics (0.4 credit)		4.0 credits including: - US History and Government (1.0 credit); and - World History and Culture (1.0 credit); and - Modern History of Hawaii (0.5 credit); and - Participation in a Democracy (0.5 credit); and - Social Studies basic elective (1.0 credit)	

Student Choice/Elective	5.0	500	6.0	720
Four Year Totals	40 .0 credits	4000 hours	24.0 credits	2880 hours
<b>Elements Included within above Subject Credit Requirements</b>	<p>HLC – completion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Senior project with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 300+ hours of documented, validated time of which 50 hours is community service related to the topic of the project</li> <li>○ Ten+ page research paper</li> <li>○ Product(s) that provide evidence of new knowledge/skills</li> <li>○ Successful defense of learning</li> <li>○ Presentation of project work to a community audience</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Minimum one year of senior elective in support of College/Career exploration and planning.</li> <li>▪ Minimum 2 years field lab experience.</li> <li>▪ All credits awarded align with Hawai'i identified State and Common Core standards and HLC identified standards</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DOE students may follow three different tracks toward graduation and be awarded a diploma based on successful completion of the selected track.</li> <li>▪ All credits awarded align with Hawai'i identified State and Common Core standards</li> </ul>	

ATTACHMENT 3

# Post Evaluation & Credit Rubric

Proposed Credit

Student Name:

Post Eval Date:

Project Title:

Advisor:

Eval Team:

Final Credit

Project Parts	0	1 Little Evidence/Effort	2 Satisfactory Evidence/Effort	3 Exemplary Evidence/Effort	Comments
<b>Timeline, Work Ethic and Mechanics- 20% of credit</b>					
<b>Average of scores=</b>					
Proposed Timeline (Advisor)		*Deadlines not met and little attempt to stay on track *Time logged onto PF inconsistently *No work outside of school logged	*Deadlines for each phase are met and any postponements are documented and authorized *Time is logged onto PF regularly with a minimum of 3 sentences of comments *Work outside of school is logged and validated	*Deadlines met ahead of time *Time is logged onto PF daily with comments that clearly describes value of work done *Work outside of school hours is logged and validated with evidence	
Work Ethic (Advisor)		*Student is often off task and unproductive during project work time *Student did not attempt to meet with advisor during the project	*Student shows good work habits and uses time during the school day wisely *Student has met regularly with advisor regarding progress of project	*Student demonstrates pride in good work habits *Student sets an example and acts as a mentor for other students during project work time *Student has met regularly with advisor and has taken notes regarding progress of project	
Research		*Notes taken. *Notes are not organized or clearly written *Not all resources are cited	*Notes taken are from various resources *Various note taking skills are used *Sources cited *Research is organized	*Notes taken from various resources are annotated *Notes are rewritten for clarity *All resources are correctly cited in text, as well as at the end of project *Research is organized & indexed	
Resources		*Not all initial resources used *No effort to find more information *No primary resource used	*Three initial credible resources used *Input from Primary source incorporated	*Uses additional, credible resources than originally projected *Primary source is mentor throughout the project	
<b>Knowledge Gained/Demonstrated- 40% of credit</b>					
<b>Average the scores and multiply by 2=</b>					
Questions		*Not all DQ's were answered and/or used as the driving force *Research off topic *EQ is not realized *Student does not fully understand the topic	*All DQ's are clearly answered throughout the research *EQ clearly answered by evidence in the DQ's *Student fully understands the topic	*DQ's are expanded upon throughout the research *EQ is apparent throughout the project *Student fully understands the topic and expanded on it	
Connection/Focus		*Meaningful connection to Hawaii is not clear, and/or little attempt to make one is found	*Meaningful connection to Hawaii is evident and demonstrated within the project and products, as it relates to the topic	*A meaningful connection to Hawaii is clearly demonstrated throughout the project with a deeper understanding of the Maoli culture as it relates to the topic	
Reflection		*Reflection unsatisfactory	*Reflection satisfactory for students level. Rubric is used as guide	*Reflections done throughout the project and final reflection completed	

Products/Evidence/Presentation- 40% of credit		Average the scores and multiply by 2=	
Binder; Artifacts/ Formative evidence of learning.	<p>*Project binder incomplete and unorganized</p> <p>*Little evidence of planning &amp; development of product(s)</p>	<p>*Project Binder is in order, complete, and ready at time of advisor check</p> <p>*Evidence of all planning, research, timelogs, development of product(s) and all written artifacts are included</p> <p>*Products are uploaded to Project Foundry</p>	<p>*Binder is complete and organized in a professional manner</p> <p>*Evidence of all planning, research, timelogs, development of product(s) and all written artifacts are included</p> <p>*Products are uploaded to Project Foundry</p>
Products	<p><b>Final rubric scores for each individual product will be used in the calculation of final credit. (Final rubric score divided by number of elements) Average all product scores.</b></p> <p>1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____</p>		
Post Evaluation Presentation	<p>Student is missing products and is unable to share knowledge gained.</p>	<p>Adequately presents evidence of new learning.</p>	<p>Adequately presents evidence of new learning. Student is on-time for evaluation and has all products displayed and is ready to share new knowledge.</p>

Standards	Proficiency at Developmental Level- ✓	Credit Awarded
<i>Meaningful connection to Hawaii noted in final products</i>		

Credit Calculation	
1) Rubric Score	
2) Divide rubric score by-	<b>10</b>
3) Decimal formatted rubric score	
4) Validated credit hours	
5) Credit Hours (#4 multiplied by #3)	
<b>Final Credit (#5 divided by 100 rounded to hundredths)</b>	

**Comments:**

**SCAN AND UPLOAD TO PROJECT FOUNDRY AS A PRODUCT  
BEFORE COMPLETING THE CREDIT AWARD**