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## Testimony- Special Education Pay

1 message

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To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 8:58 AM

- Mara Carlson/Special Educational Mild/Moderate Inclusion Teacher/DOE/King Kekaulike High School.
- Meeting : Finance and Infrastructure
- Agenda item: Differential Pay for Special Educational Teacher
- Position : Special Educational Inclusion Teacher

Good Morning,

I am writing to share my personal testimony on the Special Ed differential pay. I first want to start with the positive effects it has had on my life. Before the differential pay I was working two jobs. Teacher by day and waitress at Marco's in Kahului. I had waitressed for six years. Five of them while I was teaching at the same time. It was hard work but it was the only way I could afford to live on Maui. My dream was a small "American dream". It was to be a teacher, mother and buy a condo on Maui. Because of the Special Ed difference pay I was able to quit my part time job and have a baby. I also bought my little fixer upper condo in Wailuku April of 2021 with a 3% down payment. My son is now a year old, I own a condo and I no longer work a part time job. Because of this pay raise, in a sense, my dreams have come true.

If the Special Educational differentiation ended I would have to consider selling my condo and moving to the mainland where house and living expenses are more affordable. I don't want to do this. I love my students here at KKHS. I am connected to the community and love coming to school and helping my students that are at risk and need my support. I have lived on Maui over eight years and Big Island for two prior. I have made it my home. Please consider keeping the pay differentiation as I would no longer be able to afford it here otherwise.

Also the workload of a Sped teacher has changed over the past few years. My caseload is 17 students and I do spend many hours outside of the 40 hour work week, preparing meetings, drafting IEPs, communication with teachers, parents, students, and admin, grading, planning, creating new lessons, improving the old lessons, ect. I have never been so busy or worked so hard as a teacher. However I justify it with the extra pay. Without it I would have a bad attitude and be bitter. With the extra pay, the extra work, I can validate it with the pay compensation. I am an Inclusion teacher to four teachers and I have three

preps, U.S. History, Marine Science and 11th grade English. Again, I have never worked so hard. I could not continue to do what I am doing now without pay compensation.

Thank you for your time,  
Mara Carlson

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