



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

Testimony

1 message

enosahulani@yahoo.com <enosahulani@yahoo.com>

Thu, Sep 24, 2020 at 9:05 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Board of Education,

I am a teacher. I am a parent. Please let the students return if families feel comfortable to send them. Our students are not getting what they need via Distance Learning. The choice should be given to the families. Teachers are essential workers, and like our her essential workers we are ready for the front line. Those teachers who are vulnerable can teach the DL students. Not all of us teachers want you to change your minds. Do what is BEST for the STUDENTS.

Mahalo,
Veronica A. Wright

Sent from my iPhone



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

TESTIMONY: NO PERSONAL INFORMATION

1 message

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 3:54 PM

To: "[REDACTED]" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

IN SUPPORT OF : BOE chair recommends suspending in-person learning until directives met

I am currently in isolation from my family because my student tested Covid 19 positive. This student of mine had difficulty doing distance learning so I had asked his parents to bring him to my class, temporarily for in-person support. He is the ONLY STUDENT for face to face support in my classroom. 12 days ago, he tested positive and it was the most stressful and difficult day for me and my family. On that particular day, I was supposed to pick up my elderly father who was being released from the hospital, after falling at home. I had no contingent plan and my family was not prepared for this. I had exposed my family, two of whom are high-risk.

I am a primary caregiver to my parent who has dementia. My sister had to step in while also managing her family and a full-time job, while I am in isolation in one part of our home. There were times she had to step out of the house to take care of her responsibilities and I had to leave my room, to check on my father, outside from his bedroom window. Praying nothing happens to him while my sister is out.

I have 2 more days of isolation. Today I had my second Covid 19 test, awaiting the negative result so I can have my life back with my family.

Veteran teachers like me who have the same circumstances of being a caregiver or having high-risk family members need to have a contingent plan of support in the event of exposure and going in isolation or quarantine. So I fully support suspending in-person learning, as I came face to face with the reality exposure to Covid 19. I love my students! I am passionate about education, but because of my family situation now, I need to think of them first.

[REDACTED]



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

Testimony

1 message

enosahulani@yahoo.com <enosahulani@yahoo.com>

Thu, Sep 24, 2020 at 9:05 PM

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Aloha Board of Education,

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Mahalo,
Veronica A. Wright

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony on Items B and C

1 message

Bo Frank <radfordrams@hotmail.com>

Fri, Sep 25, 2020 at 6:33 PM

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

Aloha Board,

Mahalo Chair Payne and the Hawaii BOE for making student and teacher health and safety a priority. I support and applaud the proposed directives about how and when schools transition between delivery modes and also about teacher telework.

Mahalo,

Bo Frank

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony

1 message

Trisha Gushikuma <trishatg6769@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 9:28 AM

Testimony on criteria items B and C.

- B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions
- C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

As a parent I am appalled by the decision of the Department of a education and Department of health of having students return to in person learning during these times. Our children are not guinea pigs they are human beings that have a bright and promising future ahead of them. We need to look into there best interest and health which the superintendent and DOH has not.

There needs to clearer expectations from the DOE and DOH plus they must include all teams that this will affect.

As for telework for teachers they should be granted telework from home if they are able to do the same amount of work, time and dedication. They should be given the opportunity.

I want all to return to work and school but this must be done safely and with all interest at heart.

We need to continue online learning to keep all students, teachers, faculty and staff healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Trisha P concerned mother for her child's health and future



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

Testimony for 10/1 mtg

1 message

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

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 10:30 AM

- Heather Moselle: Hickam Elementary School Parent; CMHC Graduate Student; ACA and APA student member
- Special Meeting
- Agenda Item B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions
- I support teachers' right to telework and the action suggested by Chairperson Payne in the Executive Summary, in order to make that most feasible for implementation.

The impact on teachers' mental health due to the strains of the pandemic is certainly a topic that will be explored in future research. But as of yet, the research is severely limited in the area of telework, educators' mental health and organizational impact. However, a study of academics at a number of universities who had the opportunity to telework did find an increased in retention of competent staff for the institutions studied (Cheuk, 2006). Additionally, autonomy, flexibility and better work-life balance were noted by academics as benefits of teleworking, along with perceived increased quality of work and productivity (Cheuk, 2006). Obviously, this research is a bit dated and pre-COVID19, but it does highlight positives for both the institutions of higher learning, as well as the academics who were provided the opportunity to telework.

As a parent, I am watching closely as a number of our local educators have teamed together to deliver quality distance-learning to my own two children through live-classes and teacher videos. It is a feat to behold. Their patience is enduring, their technical proficiency on a number of platforms is self-evident, their ability to adapt to technical disruptions on the fly is skillful. Whether they do that from a school building or wearing slippers in the comfort and safety of their home makes no matter to me. Please allow them the opportunity to telework, if they so choose. As educators have demonstrated unbelievable flexibility in teaching methods amid the pandemic, so, too, should their leadership in allowing them to work in a safe and practical environment.

Reference

Cheuk, F. N. (2006). Academics telecommuting in open and distance education universities: Issues, challenges and opportunities. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 7(2) Retrieved from <http://library.capella.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1634496520%3Faccountid%3D27965>

Respectfully,

Heather Moselle



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

Students returning to classrooms

1 message

MICHAEL ALLGAIER <michaeljamesallgaier@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 11:55 AM

Gentlemen and ladies:

DON'T DO IT!

Don't put students back in classrooms in the midst of a pandemic.

DON'T BE [REDACTED]

Thank you.

Michael Allgaier
Resident of Holualoa



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

Testimony " B" item

1 message

Tai Baird <bair6939@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 12:40 PM

Aloha, my name is Tai Baird, I teach at Kahului Elementary School on the island of Maui, and I feel very comfortable testifying publicly.

In the event that I do not testify publicly, I am submitting written testimony as well regarding action item B.

I am a special education teacher who feels that telework availability criteria needs to be reevaluated and viewed differently in light of situations that I have heard from colleagues over. In addition, I feel I have seen the struggles first hand. Currently there are a number of teachers on my campus who have school aged children who attend Kahului School. Despite the fact that we were told as a school community that there were to be no children on campus except our most vulnerable population and our special needs students, still our principal and our CAS are currently allowing teachers who teach at this school to be on our campus. It has put our school community at odds with each other and has divided us a "one." This is because many of our teachers are in the older age bracket and feel scared, worried and are unsure of what to think with the recent knowledge of this information. Both situations are scary- teachers who cannot find childcare options that are safe for their families so they bring their children to the approved work place "learning pod" and then the teachers who do not think this is safe and want to follow protocol of all children not being on campus for health and safety reasons. Telework criteria revised so that teachers with children can do this while having their children at home should be provided this option instead of allowing teachers to come to campus with their children. I think this should be the first change made. In fact, I think it should be mandated. All teachers with child care predicaments should be strongly urged to telework, so that every teacher's safety while on school campuses should be protected. Furthermore, teacher well being and safety in such an unsettling time needs to be at the forefront of each principal's mind. Principals should be required to advocate for this option, should a teacher say that he/she needs or has a problem with childcare. By offering this option during the pandemic, I believe we will have more support from teachers and teachers will have more belief in their school leaders.

Thank you. Tai Baird, Special Education grades 2-3 Kahului Elementary School



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

TESTIMONY

1 message

J808 Town <j808town12@gmail.com>
To: TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 1:17 PM

To: BOE Members

Many teachers were beginning to lose faith in our education system, and also the board of education. We write in so many testimonies sharing our true experiences and we are not be heard. The board listens to all the stories of what really happens in our schools and nothing ever gets done. The meetings are long, many questions are asked, recommendations are made but it stops there. I was beginning to wonder who actually has any authority to make some decisions and order directives. I am a teacher with 27 years of experience and I planned to work for another 5 to 6 years because I love my job. However just last week, I called the state retirement system to see how I can retire early. Teachers are feeling overwhelmed, overworked, stressed, and unsupported by people who have a sworn duty to protect our students, staff, and teachers. Teachers are the frontline workers in a school so why aren't our voices being heard. Why are we being mistreated and disrespected? What have we done? I really don't understand. All we want to do is to teach our beloved students and be safe for our own families. Is that so wrong? COVID will be gone one day and our economy will recover but we will never forget how we have been treated and disrespected during this pandemic.

Finally, something is going to be done! Over 13,000 teachers are finally seeing a glimmer of hope. We are so appreciative that the BOE is taking things into their own hands and demanding that the DOE and DOH step up and do their job effectively. They gave us the run around for over eight months and it needs to stop. I'm sure the board is tired of it too. I couldn't believe the answer DOE gave regarding Acellus at the last meeting. They had to rush and pick a platform so they didn't have time to vet the program. Did we all hear that? So they should be the very ones to realize that rushing is NOT good and it only results in poor choices. So why are they rushing us to have F2F instruction?

How is it that the Kaneohe-Kailua complex already decided to continue DL until the end of the 2nd quarter and my district is considering bringing students back from Oct. 26? How is it that Hilo has decided to do the same thing? How are these decisions being made? If a school is going to reopen F2F instruction then there should be certain criteria met. Different complexes are making decisions based on their CAS. We need statewide guidance and NOT just leave it up to the complex or CAS to make this very important decision. We can't let personal opinions, feelings, or pressure from DOE drive decisions. That's a dictatorship!

We are grateful for Chair Payne's bold action to call for a special meeting to discuss many important topics. I'm glad the board sees how ridiculous it is for teachers to drive hours to a work site just sit in an empty classroom to do remote learning. I try not to drink too much water because I don't want to use the restroom that is shared by many people. I can do the exact same quality work at home because I have a better internet connection, 2 computers, all my teaching materials, and a home office. I think dogs are treated better than how we are being treated. It is so demeaning. If the board doesn't mandate and give a directive the pointing of fingers will continue. The principal denies your request because of CAS. CAS denies your request because of a memo written by Kishimoto. What criteria need to be met in order to telework? No one knows and Kishimoto keeps hiding behind this memo that no one knows about. Honestly, what is

wrong with our system. I would just like to use the restroom without worrying about my safety. Then so many different custodians come in and out of our rooms. Is that really keeping to our bubble? Again this makes no sense.

I hope the board had a chance to review DOH's opening of the school's metrics. I'm sure the board has many questions. What guidelines did DOH use to make these metrics? Please ask them. **These metrics are going to be driving our schools reopening so the board has a duty to question them and not just accept them.** They surely didn't use guidance from CDC because it's totally different. Can you please ask the department that question? DOH said numerous times that they use CDC guidelines but if you compare the metrics it's really off. Please take a look at Amy Peroso's analytical side by side analysis. DOH once again had to rush to throw some numbers together in time for the press conference. If DOH couldn't come up with metrics for over 7 months how reliable are the metrics thrown together in 1 week. Isn't this just common sense?

Chair Payne, you were on Public Radio (sorry forgot the name) and said that you can't see asking teachers to "pivot" once again. Well, we are being asked again. Just when we had to reinvent DL and finally got it working now we have to go backwards to do another 360-degree turn and teacher F2F. You would be so proud of my second graders. They are awesome! They are learning every day and you would be impressed with how tech-savvy they have become. Although, DL may not be the best there's a lot of positives. They are much more independent, learn to problem solve on the spot, and be organized. We have found ways to socialize and build relationships. We have fun Fridays where we dress up and do silly things. Last week was Wacky Wednesday and we turned that day into a narrative writing assignment. Please let us continue with DL until that end of the second quarter. We really can't "pivot" anymore. There is really nothing left for us to give. Let us plan for the quarter and not week by week not knowing what will happen. The not knowing is hurting our students more than not being in school. Keep the FSC, ELL, and special education students in F2F teaching because they are the ones who need it the most. The general education students are doing fine. You can see the data on iReady Diagnostic Assessments that we gave in September. All that panic about students being so behind was wrong and it's backed by data. Did DOE show the board the assessment data?

Lastly, Kishimoto sent out a list of PPEs that schools received and I'm not sure where there the miscommunication is but it's not true. I just asked my principal about the KN95 masks that we supposedly received and she said that we didn't get much so she gave it to the FSC and Sped. teachers. What about us? We need the added protection too. We don't have any freestanding sanitizing stations throughout campus. We don't have a solid plan on how to social distance in the restrooms, or even at lunch. We were just told to do our best. As usual, the teachers have to figure it out and we are simply tired of this! Senator Shatz is calling for better ventilation in the classrooms. Please come on down to my room to see 1 window that I can open. Our rooms are in an enclosed building so opening a small door is useless. I do have a back door I can open and not run my 1 portable air conditioner. I can't imagine wearing a mask for 6 hours and trying to teach. I'm sure you have experience wearing a cloth mask and know how difficult it is to be wearing it for even an hour. It's so sad that teachers can't trust our leadership anymore. We want to work together but it seems like we are so expendable that it's not worth their time. We could have been teleworking for months but all this stalling and blaming has resulted in a death. Why does this nonsense even have to happen? I just don't understand anymore and truthfully, I really felt defeated and sometimes just want to throw in the towel. But the board's decision to step in has and is giving teachers some glimmer of hope. I believe one board member said it best when she said she doesn't only look at data or numbers, she listens and connects to the stories behind all the data and numbers. Please remember that we are moms, dads, daughters, sons, sisters first, and that all we are trying to do is to be safe and not die. With flu season around the corner and reopening of our state we need to keep our schools closed until the state

leadership gets their act together, simply put. Once again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for stepping in and making DOE more accountable. Thank you for your time!

Hard-working teacher of 27 years



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

Telework

1 message

David Brown <hidbro@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 2:26 PM

Please allow teachers to work from home if they think that would be more efficient.
Thank you,
David Brown
KAM III
Lahaina

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony for Oct 1 BOE meeting

1 message

Mike Landes <jmlandes@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 2:37 PM

Aloha Board members,

My name is Mike Landes, and I am a social studies teacher at Lahainaluna High School and the HSTA Maui Chapter President. I am testifying on action items B and C.

For action item B: I strongly urge you to support making telework available as an option for all teachers. I am one of the fortunate few teachers who have been approved to telework for a few days each week, and I can tell you that it is working beautifully. I am able to teach all of my students via distance learning from the safety of my home, and it has been just as effective as when I've been teaching via distance learning from my classroom. I am thankful that I work at a school and in a complex where reasonable decisions are being made by the principal and CAS about telework...but I am also cognizant of the fact that many teachers in my chapter and around the state are not so lucky. I have heard numerous stories of colleagues whose requests have been summarily denied, seemingly on a whim, all because the approving these requests is currently a school- or complex-level decision. As long as principals and CASs have the discretion over this, we will continue to have teachers applying for telework and being denied for arbitrary reasons, while others in similar situations are being approved easily. As a matter of equity for all teachers across the board, all teachers at all schools on all islands should have the option to telework, just like the governor and mayor have suggested for private-sector employees, and just like these board meetings have been happening via teleconference.

For action item C: I am so thankful that Chair Payne has listened to the overwhelming volume of testimony from teachers, principals, staff, parents, students, and community members. It is gratifying to know that our voices are being heard, and that this board is not just blindly accepting the public statements of the superintendent. The DOE's recent proposal to allow blended or in-person instruction based on numbers crafted by the DOH is disingenuous at best, and is likely downright dangerous for our entire state. The numbers they presented suggest that it has been safe for us to resume some sort of in-person instruction across much of the state for quite some time...all while our case counts have continued to spike and we have continued to have COVID-related deaths in our communities and at at least 1 school. That is flat-out unacceptable. Our students, our teachers, and our families are not expendable guinea pigs to be used in some horrific experiment. Life and safety must be valued above all else. As much as I want to return to normal and be back in the classroom with my students, these are not normal times, and they will not be normal for quite some time. In the COVID era, we must realize that 100% distance learning is the only safe option until a reliable vaccine or treatment is widely available. And, we must recognize that despite the noble efforts of our principals, faculty, and staff, our schools are still woefully underprepared for a return to blended or in-person instruction. There is much more that needs to be considered than just the numbers of positive cases in a community, and those numbers presented by the DOE are not even close to being what should be considered safe anyway. Our statewide school district needs to have a statewide mandate that we will have 100% distance learning for all students through at least the end of the 2nd quarter, and potentially for the rest of the school year. The safety of our keiki, our educators, and our families must be the highest priority of this board.

I sincerely hope you will do the right thing and approve these proposals to treat our teachers fairly and keep our communities safe.

Mahalo for your time,

Mike Landes



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

Testimony for Board Action on directives regarding DOE's Guidance for Schools COVID-19

1 message

Katherine Shinsato <kshinsato2019@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 4:21 PM

To whom it may concern,

I wanted to provide testimony on Board Action regarding the DOE'S use of DOH's Guidance for Schools COVID-19, including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid of in-person learning.

As a Special Education Resource Teacher, I would like to start by noting that I am servicing students in-person, synchronously online, and 100% Distance Learning (Acellus). This year has been very challenging. I would much rather be servicing students in-person like the "normal" school year. On days that I have students in person, I am also meeting with students via Google Meets synchronously. This is not easy for anyone. I am fortunate to have an Educational Assistant to help monitor my students online; however, I do not feel like I am providing the best instruction for students in-person or on the computer. My attention is often split between so many places. When I meet with my students who have IEPs and are doing 100% Distance Learning through the Acellus program, I feel that I do not have enough time to spend with them on their goals. I also worry for when they return to in-person instruction, because they have been doing a curriculum that is so vastly different than what I am doing at school with my other students.

I understand that many families are struggling with virtual learning and that the current state of school is very difficult. It is not the ideal situation for anyone (students, parents, teachers). I have had parents communicate to me how difficult it is to manage multiple students at home and having to work from home as well. As a teacher, I would much rather be with all students in-person, because I feel that I can better address students' needs and build relationships with them.

That being said, I feel that the return to in-person instruction should still be postponed until the end of the 2nd quarter for all students because of health and safety concerns for students, faculty, staff, families, and our community as a whole.

As someone that teaches students in-person, I know what it is like to have vulnerable students come to campus and the need for clear guidelines for when students are on campus. There have been unclear guidelines/procedures/expectations just for when the students that receive Special Education services are on campus. For example, when students or students' household family members contract COVID, I still feel that the guidelines/procedures/expectations (e.g., what happens when a student or household family member contracts COVID, how long the student needs to be out for, whether/when the student needs to be tested to come back to campus when the student vs. a household family member gets COVID, etc.) are not consistent or clear to all faculty, staff, and families on campus. I would feel safer if these things were clarified, even more so now that more students may come onto campus. For all schools, procedures, such as recesses, lunch, and pickup/dismissal times, with more students on campus needs to be clearer and more consistent as well.

I wonder whether general education students should be coming back to campus during the 2nd quarter. There are so few days in November and December as a result of holidays. What I gather from some of my general education colleagues, many are just getting into or have just gotten into the routines with teaching their students online. This was a massive undertaking and transition to virtual learning on a more regular basis than what it was like in 4th quarter and that also includes assessing and grading students. Another concern would be if the numbers go up again, and the teachers have to transition from Face-to-Face instruction back to virtual learning again. Having to continually transition between virtual learning and in-person instruction would be difficult for any teacher. Allowing the gen ed students and teachers to continue with virtual learning would allow them to not worry so much about transitioning back and forth during the 2nd quarter based on the count of cases and allow for more time for clarifications on procedures/guidelines to be made. Students that are doing the Acellus program for 100% DL will also be allowed to rejoin their classes in January, so there will be a lot of changes occurring in January anyways. Postponing the changes for general education students to return to in-person instruction until January would allow for one change to occur when the 100% DL students have the option to return to their class as well.

With regards to teleworking, there must be SPED teachers out there that would feel safer with the option to telework, but since we have students that come for in-person instruction, we would be unable to do so as a result of the nature of our job. I understand that my general education colleagues have different struggles than we do as SPED teachers, and many of our students who receive Special Education services have needs that are better addressed in-person. On the other hand, I know there are many stories out there of SPED colleagues that would feel safer to either teach virtually and/or telework from home. However, we are not afforded that option since we have students in-person. In addition to the threats of furloughs and pay cuts, I fear that the ability to telework will make even more SPED teachers decide to leave the profession. I kindly ask that arrangements/options for SPED teachers to telework be looked into and that we look into whether students receive SPED services should be on campus for in-person instruction.



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

Testimony on BOE proposals B & C - FULLY SUPPORT!

1 message

nelson maeda <nelsonmaeda@yahoo.com>

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 4:26 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

I fully support the Board of Ed's proposals to have clear re-opening standards and criteria's for transition to in student learning format and more so, the flexibility for Teachers to telework. It is clear that from my personal 1st hand experience, it is not safe and very dangerous to be on campus in the vicinity of other Staff Members.

Sincerely,

Nelson Maeda
Educator



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

DISAPPOINTED IN LEADERSHIP

1 message

Troy Jarrell <napuaohawaii@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 4:41 PM

Aloha e Board of Education Members,

As a teacher for many years, this has been the worse year that I can recall. It isn't the enormous work load of creating curriculum and the use of technology or even having to use my own money to have the necessary supplies needed to properly instruct my students. It began on the opening day of school, July 29th with NO clear guidelines or procedures in place to start the school year.

Dr. Kishimoto should have been the leader that the Department of Education truly needed. Instead, she failed every teacher, administrator, staff person in the Department of Education and the saddest casualties are the keiki and their 'ohana. As the superintendent, Dr. Kishimoto should have stepped up to the plate and prepared us for the coming school year, instead she played politics. The training that she allowed us to have was a waste of time and an insult to our intelligence. What we needed was how to create a document for Google Classroom, how to use it proficiently, how to create interactive pages so our students could be actively engaged distance learners. All these things we had to learn on our own, because she doesn't value us, the teachers under her direction.

This isn't the only tragedy, she has caused our administrators, district and educational leaders to be unable to lead, the very job they were hired to do. As you, the Board of Education makes decisions, you need you be keenly aware that your decisions will have long term implications on Hawai'i's future. We cannot not afford this kind of leadership during this pandemic. We need you and Dr. Kishimoto working collaboratively together to ensure that the Department of Education is fully functioning and does not appear to be a dysfunctional institution that is fragmented and incapable of solid leadership.

I have sat silent for far too long about this issue. I use to love teaching, but under the current circumstances and lack of true leadership, I find myself questioning my profession and perhaps even leaving it entirely. I see other school districts that are consistently upholding their pedagogy and their educational standards, allowing their leaders to be unafraid of making important decisions that support their teachers, administrators and educational leaders, students and families . . . why can't that be us? When you make decisions do you have our best interests at heart, the children and their families, if not, I implore you to rethink your decisions and make decisions that will shine a bright light in the darkness that currently shrouds the Department of Education.

Respectfully submitted,
Troy Jarrell
DOE, 4th Grade Teacher



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

Testimony in favor of Teleworking for Teachers - ActionB

1 message

TK Mur <traciemuraki@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 8:36 PM

B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restriction

To Whom It May Concern:

I am testifying in favor of allowing teachers to telework. I am writing in favor of this because the paperwork and the instructions were very confusing during 1st quarter of this year. I turned in my form to my principal and was denied.

Later that week, another teacher contacted me and informed me that he had turned in the wrong forms, and the administration informed him to ask me for the correct forms because they were unsure which forms to turn in. I am not the expert, nor am I the one to ask about forms, which would seem to add to the confusion, as there is no point person to contact with any questions.

There is lots of confusion, and no clear reasons as to why telework has been denied me. I currently and have always been in compliance with the teleworking requirements that you are proposing, yet was denied.

Please allow us to telework.

Mahalo!
Tracie



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

Choose Distance Learning

1 message

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 10:15 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha mai Kakou.

I am a 16 year educator with the Hawaii DOE, all within the elementary school setting. I have faithfully & loyally dedicated my years to the little minds I am so fortunate to help learn. COVID-19 has negatively impacted our lives as educators & the lives of these little learners.

Distance learning continuation for the 2nd quarter of the school year IS the best decision the DOE has made. I have watched my colleagues eagerly dive into virtual platforms & continually share success stories of our students learning virtually.

When done with integrity, distance learning is successful for both the teachers AND students.

Through the distance learning platform of this school year, 2020-21, I have personally been told by students that their families have not been responsible with social distancing & the COVID-19 state restrictions. Upon asking how their weekend was, or why they were so tired that day, they innocently disclosed on multiple instances, that their Ohana has had gatherings, parties and beach camping adventures with other families.

It is THESE little learners who will be returning to face to face soon, putting us educators at an increased risk. Other teacher friends & coworkers have said they've had instances of students sharing irresponsible parenting choices as well through virtual learning. Our schools are not ready to accept students back face to face without proper systems in place. Teachers are afraid.

The parents of these children are selfishly setting the wrong example of safety & are not being community contributors by continuing to put themselves before others with these gatherings.

Also, the vulnerable population that are already receiving face to face instruction are not different as there have been instances of these students sharing stories of the same.

Furthermore, custodial staff have not been taking a proactive approach to sanitizing communal areas in schools. They instead, have continued with business as usual with landscaping being their top priority. There are students on campus, along with almost all teachers there religiously on a daily basis & many of them have had to call & request directly for custodial upkeep & an increases in cleaning. If they can't increase their efforts now, what happens when even more kids come on campus?

We need your help to continue to keep us safe by upholding distance learning for the remainder of time until COVID-19 ceases to a manageable & uniformed sage feeling that is shared by our educators. Please support us. I beg of you.

Distance learning is best for everyone involved!

Mahalo,

A more than concerned educator.



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

Testimony

1 message

Jenny Migita <migitaj@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 10:54 PM

Dear BOE members,

I am writing today to testify regarding the Board's action on directives regarding telework for teachers as well as the DOE's use of guidance from the DOH as criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes.

First of all, as long as schools are engaged in complete distance learning, I feel safe enough in my own classroom and with the limited contact with others during brief visits to the school's main office and common areas such as the bathroom to not request telework for myself. However, teachers at my school have been told that teleworking should not be requested for reasons such as childcare, living with vulnerable people, medical history, etc. Of course, I understand that a teacher must still be able to perform their teaching duties. However, we should also consider what kind of education students will receive if they are taught by an emergency hire because their highly qualified teacher needed to take leave to be home with their own school age children, or because their veteran teacher was too high risk to teach in person.

In fact, just this year, the DOE anticipated an extraordinary teacher shortage due to COVID related retirements, leaves, etc., and is now allowing high school graduates to teach in public schools. I know first hand that more often than not, this is far from an ideal situation for student learning. If student learning truly is the priority, I believe we should support our highly qualified effective teachers, even if their teaching may not be exactly what it looked like the year before.

Regarding the DOH's metrics for schools, I have several serious concerns. According to the DOH's metrics, Oahu can have an average of over 170 new cases every day for two weeks and it would still be acceptable for hundreds of students to be circulating through classrooms for blended in person instruction. California's metrics for reopening schools converts to 9.8 new cases per 10,000 people, whereas ours allows blended learning even with cases more than triple that number, 35 cases per 10,000 people.

In addition, in a NY Times article, "Mayor de Blasio has said he will shut the entire school system down and move to remote instruction if the positivity rate in the city as a whole rises above 3 percent," and our positivity rate today was over 7%, according to Dr. Green. Yet, according to our DOH metrics, based on the numbers from Sept 1-14, both elementary and secondary can have blended in person instruction?

It's also worth noting that Dr. Tim Brown, epidemic tracking expert at the East-West Center, says that the CDC estimates that the number of diagnosed COVID cases is only 10% of actual cases. Therefore, if the DOH metrics say it's acceptable to have 35 cases per 10,000 people for in person blended instruction, there are actually 350 cases in that 10,000. This means that at a school with 1,000 student enrollment, the DOH deems it acceptable to have 35 COVID positive students coming to school in person each week. I'm sorry to say, the DOH metrics seem wildly risky compared to California and New York's.

Lastly, the Kaimuki-Roosevelt-McKinley complex area superintendent has asked schools to plan to return 25% of students in person by the end of second quarter. Meanwhile, the Kalaheo-Kailua complex area superintendent has announced to the media that their schools will be continuing all distance learning through the second quarter. Our complex zip codes have similar or the same levels of COVID case numbers, but if anything, the KMR complex includes more populations with higher COVID transmission risks.

KITV reported that the letter from Kalaheo-Kailua CAS cited her reasons as, "to maintain consistency and safety," and "to make sure measures were in place to welcome back students in the spring". However, it is unclear what reasons and data could have factored into such a different decision for the KMR complex, and the only explanation offered so far has been that each complex area is overseeing their own return to school plans.

I would like to remind the Board that two weeks after our state began reopening, our COVID transmission rate (rt) was 1.38. Also, COVID has an incubation period of 3 to 14 days, with most individuals showing symptoms within 4 to 5 days, but still infectious 2 to 3 days before even showing symptoms. Please remember, then, that the number of new cases will continue to rise exponentially for at least four days after schools will be forced to close. If we allow each CAS to make their own decisions without clear data driving them, and or with the kind of metrics the DOH currently advocates, we will likely have over 600 new cases daily by the fourth day of school closures.

I appreciate all the work and discussion that the Board has taken up during this pandemic. I have been following the late night meetings online, and have been encouraged by the critical questions that have been asked at them. Your action items today are

9/28/2020

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clearly products of close examination. I am therefore writing in support of these action items, and would also like to ask that you please look at the DOH's metrics with the same critical stance. Thank you for your time.

Jenny Leung



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

testimony for October 1, 2020 emergency meeting

1 message

Chanda Tsing <chandatsing@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Sep 26, 2020 at 11:41 PM

Dear Catherine Payne,

As you are the BOE Chair I wish to address you with my concerns about the upcoming special meeting to be held on October 1, 2020. I would love to know that my words are read and considered, and even more so to have my questions answered.

Just recently a statement was made by the BOE, "Constant change can cause enormous stress on students, families, and school staff." If this statement is truly believed, why would a decision made a week ago already be in question? After the decision was made last week regarding quarter 2 our principal promptly held a meeting to discuss with our teachers possibilities of reopening and what the school was prepared to do or not do. She invited everyone's input and then met with the CAS for our complex. More meetings have been held, plans have been drafted, communication to parents is being planned and then this curve ball, "I also recommend that the Board suspend changes to instructional delivery modes (i.e., distance, hybrid, and in-person learning) for all schools". This is what we have experienced over and over again through the first quarter. It is mentally and emotionally exhausting to prepare for one thing that has been announced only to find that plan is no longer ok and we must make plans for something else. You are allowing this constant change to happen, and causing hundreds, even thousands of DOE employees undue amounts of stress.

I wish I could say this is the only place I see you not keeping your word, but it is not. Previously in statements about reopening schools it was stated that, "Complex area and state support and coordination bolster the 95 benefits of school empowerment and local control". This too has been forgotten, as the superintendent is being told to put more restrictions and determiners about when a school can open. The local community is losing all voice. And this statement, "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board directs the Department and its schools to strive to provide as much in-person instruction as practicable in a safe manner throughout the 2020-2021 school year" is all but forgotten.

Our school has gone to great lengths to meet the requirements to reopen. Adjustments in class sizes were made, furniture has been moved and new routines have been created just to name a few. It has been a whole school effort to fit the needs of our school and community. It will not match what a school in town is doing or what a remote rural school is doing, because it is just right for us. And we will not be telling other schools to do the same.

As a part of the DOE, we try to justify student distance learning is all okay, by saying we are taking care of the socioeconomically disadvantaged and vulnerable students. Who are we kidding? What student wants to be welcomed to an empty school where he or she is the only one in the classroom. Although it is not said aloud, these students know they are coming to school because they are not rich enough to have the internet or are bad students (due to learning disabilities) and need extra help. No one wants to be in these categories, yet we have created them. For a state that is trying to foster a more inclusive classroom for their special education students, they have now created the most restricted learning environments I have ever seen.

Perhaps if we were in some dire circumstances I could understand these ongoing restrictions. Let's put the numbers out there, these circumstances are not dire, or even close to being so. Of the population ages 0-17, .04% (yes, not even half of one percent!) have contracted COVID-19 in the state of Hawaii. We are not keeping our children safe by not allowing them to go to school. We are taking away their freedoms. We are taking away opportunities for collaborative learning, the kind of learning that will benefit a 21st century student. We are taking away the face to face connection we all need. You get it while you attend your meetings. Some students don't leave their houses.

If the state (and BOE) is so reliant on metrics as determiners of who can and can not go to school, we need all the metrics. Could the state also start looking at numbers of school age children who now experience despondency, depression, anxiety or suicidal thoughts? Can we have the metrics of the same age group, 0-17, that have been rushed to an emergency room due to self-harm or abuse? Can we have the numbers of children being left home alone? Can we have the numbers of students who go to bed hungry? (Schools may be offering free lunches, but how does an 8 year-old that lives two miles away from the school left alone for most of the day get to school to get that lunch?) There are a lot of numbers no one wants to talk about. COVID-19, by far impacts adults, yet it is our children that suffer. Share the numbers that are important to our student population.

While I am on the topic of metrics, there are two other concerns I have about the metrics. First, according to The New York Times, as of September 8, 2020 Hawaii began reporting probable cases, with the explanation that **Probable cases and deaths** count individuals who meet criteria for other types of testing, symptoms and exposure, as developed by national and local governments. Can we rely on the state's numbers when "probable" cases are included in the number that determines a school's ability to open or transition from what model of learning to another? And second, there have been 5797 deaths in the state of Hawaii from January to June this year. Only 22 of those were related to COVID-19. I know that number has changed, and grown significantly. it is now at 131, of which 0 are in the age group of 0-17. Put the COVID-19 numbers side by side with the total number of deaths in the state, and it is clear there are other concerns that should be considered in our decision making process.

Finally I would like to state something I have said before. Every student is offered the choice for distance learning. If this is a choice being offered, does that not entail another option? We have yet to offer another option. This is not a choice. We have a decision forced upon us. We have our freedom taken away. You may be thinking it is for my benefit, or my child's benefit. That is not how I see it. I have been informed of the dangers of COVID-19 for almost 6 months now. Unless you are calling me stupid, I believe I can take the information that is so blantly and constantly put before me and use it to make my own decision of whether or not I feel school is a safe place for my child, just as I am allowed the choice to shop at WalMart and eat at McDonalds.

Schools have been in planning stages to open since August. If the state is opposed to opening schools, a statement back in August informing the public would have been better received than this rollercoaster ride of decisions you continue to drag the public on. Stop this back and forth, it is ridiculous. The emotional and mental strain on admin and teachers is through the roof. Last week a decision was made. Move forward.

Sincerely,
A. Chanda Tsing
Parent and Educator



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

Testimony

1 message

Sun, Sep 27, 2020 at 1:19 AM

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

Dear Chair Payne and BOE Members,

I can't adequately express in words our gratitude for the countless hours you have spent listening and taking action to support teachers.

Regarding telework, the proposed clear guidelines to grant teachers telework will honor what was intended in the BOE's June 18, 2020 Reopening Resolution.

It will no longer allow Principals and CAS' to pick and choose which teachers can work 'in the safety of their home'. It renews our faith that at least the BOE values our health, safety and lives of our families; as well as trusts teachers as professionals. Allowing teachers to telework offers fairness with all others who were told to "stay at home, work from home".

The proposed telework agreement states that "Administrators will approve teachers that request telework during distance or hybrid learning modes".

Can I please ask for an additional clause to be added? I am a NCT (non-classroom teacher), specifically, a Curriculum Coordinator. I do not have a classroom of students. Instead, I support teachers all through virtual meetings. Could you please add - "In addition, Non-Classroom teachers will be allowed to telework; provided they do not have a class of students present on the school campus".

Thank you very much!
Elementary Teacher



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

Testimony - Telework

1 message

Angie Tannehill <angietannehill@hotmail.com>

Sun, Sep 27, 2020 at 9:00 AM

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

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

I am submitting testimony today in regards to the denial of telework by the department of education. I am a RTI Coordinator at an elementary school. My job is to work with students from any class school wide and help the struggling learners fill in gaps and help students to learn to read. My office is a portable that is shared with three other people. I feel unsafe and uncomfortable for the majority of the day in my working conditions. I also find it extremely difficult to do my job this way. I keep my mask on for the majority of the day except for when eating and drinking. Two of my colleagues in my shared space keep their mask on the majority of the day as well. The third person does not feel the need to where her mask during the day unless someone comes to her corner of the portable. We have to go to that corner to wash our hands as her desk is near the sink. The stance of the school is this is my bubble and I should be fine to take off my mask. However, I don't feel this way and my other two colleagues who share this space don't feel this way.

Even though we have tried to make an agreement with the people who share the room and this space to not have others come in, one person is often breaking this agreement and allowing others into our space. This person is also frequently going to other people's rooms and spaces as well. They also talk about taking risks in their personal life such as going to bars. The rest of us feel uncomfortable with this type of exposure in our lives. We have attempted to communicate that we are concerned about the virus and asked her to wear a mask. They listen to our concerns briefly but it is often short lived and goes back to not wearing it most of the day. Our principal is aware of this and to my knowledge has not even spoken to them or attempted to reinforce the importance of mask wearing with this person. This working environment caused one of the individuals in this space to retire earlier than planned next month. The person retiring has been denied repeatedly for telework and she told me she would have stayed if those requests had been honored. If there was no pandemic, she would have finished out this school year and maybe one more. However, she is older, has health concerns, and has been told to come in everyday when she could easily work from home. Next month, the school will have to do without this key position as there is a hiring freeze now in place.

Throughout a typical day I work with students virtually as well as have meetings virtually. I do this with my mask on. I have a desk near a window that I open fully rain or shine, even though the chickens crow loudly outside of my window and we get a lot of rain in our area. I do this to maximize airflow in this confined space. I am concerned once winter comes that I will catch colds from the wind and rain exposure. I find this very problematic when helping students learn phonics and when reading aloud. I am told I can take my mask off, yet I feel my safety is more important so I struggle with teaching online through a mask. I do the best that I can, but I find this situation both physically challenging and greatly demoralizing. I have been an above and beyond dedicated teacher to the DOE since 2005 and know these students deserve more, especially right now. This school year I have requested repeatedly to telework and I have been denied repeatedly without justification.

We also have two grade levels who are teaching on campus in person daily. I go to the bathroom as little as possible and I don't feel comfortable to go to check my mailbox or use the teacher lounge on campus. I limit my trips into common areas as much as I'm physically able. There are many teachers who feel this way on our campus.

Recently I was denied on the vague grounds that school is a technical hub. However, I find my home office has far superior access to the internet, privacy, and office ergonomics than the conditions I have to work in at school. The much better conditions at home have been noted in my numerous telework requests, but thus far this has not been addressed in the slightest. Perhaps you are curious as to my teleworking situation being adequate or not. At home I have a gigabit internet connection. For video conferencing there is nothing better on the island, and my home connection outperforms the school network on all major video conferencing networks. For years, I have often done things at home due to poor connectivity at school, and find I am far more productive at home largely for this reason. I know some others have problems with competing needs of bandwidth at home, but for me this is not the case. In fact, I have far more issues with this at school than at my home. Additionally, I have no kids or pets to interrupt or distract me while working. Lastly, I have a dedicated space to work in with air conditioning and hardly any outside noises (which is certainly not the case at school). At school, I am limited to the 13-inch laptop to work on. At home, I can plug this 13-inch laptop into my 42-inch monitor which would allow me to see my students and my instructional screen-share fully at the same time (without having to juggle them around on a small laptop). I also have access to another personal computer and a personal iPad with Apple Pencil. This allows me to have more engaging instruction. Also, I have an ergonomic standing desk to work from so that I don't get headaches and backaches like I do from my student desk which is all I have in my work space at school. Whether I am at school or at home, I have to use my personal cellphone to make phone calls to student's parents or the school office. We have one shared school phone in our portable that one of the individuals must use often. She asked that the rest of us not use it now because she is

worried about covid so we let her use the school phone for our room. It should not be overlooked also, that at home I have no need to wear a mask. Since I'm working with students virtually anyway, this means I can now interact with them sans mask and properly teach phonics. As you can see there is literally no benefit to my working at school currently.

I will not service kids from many bubbles in person until this pandemic is over. If I am told I must do so, I have resolved to take a leave or quit. Many of our students on campus come from homes where parents work in hotels so I feel the risk is far too great once we reopen for tourism with no vaccine or highly effective treatments in place. I am getting older and I have already sacrificed my health too much for this job for over 15 years by working long hours and working second jobs that gave me less time and energy for exercising, sleeping and eating healthy. This is where I must draw the line. I am fortunate that I am currently able to have this option if I feel it is necessary. For now, I am still working as this is not the choice I want to make. I love teaching and I love helping my community, but I can't do so at the expense of why health. My heart breaks for many of my colleagues who are not in a financial position to take leave or quit if they need or want to. I was in their position for the majority of my career. I am truly grateful that I am able to have this choice if necessary, during this pandemic. If I were allowed to telework, I could be an effective part of the school team indefinitely. Teleworking for positions that are able to do so like mine is even more important if there are more bodies on campus.

Furthermore, I am thoroughly confused as to why the DOE wants to take on more risk when there are ways to mitigate risk by permitting telework where it makes sense. After experiencing telework during the fourth quarter, I will admit it is definitely a harder way to work. However, in my opinion, safety and minimizing risk should always come first over convenience and blanket policies. I think we all know with this hard stance on telework (and general lack of compassion by the DOE), when schools reopen there will be many more retirements and departures. In my area there is already a teacher shortage, and a severe sub shortage. It seems in everyone's best interest to find a middle way.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter. Anything you can do is greatly appreciated by myself and many others who may not be submitting testimony but share these concerns and issues.

With a Warm Aloha & Mahalo,
Angie Tannehill



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

Testimony for BOE Reopening Action Agenda Item

1 message

Catherine Caine <catherinecaine@waikikischool.org>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sun, Sep 27, 2020 at 9:27 AM

Dear Chair Payne and BOE Members,

I am taking this opportunity to support the Agenda Item on directives regarding the DOE's reopening plans. I genuinely appreciate this opportunity provided by the BOE to make sure the reopening of our schools is supportive of our students, families, school staff, and teacher safety.

First, I am concerned about what the metrics, provided by the DOH, really means at the school level. These metrics are based on an entire island and ignores the possible higher level of infection in individual communities. If there is anything the recent mass testing has shown us is there are communities with a higher infection rate for COVID.

Second, the decision-making authority for the reopening has been given to the complex areas, I would like to shift that decision to individual schools with the support of the complex area. My reasons for this would be based on local metric guidance (not island wide), parent input, staff consensus, and teacher preparation time to welcome students back safely. Individual schools, with the DOE and DOH clear, coherent, and relevant guidance, have the knowledge necessary to serve their community to safely reopen our school.

Third, we need to look at what reopening schools have created in other states, and around the world. Opening schools, inviting students, and then closing within a week due to increased infections is very destabilizing for students and families. It also creates instability for teacher planning and student learning.

Again, I want to thank the Board of Education for their continued support of our Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Catherine Caine
Waikiki School



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

testimony item B

1 message

Carrie Yossa <cyossa55@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sun, Sep 27, 2020 at 9:37 AM

Aloha, I am writing in regards to testimony of item B: [Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers](#)
I work at Mililani Middle School and telework is not being equitably offered to all teachers. Although I have adequate internet service, a quiet, comfortable place to work, and my principal and colleagues can contact me throughout the day, I feel I have not been appropriately considered for telework.

I am a special education resource/inclusion teacher, and as such I have 2-3 students attend my classroom 2 days per week. The services they receive in the classroom are the same services my students who stay home receive. I teach classes through google meets, to insure that students have the same opportunities whether they are in the classroom or at home.

Having the directive that I had to have students in my classroom 2 days per week, I asked for 3 days of telework privileges. My request was not approved and I was told to resubmit my paperwork requesting only Thursday as my telework day. I was only "allowed" to request 1 day per week of telework. When I requested that I would like to telework on Thursday only, my telework 'request' was approved. General education teachers at MMS are allowed to request 3 days of telework; special education/resource teachers are allowed to request 1 day of telework; elective and 12 month teachers are allowed to request zero days of telework. I feel that these options are not equitable and go against the guidelines set forth by the department.

Thank you,
Caroline Yossa



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

Testimony

1 message

Nohea Goo <ngoo@hawaii.edu>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sun, Sep 27, 2020 at 11:40 AM

Testimony for action item B: Telework Availability for Teachers

My name is Nohea Goo and I am a teacher at Dole Middle School. This is my 19th year teaching Math at Dole Middle School.

Since making the news, the principal at Dole Middle School has come out with a telework justification document (the document is below this testimony). The document pre-determines the days in which a teacher could be granted telework which for me, is on Tuesdays and Fridays. Some of the reasons why teachers can only be granted for a maximum of two days a week includes, coming on campus affords personnel to communicate via phone, fax, printing documents, and scanning of documents, as well as tech support and assistance, access to hard copy information and resources and signing of documents. According to Form B of the State of Hawaii Request for Participation In The Telework Program, item #7, "What equipment would you need to be provided by the Employer to enable you to telework?" I only checked off a cell phone if it is available. I have access to a phone, fax machine, printer, and scanner at my home. The technology request form for my school can be accessed from the school's webpage. Other than having to submit and sign the telework paperwork, I have not received hard copies of any information for over a month, nor have I needed to sign anything for over a month.

The process to get granted paperwork not only included me filling out three different forms, but required that I meet with my Vice Principal to go over the forms and go over the school form titled "Dole Middle School Teleworking Expectations and Agreements." At the end of the meeting the Vice Principal printed out the "Dole Middle School Teleworking Expectations and Agreements" form, and came to my room so that I could initial every section of the agreement. After submitting my forms it took two days for me to get an appointment to meet with the Vice Principal. From there I waited to get approval. I was granted telework on September 22, 25, 29 and October 2. The email granting me telework was sent by my principal on September 21 at 4:28p, I ended up working on campus on September 22 since I didn't receive the email before the end of the school day. In addition, I have a progress status meeting scheduled during my preparation time on October 2.

I also requested telework for a second time through the Civil Rights Compliance Branch more than a week prior to filling out and submitting the State of Hawaii Telework forms. I heard back from the Civil Rights Compliance Branch after getting approved for telework by my Principal stating that additional information is needed from my doctor to see if there needs to be an adjustment in the amount of telework days I am granted. I initially requested telework in July, prior to returning to school.

The process for telework should be consistent through all public schools. I spent more than two hours filling out paperwork, meeting, and signing paperwork to be granted four days of telework, and actually being able to participate in three days of telework due to the delay in communication. Many teachers at my school after hearing the process to apply decided that the time and effort involved for up to four days of telework was not worth it since distance teaching has required much more preparation time compared to face to face learning. There has been no mention of the availability of telework for the second quarter since C.A.S. Rochelle Mahoe has not communicated to Dole Middle School regarding quarter two. If it is okay for me to telework for two days a week, I am not sure why it is not okay to telework for five days a week. I have two family members that are teachers at other schools in other districts that were granted telework for five days a week. These two family members did not have to go through the lengthy process that I had to in order to be granted telework.

The quarter ends in a week, the availability of information regarding telework should have been given out at the beginning of the school year.

Thank you,
Nohea Goo

DMS Telework Justification
9/2020

Rationale:

These days are a start of our Telework progress monitoring data collection. DMS Administration will monitor progress data based on the individual telework agreements. Consideration for additional days of approved Teleworking can be added if progress data indicates satisfactory implementation of Telework Agreements and continual student progress. Teleworking is not mandatory. Teachers can choose to apply or not apply for Teleworking.

Rationale for Teleworking Personnel

1. Minimize DMS Personnel exposure to others on campus
2. More opportunity for cleaning of facilities
3. Coming on to campus affords personnel opportunities to communicate via phone, fax, printing documents, and scanning of documents
4. Access to campus resources
 - a. Tech support & assistance
 - b. Materials & resources
 - c. Access to hard copy information and resources
 - d. Signing of documents

Teams	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Gr. 6 Team Honu (EL/SPED/504)			Telework	Telework	
Gr. 7 Team Kulia (EL/504)		Telework			Telework
Gr. 7 Team Malama (SPED/Inclusion)			Telework	Telework	
Gr. 8 Team Haaheo (EL/504)		Telework			Telework
Gr. 8 Team Hookela (SPED/Inclusion)			Telework	Telework	

Progress monitoring and additional days will be measured on a case by case basis based on Telework agreements with the GL VPs as approved by the Principal.

Reference Documents:

- DMS COVID Response Protocol (8/2020)
- Health & Safety Handbook V6
- 2021 Telework Expectations/Agreements
- Telework Form Attachment A, B & D



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

Written Testimony- Support Return to In-Person Learning or Hybrid Per DOH Guidance

1 message

Jodi Visser <odeejay12@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sun, Sep 27, 2020 at 4:18 PM

Dear Hawaii Board of Education,

We respectfully ask that the BOE adopt the DOH's health criteria to allow schools to return to in-person/hybrid learning options. We recognize that at this time DOH suggests decisions on returning to in-person instruction are based on the Complex Area. We request that schools within the complex area also be granted autonomy, if a school is prepared and students and parents adhere to safety requirements, to direct the return to in-person instruction.

We are parents in the Kailua- Kaleheo Complex area. Our children are students at 'Aikahi Elementary school. Our Complex Area currently meets requirements established by DOH to return to partial in-person instruction. However, our Complex Area leadership determined; without input from parents, teachers, and administrators (aside from principals), that our students would not return to any in-person instruction until January 2021. When questioned about what criteria needs to be met to return to in-person instruction; the Complex Area leadership did not have an answer, nor did they have a benchmark, other than subjective assumptions, as to when our areas learning model would be adjusted. This is concerning as it leaves decisions open to lobbying and political influences.

We understand that rotating between learning models such as in-person to distance learning is a large transition and will be difficult. However, we strongly believe that even a month of in-person instruction for our children will pay great dividends in their motivation and ability to succeed going forward. To actually meet and interact with their teacher is a benefit most children have yet to have: beyond screen time. We acknowledge that opening up Hawaii businesses and travel will bring additional cases of COVID-19 to the state and we feel like there is a narrow window, October and November, to return to in-person instruction, before the number of cases exceed DOH guidelines for in-person instruction. Therefore, we request that students return to school as soon as possible, 13 October for schools that are prepared, so that our keiki will have as much in-person instruction as possible.

We feel that our students and families are needlessly suffering under the distance learning requirement. Academically, socially, and emotionally our children are stunted. The teachers at 'Aikahi Elementary School have gone above and beyond to adjust curriculum and teaching methods to support their students, however it is not the same quality. A child's education goes far beyond academic instruction; the social and emotional development they gain through interaction with trained teachers, caring staff, and other students is a significant part of their individual growth that they are missing. Additionally, as working parents it is a daily struggle to be their primary source of academic instruction.

We thank you for considering this testimony as you establish guidance for Hawaii's public schools.

Thank you,

Jodi and Scott Williams

Parents of 3 (4-month-old, Kindergartener, 5th Grader)

9/28/2020

Dell Marketing LP Mail - Written Testimony- Support Return to In-Person Learning or Hybrid Per DOH Guidance

Department of Defense Civilian Liaison Officer at Camp Smith/ Hawaii Pacific University Associate
Athletic Director
11-year residents of Hawaii



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

Testimony on the Reopening of Public Schools

1 message

Shelby Stern <shelby.desilva@gmail.com>

Sun, Sep 27, 2020 at 8:51 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Shelby Stern and I am writing to testify on action item C (Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning).

This school year has been one of the hardest years I've ever dealt with as a teacher and has drained me of my energy every single day. I have been pushed to my limits and I have felt massively overwhelmed and stressed by the demands of this new mode of learning. However, each and every day I show up for my students and I instruct them online the best way I know how. Is this ideal? Definitely not; but is it safer? Absolutely! Hence why I agree with BOE Chair Payne's proposals in regards to reopening schools.

As of this writing, the only PPE I have in my classroom is a small bag of gloves, 1 face shield, one plastic barrier that our custodians graciously made for us, a 10 pack of face masks, a bottle of rubbing alcohol for cleaning off computers, and a spray bottle of disinfectant for all other surfaces. Because it is only me in my classroom at this point, those items haven't needed to be used extensively, but with students potentially returning to campus within a few weeks, those items will disappear within days. We already know that cases are happening within the community that we serve, so the DOE needs to take appropriate action and give us appropriate parameters to *safely* reopen our schools. They should also be working to ensure that all schools have what they need to reopen safely for the long term (not just for the here and now).

I also have serious concerns about reopening schools in conjunction with reopening tourism to Hawaii. When COVID originally hit in March and we abruptly shut our schools, teachers and students (myself included) felt the trauma and the shock associated with a sudden new normal. To be very honest, I am still processing the trauma of last year whilst trying to teach through the beginning of this year...I'm sure my students would say the same. I am worried about prematurely reopening schools only to see cases rise again as tourism begins and then needing to shut us down again. Without clear guidance from the DOE, the situation above would be nothing short of a nightmare, causing much undue stress and exacerbating trauma.

I understand that the economy needs to reopen, but it shouldn't be at the cost of teachers, students, and our families. We must move forward in an organized and well-thought-out manner. We need to give consideration to teachers and their health (both mental and physical) as well as the health of our students and their families as well. I cannot stress enough how unnecessary it would be to reopen just to lose lives and close down again.

Thank you for your time,

Shelby Stern
Pohakea Elementary School
Ewa Beach, Oahu



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

Return to school

1 message

Debra Miyaki <miyakid580@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 5:43 AM

Dear Board of Education Members,

My name is Debra Miyaki. I wish to stay anonymous, but I feel like I must share my story. I do not usually complain, I voice my opinion when I feel it is necessary. It really upsets me when Dr. Kishimoto says teachers can telework if they submit paperwork. I have requested to telework, and was denied. I have asthma, high blood pressure, and pulmonary fibrosis runs in my family. I was told from our CAS that if I am concerned I should take family leave. I know other teachers in our Complex also requested to telework and was also denied. I think that is just wrong. I do not have the luxury of taking leave, but I feel we have the right to stay safe.

We already had 2 positive cases of COVID on our campus. Many friends and family also teach. Many of them tell me they also have had positive cases on campus as well. In fact, one of my friend's cousin passed away from COVID. Her cousin Dayna was the clerk at Dole Middle. Our school has not even officially opened yet.

Our Complex is talking about opening up back in October. I honestly do not think it is fair or safe for teachers to return to school. I worry about our Special Ed teachers because right now they are the ones teaching the students that are vulnerable. I am a regular Ed teacher, but feel this is also wrong. I know many SpEd teachers are thinking about quitting or changing profession due to the unreasonable paperwork & unsafe working conditions.

I hope and pray that you will help us to open schools safely, and that all Complexes can open up together. It is not fair for us to be the guinea pigs, because that is how I feel right now. I implore you to help the teachers, staff, and students of our complex to stay safe, and open up with the rest of the Complexes. I miss my students and families. I want to see them all.....when it is safe to do so. People argue that our numbers are low. That is also not true. It fluctuates daily, but the death toll continues to rise daily. Please take this into consideration when you make your decision.

I hope and pray that we can all open up safely together. I feel it is so wrong for our complex to open in October or early November, when the rest of the Complexes open after 2nd quarter ends. Please help us.

Mahalo,
Debra Miyaki

Sent from my iPad



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

Testimony for October 1, 2020 meeting

1 message

Maureen Mench <sunnym777@aol.com>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 6:06 AM

Reply-To: Maureen Mench <sunnym777@aol.com>

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

Aloha-

I would like to submit written testimony in support of re-opening the public school in the Windward complex. I was very hopefully that after fall break my 2 elementary school children would be allowed to be back on campus full time or with the modified hybrid program. However, we were recently told that the schools in our complex would not be returning to in person at the earliest until January 2021. I find this very disappointing and unacceptable. As a psychologist working with people every day who have been impacted emotionally, physically, and financially by the COVID-19 pandemic and its resulting laws and regulations I am pleading that the Board reconsiders its decision to not resume in person learning until January 2021. Our children are suffering emotionally, mentally, physically, and education-wise by not being in the classroom. The mode of instruction is not an acceptable or healthy medium for our children to be learning. The risk of contracting COVID-19 is low especially with the significant safeguards in place to keep our teachers and children safe. But we have to be realistic, there will always be a risk and as a parent I am willing to take that risk as I think negative consequences of my children being taught online far outweighs the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19. Our family has made multiple sacrifices including financial in order to continue working and having to hire outside help to assist with childcare/ facilitate distance learning. I know many families are not in the position to hire outside help and therefore many parents are unable to work or are working while their very young children attempt to navigate the very complex and confusing world of distance learning on their own. Our children need to see their teachers, play with their friends and get off their devices. It can be done! Multiple private schools are conducting face to face learning and the public schools can and should be as well! Please reconsider this decision and allow schools in the Windward (Kailua) area to return to at least hybrid learning after fall break.

Maureen Mench


www.hawaiianxietytraumatherapy.com



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

Testimony

1 message

Haley van Noord <alohahaley@yahoo.com>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 6:06 AM

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

Distinguished Board of Education Members,

My name is Haley van Weemen van Noord, I have been a 7th grade Life Science at Lahaina Intermediate School on the island of Maui for the past ten years and I am writing in support of items;

- B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions
- C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

I fully support efforts to further encourage telework in addition to clear health and safety measures. The only way to fully protect our keiki, staff and teachers is to go 100% distance learning until there is a vaccine.

Please help teachers provide the schools our keiki deserve. It is our kuleana to keep our students safe. We need your help.

With gratitude,
Haley van Weemen van Noord MS, NBCT



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

Testimony

1 message

Kelly Sur <kelly.sur@k12.hi.us>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 8:28 AM

To whom it may concern;

The basis of education is gathering facts, documents, looking at the "science" into inquires that look for truth. Why does a small percentage of teachers have the platform to voice their opinions on when school campuses are opened for in person learning? We hear from the HSTA teacher union representative on keeping on line schooling...why isn't this voted on?

Throughout the world, the science is showing that the Covid - 19 virus is similar to a flu for those under the age of 19 yrs and younger. I believe there are more teachers and students who would rather go back to school on campus. The basis of quarantining is for those who have been infected, as well as those who are considered HIGH RISK with health issues. Most of the countries around the world, as well as the majority of states have opened up schools as well as athletics. This is not speculation, these are FACTS!

If the fear of opening up school is because of the amount of students on campus at one time, open up athletics with small controlled groups to start workouts. Following all CDC, DOH guidelines, this is long overdue. Nothing is fool proof, but with guidelines in place, should anyone become infected, we follow DOH guidelines (quarantine) and move on. I am in the high risk range due to my age, but I believe this is a part of life as we know it now. I can shelter myself from everyone and live like a hermit, or live life as we should. For those teachers or coaches who do not want the risk, take a leave or retire.

Mahalo

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

Testimony

1 message

Taylor Marye <icuct3.14@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 9:27 AM

Miko Marye, Speech-Language Pathologist, WDO

General Business Meeting

Agenda item IIIB: Telework

Position: Support

After dedicating the past 16 years of speech-language service to the Department of Education I would like to ensure that I can continue to provide service with good health for myself, my family, and my community. Speech-language pathologists specifically need to work with our facial features unobstructed for students to learn how to communicate effectively. We work with students who did not naturally learn to communicate typically and thus have disabilities. Teleworking has allowed for best, safest practice during the COVID19 pandemic and continuance of this valuable service delivery option is IMPERATIVE. Whether we continue with distance learning or begin transitioning students back to campus -teleworking allows for the safest community contribution (need to minimize “bubble” intruders). Safest on a continuum (backed by the World Health Organization and Center for Disease Control) would look like: service provider at home-student at home, service provider at home-student at school, service provider at school outside -student at school outside. Service provider at school would require N95 mask + face shield and student in face mask as we know COVID19 transmission can be by aerosol or droplet...how does this help our keiki learn how to pronounce/enunciate and communicate effectively? Speech-language pathologists have a caseload that reaches all grade levels of the school(s) thus, we would definitely be identified as super spreaders. Please keep telework approved and push the Department to continue to allow for this delivery option.



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

Testimony to send our kids back to Face to Face instruction

1 message

Melissa LDT <melissaldt@gmail.com>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 9:32 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: lanelle.hibbs@k12.hi.us, doeinfo@k12.hi.us

Dear BOE, DOE, Christina Kishimoto & Lanelle Hibbs,

Thank you for all that you do supporting our children here on the Windward side. I truly am disappointed with the decision to not go back to face-to-face or blended learning this next quarter. I understand you may not have voted this way. What I don't understand is why everyone else has to go back to work (Grocery workers, postal, medical, restaurants, airlines etc) yet teachers and staff get to vote on not having to return to blended or face to face learning. It's absurd. You are loosing student enrollment which looses money for schools. We have left the DOE and started homeschooling yet it still saddens me that the children are not being allowed in school. As soon as face to face returns we plan on re enrolling. Are you all not concerned about your employment? Funds will run out. Now is the time for teachers to stand up and show up. Then next year they can all consider a strike if we don't pay them more and what they deserve. After what parents are going through right now I'd guarantee we'd vote in favors of a pay raise. Teachers are essential. This is not about safety. Our Kailua schools have such low enrollment and large classrooms that are totally capable to facilitate safe face-to-face learning. This community would be willing to do whatever it took to make that happen. We have campaigned for tables and chairs and pop-up tents to make more room for classroom space. Maunawili elementary is my home school. Kids and parents are stuck at home. I've seen these kids, my niece, my nephew & boy up the street. They are not retaining information. They are not engaged. They are sad and depressed.

A 1st grader kid asked me if he could come to my school because he hates being online. Unless a parent can hand hold their child's hands (which most cannot because they are also working) through distance learning these children are not getting the education, care and respect they deserve.

Thank you for listening.

Melissa Veenstra
Maunawili Kailua

Melissa Veenstra
[REDACTED]
MelissaLDT@gmail.com
Let's Do This!!!



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

Return to Learn Testimony from the Porter Ohana

1 message

Bonnie Campanella <bcampanella@gmail.com>
To: Lanelle.hibbs@k12.hi.us, testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: Stockton Porter <stocktondavidporter@gmail.com>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 10:18 AM

Aloha and Good morning,

I am a mother of 2 children, one in Kindergarten and one in 2nd grade. Both attend Enchanted Lake Elementary School. While I have been fortunate enough to take a voluntary furlough from my job, my job needs me back in December. The latest news of not returning until after the new year is deeply upsetting.

The children need to be back in school, Period.

My kids have been so, so, patient in this entire process, however they are so emotional about the news as well. They are now seeing their peers return back to their respective schools, and kids are talking about how great it is to be in a classroom, yet our children are being left behind with no communication on WHY... Because frankly I don't buy into the fact that the ENTIRE union of teachers expressed the need to stay at home. I also think that we know enough about this "pandemic" to know that establishments can open safely with the proper protocols in place.

If this is a union issue, let me be the one to tell you that my husband and I both belong to unions. If you want specific, I belong to SAG and the AFA.... My husband is DGA. Our unions have been fighting to get us back to work and have been able to coordinate return to work safety plans. Things are not the same and the protocols are INTENSE, but it is what we MUST DO. The fact that you all have now had 6 months to fight for these children to return makes me believe that YOUR not trying hard enough.

There are plenty of parents, myself included, that are happy to speak up and be the voices for our children. Distance learning is a temporary fix and now you know it CAN work, but this needs to be a LAST RESORT. I cannot even count the amount of times I have walked into the room and my daughter's teachers has been kicked out of her google meet only to find the kids playing "Simon says" for the rest of Language Arts class with NO TEACHER. Not only that but her teacher has had IT tell her she needs a new computer only to be denied it by the DOE. This is not okay.

These children are entitled to a free and appropriate education. This is not free nor appropriate in my view. I have lost income from staying home for the past 6 months. We have been given NO CHOICE. I wonder if the teachers union would be singing a different tune if they knew their paychecks would suffer from this decision... Food for thought.

I asked my children what they would like me to include in this message and they both said that they are longing to meet their teachers in real life. They want to be amongst their peers. My kindergartener is not getting the attention she needs or through Google meets. (And as I write this she had yet another problem with signing in)

I really hope that there is enough outreach from the voices of these children (AKA the parents, grandparents, and guardians) to change some attitudes from the decision makers. Mahalo for you time.

Bonnie Porter
bcampanella@gmail.com





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

reopen elementary schools

1 message

Peter & Julie <barcia123@aol.com>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 10:19 AM

Reply-To: Peter & Julie <barcia123@aol.com>

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

Aloha. Many of the online programs offered for public school elementary grades are not academic, just fun and games. Most are activities that fill time slots. They are not challenging and are not geared to student advancement. Teachers and students are wasting their time and talents. Online schooling Staying virtual is denying them the valuable opportunity of meeting and conquering challenges. Online schooling also robs students of physical activity and personal relationships and interaction. Schools have had lots of time to set up in compliance with COVID guidelines and in person teaching should boldly begin! Thank you. Julie Barcia



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

Fwd: please get our kids back to school

1 message

Lisa Keaney <lisaann1313@gmail.com>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 10:40 AM

To: misty.kaniho@k12.us, testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Good Morning,

I'm sure you are getting inundated with emails, but I wanted to express my concern as a parent of two elementary school kids who are in desperate need to return to school. I would even take 2-3 days a week with kids split into different pods! In addition to the fact that my husband and I both work full time, my children are having a difficult time paying attention to a screen all day long with little to no face to face social interaction. I believe that this is one of the most imperative components to childhood development.

Please consider this as most of the private schools in the state have resumed school and have obviously come up with a safe model.

Aloha,

Lisa Keaney



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

Testimony

1 message

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 11:32 AM


To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

hi! To Whom it may Concern:
I would like to please remain Anonymous.

As I think of all the schools reopening, it gives me a sense of happiness to see the kids once again but at the same time it gives me a sense of weight and worry because of the words and comments that are being said to the community is simply not true...

To address the PPE situation, how is PPE getting distributed? Is there an ordering process? Was there money given to each school? The reason why I ask is because no PPE was or has been provided to me directly. Yes theres some hand sanitizer bottles here and there. Majority bought by myself or ones left from last year. Masks were not provided, face shields only if one asked for it. We asked for gloves and cannot simply get that, or was told get the health rooms gloves. Which we felt we shouldnt be taking the health room supply. Thats why I ask how or what is the procedures of getting PPE in your school. We were under the assumption that each school just got handed a whole lot of supplies? Not really sure whats happening since we still havent recieved any.

What are the policies if you are 2nd party exposed or 3d party exposed to covid? These are not clear also. Do we stay out 14 days? Do we telework? Do we have to take our sick leave as I was told too? What are the procedures and protocols for this? This should be state wide protocols and procedures.

What are the protocols and procedures for wiping and cleaning high touch areas? Whose in charge of that? Sorry to say but no one is doing it without the kids so what makes us think they will be doing it with the kids here?

The protocols and procedures for cleaning as well as exposure should be the same state wide. It doesnt matter if youre in Elementary, Middle, High School or College. It doesnt matter if your from different socioeconomic backgrounds. All the expectations procedures and protocols for cleaning, exposure and trying to keep everyone safe should be the same. Last but not least on the DOE's website, listing covid cases by complex area WEEKLY is so nontransparent. Why isnt it posted cumulatively with the total number of cases? It gives a false sense that everything is ok when really it isnt giving all the information.

Wether you are afraid or not of covid these are your people we should be trying to keep everyone safe and trying our BEST! To CARE about peoples well being, safety and health. Yes, I would love for school to start and see each childs beautiful smiles but not at the expense of someones life.

Thank you for your time

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony

1 message

Ann Crawford <acrawford@kkhs.k12.hi.us>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 1:13 PM

Dear Board Members,

My name is Anna Crawford. I have been a World Language teacher at King Kekaulike High School on Maui for 17 years. I am a member of the leadership team and the Senior Project Task Force.

Thank you so much for holding this special meeting. I have listened to all the recent meetings and I can tell how much you care about students and all of us involved in public education. Thank you for your service. Also, let me thank you for agreeing to give us the extra preparation time at the beginning of the year. The extra time really helped me to start the school year with students in an effective and positive manner.

I am writing today on the following Action Item:

C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning. **I am in favor of this Action item.**

At my school we are doing distance learning and it is working well. I meet with each of my classes live (synchronously) 2- 3 times a week. The other days I provide asynchronous learning opportunities. In the online live meetings I see all of my student faces, they can see mine and we meet as a whole class. I am able to put them in "break out rooms" and they can interact with one another in small groups. In our live meetings, I sit about a foot from the webcam and students can see my face and mouth moving close up which for language acquisition is ideal. The students are attending my meetings, doing the assignments, and succeeding on assessments.

We were told last week, in a vaguely worded statement, because of the new metrics released by the DOH, that we would be returning to "some sort of blended learning at some point in Quarter 2". I feel that shifting to a new mode of instructional delivery in the middle of a quarter (particularly at the highschool level) will be very disruptive to student learning. We have all just gotten used to making virtual learning work and to have to shift again and adjust to "blended learning" will take time away from student learning. We have already lost valuable learning time this year. Teachers haven't really been trained to do blended learning effectively and we will be figuring it out as we go. We need clear criteria on how to transition between delivery modes.

My professional opinion is that we should stay on distance learning until at least the end of the semester. Just because we can shift to blended learning doesn't mean it would be the best for the students at my school. Shifting mid quarter is very disruptive to student learning at the highschool level.

In blended learning with A, B rotation, I would only get to see my students live in class once a week and never online. We would never get to meet as a whole class. The students would not be able to interact. We would be masked so students would not be able to see my mouth or facial expressions, which are

essential components for language acquisition. I teach in a portable and can only accommodate 7 students at a time and maintain the 6ft of social distancing. Even with only 50% of our students on campus on any given day would it not be safe. Some students would have to be in a "satellite location." I don't think we have the space for this. I don't have the technology to record myself leading a face to face lesson. The computer I have is old and outdated. I have to sit a foot away to have my voice picked up by the microphone. We have not been offered any funds for supplies or equipment. How are we going to accommodate the students who are not comfortable returning to school? How will I accommodate the students who are on Acellus but kept their special electives (because they are not offered on Acellus) with their teachers, like the students in my French 3 and 4 classes? If I can't hold online meetings because I have students in my classroom all day everyday, the students not at school will be left out. There are still so many unanswered questions and no clear guidelines.

Not having clear criteria for transitioning to a new model of instruction is very anxiety inducing. I have been trying to keep a positive attitude and to do my job to the best of my ability. The idea of having to shift learning delivery modes again has made me feel low and deflated. I spent one of my lunch breaks last week trying to find a therapist who takes my insurance. The stress and anxiety caused by being asked to shift instructional models in the middle of a quarter are negatively impacting my health and wellbeing. The shifting is stressful for students as well. They need consistency and to know what to expect. Shifting to new learning modes would have less of a negative impact on student learning if it were done after the winter break.

Again, thank you for your service and taking the time to read my testimony and consider these important agenda items.

Sincerely,
Anna Crawford

French and Advisory Teacher, Kekaulike High
Head Faculty Rep, Hawaii State Teachers Association
Senior Project Mentor



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

Testimony

1 message

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 1:17 PM


To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

I am submitting my testimony anonymously

This is for III B, I agree teachers should telework with rules.

First, at our school teachers stay until 4pm and come in on breaks. Please, make a rule that teachers have to leave campus by 3 and are not allowed to come during breaks. This is to help the custodians. Custodians don't have enough time to clean and sanitize because teachers stay late. Two hours to clean 100 rooms is not enough. Also, during breaks, teachers should not be on campus. They are disruptive. They come during random times of the day, they don't inform people they are on campus. Custodians can't finish their duties during breaks because the teachers are calling constantly to get in their rooms. Custodians haven't been able to do a lot because online classes or on campus. They can't be loud or disruptive. They are finally going to get work done over fall break, just to get interrupted by teachers. Also, if teachers come in during breaks, the custodians will have to clean their rooms. We are in a pandemic, what if a teacher catches covid over the break and brings it to campus? They will bring Covid to 12 month employees. Teachers should follow their contracts. I'm shocked that the teachers at my school want to telework. They come in early, leave late, and come to work during breaks. I think this should stop due to covid.

If you approve for the teachers to telework, please give them stipulations. During the first lockdown the teachers stayed home, and the office completed all their work on top of our regular duties. We had to mail 80 page packets every week, deliver everything to their classrooms, and do supply pick up. We did a lot.

If teachers telework, but need to do some work on campus, they should come in and do it themselves. If they need to mail something or give something to a parent, they need to come to campus and do it.

The office is the glue that holds the school together. We have been working since May. We have been working hard. We are tired too, we are scared. We don't want to do teachers work on top of our duties.

Also, I would like to mention, the employee who died at Dole elementary worked in the office. I find it sad that HSTA has used her death to promote their telework agenda. She was not a teacher, she was an office worker. HSTA only mentions other staff members' safety when it benefits their agenda. When HGEA and the custodians union joined forces with them, they mentioned us. After HSTA got what they wanted, they never mentioned us again until the office worker passed away. HSTA needs to fight for the teachers and stop using employees they don't care about to benefit them. Shame on HSTA and shame on Corey!

I am for telework, but stop putting all the teacher ideas and work on office staff. We are tired, we are stressed, we are scared, we are overworked.

Again, I want my testimony to be submitted anonymously

Thank you for reading my testimony

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

Please re-open schools.

1 message

Amy Harpstrite <harpstrite@hotmail.com>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 1:25 PM

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

My name is Amy Harpstrite. I am a pediatrician on the Windward side of Oahu.

I am writing in support of re-opening the schools. I am asking you to look at the science and many studies that show COVID-19 is minimally spread in grades K -6 & not significantly spread in middle or high school with appropriate safety measures in place.

I have many teachers in my family and appreciate that teachers are concerned for their personal safety, but as we reopen our society here in Hawaii, we need to re-open the schools.

Education is essential and

Distance-learning is failing the students of Hawaii. Family after family have come in this year saying their children absolutely hate it, they feel they are unable to get their child to be attentive to the classwork, and they feel their child is not learning anything. It is dismaying to hear such universal disapproval for the current situation. I understand the teachers are trying but I feel remote learning is clearly not an adequate substitute, especially for elementary students. Studies are showing that children especially in K through 2 do not learn well in this fashion & should be taught in an in person environment as soon as is reasonably feasible.

Also, I am counseling parents that children need to get away from screens and be more active as we are seeing an alarming increase in students' BMIs with the current situation. Families feel that this is become much more difficult to do with virtual learning.

Our numbers in Hawaii are showing that we can safely re-open the schools.

You announced the metrics and the Kailua/Kalaheo complex immediately said they are choosing to ignore that recommendation and plan to keep schools closed for a whole additional quarter. This is unconscionable.

Young children especially, vulnerable students, and special education students, all need to be on campus receiving in person education.

Please review your policies and reconsider allowing complexes to have such leniency in these decisions.

Thank you,

Amy Harpstrite MD



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

Testimony

1 message

liberty furchgott <libertypoetez@yahoo.com>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 1:57 PM

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

I am a high school teacher and am writing in to give testimony with regard to **B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions.** I believe that teachers should be treated as professionals who will carry out their duties and obligations as teachers whether working at a central on campus worksite or at a home worksite. At the moment teachers are not being treated as professionals when they are being denied requests to telework without regard to their situations or their commitment to their jobs. I have been turned down for telework three times so far and it has now been brought to my attention that it is the CAS of our complex who has made it clear to principals that they are not to approve any requests for telework. In this time when virtual learning and virtual meetings are the tools that we are using to communicate and instruct it seems inconceivable that we allow students to learn from the safety of their homes while educators are being forced to report to work, exposing themselves to unknown amounts of germs, when they could easily and effectively be doing their jobs from the safety of their own homes. The double standard is clear and it is abhorrent that anyone, be it a superintendent, a complex area superintendent or principal deny professional educators' requests for telework when reporting to work puts our health and safety at risk.

I am also writing in favor of **C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning.** When it is deemed safe for schools to re-open it is of the utmost importance that clear, coherent policies are more than just written down but that there is also transparency in how schools intend to ensure that the logistics are thought out and followed through on. Currently there is no clear or coherent written plans that include the logistics of how schools will reopen and I find that devastating considering that the DOE has adopted a reopening matrix from the DOH which is quite incoherent. A matrix does not solve the many logistical and school specific issues that need to be considered when reopening nor does a matrix assist families or educators who desperately need to keep some consistency in their lives. At the current virus positive rates we are on track to have hybrid learning when we return from October break yet there has been no policies discussed, planned, or enacted to ensure that when we do return that all will be safe. Actionable steps are the essential elements that are lacking with regard to reopening plans at moment. So until the DOE is able to create such thoughtful plans and practical contingency plans; while also making sure that each individual school is able to also be transparent in how those plans will be implemented I believe that reopening needs to be postponed.

I thank you for your consideration on these matters and urge you to vote in favor of both B & C Actions.

27 September 2020

Hawaii State Board of Education
P.O. Box 2360 Honolulu HI, 96804
[REDACTED]
BOE.Hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Hawaii Board of Education Members,

We respectfully ask that the BOE adopt the DOH's health criteria to allow schools to return to in-person/ hybrid learning options. We recognize that at this time DOH suggests decisions on returning to in-person instruction are based on the complex area. We request that schools within the complex area also be granted autonomy, if a school is prepared and students and parents adhere to safety requirements, to direct the return to in-person instruction.

We are parents in the Kailua- Kaleheo Complex Area. Our children are students at 'Aikahi Elementary School. Our complex area currently meets requirements established by DOH to return to partial in-person instruction. However, our complex area leadership determined; without input from parents, teachers, and administrators (aside from principals), that our students would not return to any in-person instruction until January 2021. When questioned about what criteria needs to be met to return to in-person instruction; the complex area leadership did not have an answer, nor did they have a benchmark, other than subjective assumptions, as to when our areas learning model would be adjusted. This is concerning as it leaves decisions open to lobbying and political influences.

We understand that rotating between learning models such as in-person to distance learning is a large transition and will be difficult. However, we strongly believe that even a month of in-person instruction for our children will pay dividends in their motivation and ability to succeed going forward. To actually meet and interact with their teacher is a benefit most children have yet to have: beyond screen time. We acknowledge that opening up Hawaii businesses and travel will bring additional cases of COVID-19 to the state and we feel like there is a narrow window, October and November, to return to in-person instruction, before the number of cases exceed DOH guidelines for in-person instruction. Therefore, we request that students return to school as soon as possible, 13 October for schools that are prepared, so that our keiki will have as much in-person instruction as possible.

We feel that our students and families are needlessly suffering under the distance learning requirement. Academically, socially, and emotionally our children are stunted. The teachers at 'Aikahi Elementary School have gone above-and-beyond to adjust curriculum and teaching methods to support their students, however it is not the same quality. A child's education goes far beyond academic instruction; the social and emotional development they gain through interaction with trained teachers, caring staff, and other students is a significant part of their

individual growth that they are missing. Additionally, as working parents it is a daily struggle to be their primary source of academic instruction.

We thank you for considering this testimony as you establish guidance for Hawaii's public schools.

Thank you,

Jodi and Scott Williams

Parents of 3 (4-month-old, Kindergartener, 5th Grader)
Department of Defense Civilian Liaison Officer at Camp Smith/
Hawaii Pacific University Associate Athletic Director
11-year residents of Hawaii



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

Item III B

1 message

Laurie Luczak <laurie.luczak@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 3:09 PM

Dear Board Members:

Agenda Item:

I am testifying on agenda item III B - Telework

Position:

I oppose this new recommendation date 10/01/2020, which is attempting to diminish my school level authority as Principal.

Rationale:

The hardest responsibility a Principal has involves personnel, and rightfully so because it is about people: students, faculty, staff, and parents.

This is my sixth year as a Principal. I started my official administrative journey 10 years ago. Repeatedly, we are reminded that ultimately we are responsible for what happens or doesn't happen at a school. Do children learn and grow? Are faculty and staff meeting responsibilities? Are fiduciary responsibilities fulfilled? Human behavior is beyond our control, yet we are responsible for the behaviors of faculty, staff, students, and yes even parents. We can cultivate behaviors through practices that promote a positive climate and culture and I don't know of a single Principal who doesn't aspire to do this. Part of a positive climate and culture is collaboration, care, and sharing a common sense of purpose. Additionally, we must agree that schools exist to educate and raise fine human beings. Every social ill is assigned to schools to "fix" and we certainly try with many schools adopting *Whatever It Takes* as their mantra. A tremendous amount of listening, discussion, thinking, planning, and coordination must occur to support every learner.

In order for a school to respond to the needs of our students, We, Principals, must retain our authority regarding personnel situations and needs. One of the frustrating situations for me, is how we are expected to make student centered decisions except with regard to personnel decisions. That's when adult needs seem to supersede the needs of students, the ones that we are to serve. Students often do not have a choice to be at a school. Faculty and Staff have choices and they can exercise them at their will since there is existing policy and processes regarding features of employment. Currently, as per the memos dated 05/26/2020 and 07/24/2020, teachers may apply for telework if they feel the need to. There is also a process to review that request and appeal. I choose to believe that Principals, by and large, are honest, caring, and trustworthy and will work with their faculty and staff to address personnel issues. If not, it'll take more than a new directive to change that environment. I know Principals who have lost much throughout this pandemic yet they still show up at school daily, they still listen to learn, and still keep the needs of students front and center.

I do not think there is a need to take away a Principal's authority and issue a directive that really takes the decision of determining telework out of our hands. I cannot help but wonder that if an essential element of our ability to effectively run a school is taken away, what will be taken next? We are to be innovative, but not really. We are to include and build student choice and voice, but only if the teachers are willing to empower students. We are to integrate technology, art, music, etc. but only if faculty and staff have a growth mindset. We are to keep everyone employed and do it with a reduced budget of at least -8%.

Again, I do not see this shift as being student centered. I cannot support it.

Sincerely,

Laurie Luczak, Principal
Hokulani Elementary School
*You can't step into the same river twice...(Cohen).**Gutta cavat lapidem. (The drop hollows out the stone.)**Learner - Connectedness - Intellection - Positivity - Achiever*<http://www.hokulani-elementary.com/><https://www.facebook.com/HokulaniElementarySchool>

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

October 1, 2020

TESTIMONY FOR: Hawai'i Board of Education Members
FROM: Rep. Amy Perruso (D-46, Wahiawā, Whitmore Village, Launani Valley)
SUBJECT: Metrics Used for 'Return to Learn' Plan

Aloha Chair Payne and Board Members,

I am writing to share my concerns about the proposed adoption of *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* into the *Return to Learn: School Reopening Plan*, the *Return to Learn: School Reopening Plan Principal Handbook*, or the *Return to Learn: School Reopening Plan Health & Safety Handbook*.

Many people were grateful that the state had finally given us metrics that anyone can use to determine when and how schools can implement in-person learning. And we have been told that these guidelines are based on metrics used in other states with guidance from the CDC. However, the CDC thresholds are very different from those set by our state. And they unnecessarily shift risk levels up. In fact, the metrics being used by our state unnecessarily increase the risk levels tenfold, if the research conducted by our classroom teachers is correct.

This is the DOE's metric graphic for their "return to learn" plan, listed as the "Metric Key" for "[Hawaii Metrics for School Reopening](#)."

Metric Key		
Range	Elementary	Secondary
0-5.0	In Person	In Person
5.1-15.0	In Person	Blended
15.1-25.0	Blended	Blended
25.1-35.0	Blended	Learn-from-Home
35.1+	Learn-from-Home	Learn-from-Home

The key is based on “cases per 10,000” people. Just at a first glance, this looks extremely high. Looking for the source of these numbers, we find this document, “[COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#),” updated Sept. 16, 2020. On page six, section II, the DOE provides “Considerations for Schools” and cites the [CDC’s guidelines for schools](#). Under “Reopening: Decision-Making Indicators,” the CDC writes, “Measures of spread in communities can help with decisions about reopening schools. And under the heading “Schools and Child Care,” we find this page, providing a “[Table of Indicators](#).”

Indicators	Lowest risk of transmission in schools	Lower risk of transmission in schools	Moderate risk of transmission in schools	Higher risk of transmission in schools	Highest risk of transmission in schools
Core Indicators					
Number of new cases per 100,000 persons within the last 14 days*	<5	5 to <20	20 to <50	50 to ≤ 200	>200
Percentage of RT-PCR tests that are positive during the last 14 days**	<3%	3% to <5%	5% to <8%	8% to ≤ 10%	>10%
<p>Ability of the school to implement 5 key mitigation strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent and correct use of masks • Social distancing to the largest extent possible • Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette • Cleaning and disinfection • Contact tracing in collaboration with local health department <p>Schools should adopt the additional mitigation measures outlined below to the extent possible, practical and feasible.</p>	Implemented all 5 strategies correctly and consistently	Implemented all 5 strategies correctly but inconsistently	Implemented 3-4 strategies correctly and consistently	Implemented 1-2 strategies correctly and consistently	Implemented no strategies
Secondary Indicators					
Percent change in new cases per 100,000 population during the last 7 days compared with the previous 7 days (negative values indicate improving trends)	<-10%	-10% to <-5%	-5% to <0%	0% to ≤ 10%	>10%
Percentage of hospital inpatient beds in the community that are occupied***	<80%	<80%	80 to 90%	>90%	>90%
Percentage of intensive care unit beds in the community that are occupied***	<80%	<80%	80 to 90%	>90%	>90%
Percentage of hospital inpatient beds in the community that are occupied by patients with COVID-19***	<5%	5% to <10%	10% to 15%	>15%	>15%
Existence of localized community/public setting COVID-19 outbreak****	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

The first issue to emerge is the scale. If we look at the “Number of new cases per” section, the CDC’s chart uses a scale of 100,000. This makes sense for the continent and large cities. Our DOE/DOH chart uses a scale of 10,000, as evidenced in their example:

<i>September 1 to September 14 (14 days)</i>				
Island	Cases	Population	Cases per 10k	School Guidance
Oahu	1937	974,563	19.9	Elementary Blended / Secondary Blended
Molokai	9	7,345	12.3	Elementary <u>In</u> Person / Secondary Blended
Hawaii	216	201,513	10.7	Elementary <u>In</u> Person / Secondary Blended
Maui	29	144,444	2.0	In-Person (all students)
Lanai	0	3,135	0.0	In-Person (all students)
Kauai	1	72,293	0.1	In-Person (all students)

This makes sense. We have a smaller population than many other states in the U.S. We would still expect that the scale adopted by our Department of Education would follow a structure similar to that of the CDC’s recommendations. But this is where the math doesn’t add up. If we adjust for the factor of population from 100K to 10K (10% of the CDC’s recommendation), we get:

Risk Indicators	Lowest	Lower	Moderate	Higher	Highest
CDC (100K)	<5	5 to <20	20 to <50	50 to <200	>200
Hawai’i (10K)	<.5	.5 to <2	2 to <5	5 to <20	>20

Likewise, if we take our numbers from our Hawai'i example chart above and scale them to the 100K of the CDC by multiplying by 10, we get:

HI Metrics	F2F	F2F/Blended	Blended	Blended/DL	DL
Hawai'i (10K)	0 - 5.0	5.1 - 15.0	15.1 - 25.0	25.1 - 35.0	35.1+
CDC (100K)	0 - 50.0	50.1 - 150.0	150.1 - 250.0	250.1 - 350.0	350.1+

This means that within a 14-day period, if we fall in the “Blended” (yellow) area of the Hawaii metric model, we would actually be operating schools that could very well exceed the CDC’s recommendation for the highest risk of spreading COVID-19.

Island	Cases	Population	Not adjusted (based on 10K)	Adjusted for CDC Risk (based on 100K)	CDC Risk
Oahu	1937	974,563	19.9	199	Upper Threshold of HIGHER
Molokai	9	7,345	12.3	123	Middle of HIGHER
Hawaii	216	201,513	10.7	107	Middle of HIGHER
Maui	29	144,444	2.0	20	Bottom Threshold of MODERATE
Lanai	0	3,135	0	0.0	LOWEST
Kauai	1	72,293	.1	1	LOWEST

By the time we get to full distance learning, we'll be so far in the red (at the highest risk level) that we will definitely overburden our healthcare system and will guarantee more sickness, death, and the slowing of the economic growth of the state. The Department of Education sought to put concerns to rest by telling us that they're following CDC recommendations. But apart from the colors and tiers, these recommendations are distressingly different. This current approach, under this DOE plan, will put everyone at high risk. It's true that straight numbers that can be objectively used to gauge our progress on containing COVID-19, and the ability to return to in-person schooling is important. But the numbers need to make sense, and we do not believe these do. The Department of Education must revisit these metrics, and bring them into closer alignment with the guidelines they say they followed.

Mahalo for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Amy Perruso



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

Testimony BOE Special Meeting 10-1-20

1 message

Paul Zina <paul.zina@k12.hi.us>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 5:21 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: Maggie Cox <coxj024@hawaii.rr.com>, G-KKW-Kauai Complex Area Principals <g-kkw-kauai-complex-area-principals@k12.hi.us>, g-kkw-leadership <g-kkw-leadership@k12.hi.us>

Aloha Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Hawai'i Board of Education Members,

I am writing to submit testimony on Board of Education Special Meeting October 1st, 2020 agenda item III.B "**Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions**". I am in support of providing further guidance on the approval and termination of telework agreements for teachers. I would like to first state that I have witnessed the exemplary work done in schools to mitigate the many learning challenges students, teachers, administrators and all other school staff have faced during this pandemic. The topic of telework has been present throughout. As Complex Area Superintendent of Kaua'i, I have processed each telework request submitted for our Complex Area. More so, I have seen the careful consideration given by teachers and Principals for each of those submitted requests whether approved or disapproved. **I believe the current Board recommendations as put forth under item III.B on this agenda are a great start to addressing the clear need for continued guidance on this topic for teachers and administrators. While addressing three key factors around successful telework, I believe the recommendation needs revision to include a consideration for the proven ability of teachers that have implemented distance learning successfully during the first quarter. Principals should consider teacher past practice implementing distance learning successfully or not as part of their decision to approve or disapprove telework for teachers starting in the second quarter of this school year.** At the start of this school year, we did not have this data as we were undertaking a new model of instruction that has never been done on the current scale in Hawai'i. This required an unpredictable level of support for all teachers. At the end of first quarter, we will have data to support teacher past practice with distance learning and principals will be able to consider it in the telework request decisions for second quarter should their school model continue support it.

Mahalo for your kind and thoughtful attention.

--

Paul Zina

Complex Area Superintendent

Kapaa-Kaua'i-Waimea Complex Area

Hawai'i Department of Education

3060 Eiwa Street, Room 305

Lihue, HI. 96766

Paul.Zina@k12.hi.us (Google)

Twitter: @PaulZina

Facebook: @PaulZina

State Website: <http://bit.ly/kauaicomplexarea>School Websites: <http://bit.ly/kauaipublicschools>*He pūko'a kani 'āina. (MKP #932)**"A coral reef that grows into an island."**A person beginning in a small way gains steadily until becoming firmly established...*

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

Oct 1 Meeting

1 message

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 6:05 PM


To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Board of Education Members,

I am a second grade teacher from Hawai'i Island. I ask that you suspend any in person education until at least the second semester. I feel our communities are making progress in some respects, and I feel reopening now would set us up for another wave of infections and more deaths. I am distance learning with 21 of my inclusion students. I have already heard from some of them that they were exposed to Covid or a close family member was. I am very fearful that these will be the realities when they come back to the classroom. When it is time to reopen schools, we need clear metrics on when campuses will close and what happens when there is a case or suspected case in a classroom. As it stands the schools are to be open if there are x amount of cases, then close if there are x amount of cases, then we can open again if there are x amount of cases. I understand that this is the nature of what we are facing, but how stable is this for our families? I know continuing distance learning causes some issues as well, but I would imagine FAR less issues that a possible flip flop of in person, blended, or 100% distance if it all depends on how many cases are in a community. Also, if I do have a student in my class who is positive, then my whole class goes online (at least that is what I think to be true, I do not have any clear guidance on this). In this scenario, all of the families in my class are not exposed as well, and we all need to shift to distance learning, and then back again in a matter of 2 weeks? This is crazy! Distance learning does not fit all learners, but I feel we are hitting a stride and it will be completely disruptive to bring them back now, when we will very likely be thrown back into distance learning again.

On a personal note, I applied for telework after my school was shut down for 2 weeks because we had a positive Covid case with an employee. We were supposed to have had students on campus that week but myself and a few other teachers spoke up against it and my principal changed his mind. I asked for 5 days of telework because all of my students were distance learning. I was denied 5 days and given 3 a week. The reasoning I was given was that I needed to come to campus twice a week to practice mask wearing and being around others on campus. I went to HSTA, they questioned my principal, but unfortunately there was nothing that could be done. I am forced to go to campus 2 days a week to practice wearing my mask and being around others. I am in my last year of probation and am fearful of retaliation. My principal disclosed to me that another reason I wasn't given 5 days a week of telework is because not everyone on my campus can apply for telework. He said the office can't request, the custodians can't request, he can't request, so it wasn't fair and he needs to keep the peace on campus. I did NOT disclose this reason with HSTA because I am afraid he will retaliate.

Thank you,




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

TESTIMONY: NO QUARTER 2 face to face classes!

1 message

Kanani <kanoots@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 7:59 PM

I AND MY FAMILY OPPOSE A RETURN TO FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING FOR THE SECOND QUARTER.

My daughter is a senior at Roosevelt High School and has been doing very well. It was a rocky start, but she has found her rhythm. She knows how to get help and has figured out how to manage her time. While she misses seeing her friends and teachers, and I'm sure she misses leaving the house, we are all worried about her health and safety, especially during a time when it will be regular old flu season, too! Students like my daughter, who are doing well with distance learning and who have the appropriate resources at home, including parent support, should not be forced to go back to face to face learning. If there are students who need the increased support of in-class learning, then accommodations could be made for them without the added burden of more students on campus.

Many public schools have opted to put off face to face learning until January, and I support this option. We will have a better idea of how this will play out through flu season and give our doctors and scientists time to accumulate resources and learn more about how Covid works and how it affects our young people.

Going to school is very different from going shopping. When I go to the market, I don't bring my family, and I only go because I need to and I only stay for as long as I have to. I'm not forced to sit in a room with all the other patrons. I can move about as I want and avoid people who might cough or sneeze, whether or not they have Covid. Even the amount of time I might spend at a big box store, doing bulk shopping for the week is less than the time my daughter will spend in one class! Also, I don't have to use a public restroom. I time my trips so that I can make it home in time to eat and drink and use my own toilet. My daughter, if she spends even half the day in school, will no doubt have to use the school's restroom as hundreds of other students will.

I have yet to see a sensible plan that outlines how students will arrive and leave school that avoids large groups moving together. How will those students who travel by bus travel safely? How will students who live outside the district and get dropped off early and picked up later by parents who work manage? How can the school even manage the sheer number of students as they pass between classes? How will the school ensure students observe social distancing outside of classrooms? And if you say that this is not your job, I'd vehemently disagree. It is absolutely the responsibility of the school and its staff to ensure the health and safety of each and every one of its students. They might be old enough to follow directions and understand consequences, but they are still minors. They are still humans who deserve respect.

My daughter is bright, curious, creative, and intelligent. Even she has expressed concerns over one of her classes in which the number of students exceeds her comfort level (over 50 people in one room!). My teenager, who has been kept away from all of her friends and most of her family because of Covid and who is craving outside contact, is nervous about going back to class! To top it off, I have also yet to see how it will be handled if some of her classmates contract Covid. My husband and son work— how would it affect them if my daughter has been exposed? If my daughter has to quarantine, so would our income! And for what? She has been earning above-average grades through distance learning, and I see her happily working harder than before because she also has the time to video chat with friends who can help her with problem areas.

PLEASE DO NOT FORCE MY DAUGHTER TO GO BACK TO FACE TO FACE LEARNING DURING THE SECOND QUARTER.

Mahalo,
Kanani Chang-Humphreys



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

Testimony

1 message

Dawn Dunford <dawn.dunford@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 8:06 PM

Aloha,

Having to work in the schools right now with just the SPED children servicing speech grades PS-12 has shown me that even now the adults as well as the children cannot social distance, clean the bathrooms and classrooms and wear masks with protocol given now.

I have spoken to the individuals who are responsible to make sure certain protocols are in place and continued to be told it has been taken care of. And I continue to show proof it hasn't. I am now being made to feel like I am a humbug.

We aren't even allowed to go to the district office without an appt and not allowed in the office but yet we are being told to service children face to face with no mask or social distance? Unacceptable!

When I found out I came into contact with positive cases of covid from students I took it upon myself to call in sick and go get tested - twice! And was told "oh good thinking" All they were worried about was how am I going to make up the minutes I missed and when would I be back at work.

I have been persuaded not to take the EPSLA or to telework because we are short handed.

How will it be with all the kids back in school? Believe me I feel for the parents who want there kids back in school for I have two myself enrolled in DOE.

All I can say is as a high risk candidate to catch COVID - anxiety and fear has taken over me Mon thru Fri from 7-4!

Mahalo



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

Testimony for B - Teleworking and C - DOH Guidelines

1 message

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

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 8:07 PM

Aloha Board of Education:

I am teacher at Pahoa High & Intermediate School for 24 years, and a teacher in the DOE for 29 years. I am an ELA grade 7, News Writing grade 8 and AP Psychology teacher.

I applied for teleworking due to the amount of distractions I endured during the week. Before I could actually use it, it was rescinded by the principal. I go into work early when it's quiet and peaceful. I am able to focus and get a tremendous amount of paper work done, however, to no fault of theirs, we have very conscientious custodians who weed whack every day for brief periods of time before 8:00am, then we had the weekly State lawn-mowing. Compounded with the blowers cleaning the sidewalks (instead of using water to wash dust and debris). Add multiple weed whackers going at different parts of the yard. I also endure the stench of the sewage vent on the side of the building which provides a miasma of rotten eggs especially in the afternoon. Add road work due to repaving of the highway. AND, traffic at a busy intersection. I can simply close my door, but not under covid - -I want my windows and doors wide open for ventilation. I requested ONE day of the week to be free from the constant assault of noise and distractions. I even purchased airbuds to help cancel out noise. I counted on a given day, five interruptions per hour, four days of yard work, and one day of absolute quiet. Talk about Buddhist 18 levels of Hell.

As a result of the inability to have some respite, my nerves are on edge and I make so many careless mistakes with my on-line lessons. I have to constantly edit, and every time I edited the work, my students received an email. It is annoying for them, and just think they have 6 other teachers since we have 10 periods with Math and ELA double blocked. For example, on one class's work I would have the topic "Resources" then on another classroom "resources" and yet another "resources-" if you have used G-classroom, you know that being consistent with naming things is critical in the long run. It still is very challenging to stay focus and avoid stupid mistakes. Compound all that with learning how to even use G-classroom was daunting. I live with my husband and cats. Although one is a kitten, no matter how rambunctious they are - they are not even close to dueling weed whackers. Now the sewage smell is a whole different story! Litter box...I don't understand why I wasn't allowed to telework for just ONE day. I thought of asking for more days, but I know my principal would put me through the wringer, I never thought ONE day would be denied. I know I would be more productive at home and my mental health would be a lot better, instead of irritated at school.

C.

Our school is considering a hybrid model to bring vulnerable students back on campus. It is not a good idea at all. I am not willing to be collateral damage for face-to-face teaching when there are other models yet to be tried. Nor is our school equipped for the required sanitation measures the DOH is proposing. Already we were told to use classroom funds to purchase disposable masks, wipes, and other sanitation products. Why isn't the DOE providing funding for this? Guidelines right now are not sustainable. We cannot risk even one student or one teacher to the virus. It is not worth it.

Thank you for allowing my testimony. Please provide us with a safe school first.

Sheryl Ogawa
Pahoa High & Intermediate School



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

Support for reopening schools - Kailua/Kalaheo Complex Area

1 message

Hannah Clegg <hannahclegg@gmail.com>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 9:32 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov, Lanelle.Hibbs@k12.hi.us

Cc: kfraser@aikahies.k12.hi.us

Hello Ms. Hibbs,

As a parent and single mom of a second grader, a kindergartener and an almost two year old, I'd like to share my support of re-opening schools in the Kailua/Kalaheo Complex. My girls are enrolled at Aikahi Elementary School, which has done an incredible job preparing for the return of students, and making sure they get an adequate education in the mean-time.

Oahu is far below the threshold outlined by the DOH and DOE for partial re-opening so this decision to not re-open after Fall Break was a huge blow to parents and students. Like most parents, I've weighed the concerns and risk of sending my kids back to school... and after seeing how Aikahi has dealt with things and prepared, I feel my children would be safe at school. The benefits of daily in-person school with a teacher far outweigh the risks, in my opinion. I've struggled with having my 7 year old in front of a computer from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily and my 5 year old from 8-10 a.m. While kids are resilient and very adaptable, I don't think we should ask this much of them for this long. Distance learning in my mind felt like a stop-gap til we could be in person so we were asking them to do this very hard thing for a few weeks, not months or a year!

Academically our kids are already behind those in other states. I feel this also widens the gap between the "haves and have nots" as most of those with the means to do so have moved their kids to private schools or are getting tutors. So the longer this goes on, the more people leave. After the latest announcement was made, several people I know decided to pull their kids and homeschool on their own or switch to private school.

There are social and emotional issues to consider as well. As an anecdote, I'd like to share a story from last week when I was babysitting a friend's kids while she worked. During the first few minutes of play, my daughter got her feelings hurt, retreated to the house, put her headphones on and opened Seesaw saying she wanted to work on her homework. I asked what was going on and she teared up and said "I I I... I don't know how to join in. I don't know what to say." I told her "They love you - you've been buddies since you were one! Go back out there and say whatever you want - what you'd say to your little sister - they will love it!" She said they will? Thought for a minute and went back out and soon they were all happy and playing again. A pretty minor incident but it stood out to me that if "the re-entry" can be hard for a second grader with an in-tune/encouraging parent, I can't imagine how this is affecting older kids or those who don't have strong parental relationships.

I hope the extra support from parents helps as you consider.

Thanks,

Hannah Clegg



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

in favor of Distance Learning for 2nd quarter

1 message

C Renna <2carabella@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 5:59 AM

Aloha board members,

In regards to: Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

- Although there have been some slow improvements, schools on Oahu are not yet safe; the systems in place that would protect schools are not yet safe. Flu season is closing in on us, the state continues to struggle to secure plenty of testing options with rapid results, we don't yet have a DOE dedicated team of contact tracers, there continues to be a lack of public responsibility (wearing masks and distancing outside of school hours), there remains a real possibility of overburdening our hospitals, ventilation has not been addressed.

- Many students are rocking distance learning. They get to be appropriately challenged at their instructional level, don't have to focus on a 70 minute instructional period, aren't overwhelmed/over-stimulated/distracted by others, they don't have to compare themselves to others, they're making invaluable gains in real world skills: self-reliance, time management, choice, ownership, variations in partnerships, self-reflection, relevance, etc. I've also worked with very high needs children and feel to best address their needs, perhaps we should consider their 1:1 staff going into their homes - it would be much safer to meet these students in their bubble, rather than removing them from it.

- Distance learning is a game changer: it allows us consistency with providing education. Opening and closing schools with unavoidable quarantine needs is going to disrupt delivery of learning and cause undue stress. We can make something great out of this school year, not succumb to the challenge of constant stress, pressure, uncertainty, anxiety. These are not prerequisite skills to learning, these are detrimental elements to failure.

- Schools have a chance to contribute to the community in a new way: employment (pending COVID funds). We are facing dire economic straits, but schools could curb unemployment and other financial hardships by hiring one parent per household to be a "distance learning support person." Based on need/sliding scale \$5-10k per support person, every quarter the brick and mortar school setting is closed. (Single parents can

use their funding to hire/acquire as they see fit.) Newly hired staff can receive training on learning and behavior; closed schools could go through a remodel for safer spaces, better ventilation, and collect PPE and cleaning needs over time. COVID is not going away, instead it asks us to adapt our social environments in new and improved ways.

In conclusion:

- please keep us safe by keeping us closed
- telework must be an option
- consider 1:1 staff working with high needs kids in their homes
- let us continue with providing consistency in learning - opening and closing classrooms and schools will be highly disruptive
- let's contribute to our communities in a new partnership way: by hiring parents as distance learning support staff

Many thanks for all that you do,
Cara Renna
Sunset Beach EI

Testimony for October 1 BOE meeting



Teacher at Kapaa Elementary

Agenda items:

--Board action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions

--Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and inperson learning.

Position: **Oppose**

As a teacher of first graders, I can attest to the fact that distance learning is limiting and delaying my students' academic progress significantly in a very critical year of their young lives. In my interactions with students, I have not heard *one* positive comment from their perspective. Instead I hear comments like, "*I hate computer learning*"; "*I want to go back to school*"; "*I miss my friends*". According to one parent, her child has been having regular "meltdowns" between my two online classes at home. The mental energy given to trying to learn to read via online instruction and the amount of screen time is too much for her young developing brain.

The Department of Education knows that distance learning did not work in the spring. Currently, the children are doing the best that they can, but they are not receiving the full benefits of in-person teaching and learning with their peers. The "carrot" of returning to school physically keeps them plodding along. I believe that the Board of Education is not considering the very negative emotional impact these continuous school-opening delays are having on our keiki. All of these unnecessary delays are discouraging and frustrating them and will eventually kill their motivation for academic learning.

These delays are also significantly compounding the stress level for the parents who have to juggle work and helping their children learn at home. These parents are already struggling with loss of income and uncertainty of their futures. When my students and parents heard the news that they could return after Fall Break, they were so elated! And now, another delay?! Delaying once again is unconscionable and wrong!

We have only two active cases on our island and there is *absolutely no reason* to remain closed. On a personal level, I'm probably in an age category where I'm more at risk; in addition, my husband is dealing with stage 4 cancer. Yet, I still believe schools should open without any further delay! We have a job to do. For the sake of our keiki, open up the schools!



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

Testimony for Special Meeting Oct 1, 2020

Tracie Perry <tracieraeperry@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 8:02 AM

Aloha,

My name is Tracie Perry, I am a substitute teacher for the Kalaheo Complex, with my primary school being 'Aikahi Elementary.

In regards to agenda - item "C", I support the return to in person learning immediately after fall break. The issues with documentation should be immediately fixed so that there is clear communication with staff, students and family. There needs to be unity from the Board, Superintendent and Complex Area Superintendents, not passing the buck and allowing "someone else" to make a decision.

Below is my full statement for your consideration,
Mahalo,
Tracie Perry

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Aloha,

First of all, I appreciate the tough decisions you have had to make on behalf of our entire state in a time when government and medical guidance is constantly changing. Thank you for communicating effectively and I understand the decision to continue virtual learning for the second quarter was to lessen change and avoid last minute disruptions.

However, that being said, I would like to testify that you should open schools with safety protocols after fall break.

I am writing as a parent of three, an educator, and a substitute teacher. I encourage you to reopen public schools for the sake of our keiki, as well as the families they live with. By choosing fear over cautiously moving forward, we are putting their educational, mental, and social development at risk for a virus that we now know more about and can better prevent.

Even though I am a licensed educator, it is difficult for me to help all three of my children at home simultaneously, and I have the privilege of staying home with them right now. Families with two working parents do not have these luxuries and must be having an even tougher time.

Even though I am fairly tech savvy and we have solid functioning devices for each child, there are still numerous technological issues that come up and complicate their learning. Families with inadequate internet or sharing devices are suffering even more.

Even though I am very supportive of public education, I have considered pulling my kids out and putting them in private school so they can have face to face instruction. I know other families that have already made that decision, or are choosing to home school. The loss of these families will impact our public schools for years, trying to recover the lost funding and support.

I understand it is a scary time and that teachers would be exposed to a large number of children. However, the private schools here and most schools on the mainland that have opened with safety protocols have not had large or even small COVID breakouts. I am signed up and ready to support my local schools as a substitute, so I feel the plans are safe and I'm willing to help if staff become ill.

In order to reopen in a positive way, please consider a few options:

- o Allow staff to easily telework if they are teaching virtually
- o Allow students to continue virtual learning if they desire
- o Have a clear plan for sick students that would not involve closing a whole school
- o Opening for at-risk students who do not have the support at home
- o Opening for K-2, the students that need the face to face the most

In April, the community rallied behind teachers that saved the day, switching curriculum to virtual in a snap and doubling their workload without complaint. However, after public arguments between the BOE and HSTA, and months to prepare without significant progress, our community is turning against our public schools. But it's not too late to be heroes again.

Mahalo,

Tracie Perry



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Anonymous Testimony

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[REDACTED]  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 8:29 AM

Aloha, I would like to testify as a parent of 4 keiki in the public school system. My comments pertain to aganeda item III. C.

I am not against the transition into hybrid learning on Kauai. However I do not feel safe enough yet to send my keiki back. However I understand that some feel its safe and that the schools have a plan. I visit the school once a week to gather worksheets and I have not seen any signage in bathrooms or by cafeteria or water fountains, places where health and safety should be practiced regularly. I have seen a temporary (paper in plastic, water damaged) sign saying "wear your mask" at one of the entrances. Staff is indoors with no face masks. I feel before any school reopens a quick visit by the health department or someone from BOE, someone who can regulate and verify that health and safety guidelines are met and schools ready to open is a must.

Due to our health and safety concerns we chose to keep our keiki home. We are signed up as full distance learners and have been using the provided program Acellus. When the whole school was placed on distance learning we were invited to join our classes, which has been great! Only down fall is I realized that there are programs my keiki are not allowed to use such as Lexia (which their teachers were assigning as daily homework, along with acellus). I don't feel like my keiki learn well with just acellus and wish that they were also allowed Lexia (as hybrid students were allowed both programs). I feel distance learners have the shorter end of the stick as far as resources and already loosing face to face. It would be helpful to have a few teachers assigned to distance learners online or at least to have all the same programs available in school available for distance learners.

I thank you for letting me share my opinions on what I see pertaining to health and safety and as a difference between distance learning and hybrid as you look into transitioning our students.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony on Action item C

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**Ryan** <ryoshiza@hotmail.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 9:52 AM

To: "testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" &lt;testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

Aloha Hawaii Board of Education Members,

I am writing in support of BOE Chairperson Payne's proposal. However, in the spirit of transparency I would ask the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Education (DOE) to disclose which state model they are using for their reopening metrics. I have searched for any school district using those metrics and have found none. The fact that the Hawaii's DOH uses a sample size of 10,000 whereas other states use 100,00 for their sample size is troubling. Further, the context of the model used could also affect the effectiveness of its use. For example, a rural school district with less concentration of homes would not be as susceptible to community spread as more urban areas where families live closer together with larger household sizes. In order to develop trust in our department agencies, the DOH and DOE should provide the public with as much information as possible to ensure their decisions are based on the best science and not simply creating metrics to get it over with. Withholding the basis for their metrics, when it affects so many children, teachers, and the community, only builds the distrust already present in government leaders today.

Thank you all for your hard work in these difficult times and I appreciate your support and dedication to do what is best to protect our students and teachers during this pandemic.

Aloha & Be safe!

Ryan Yoshizawa, Librarian  
Waipahu High School  
[94-1211 Farrington Hwy.](#)  
Waipahu, Hawaii [96797](#)



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony: No Personal Information

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[REDACTED]  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 10:05 AM

Aloha,

The following testimony is regarding the Special Meeting on 10/1/20 as to suspending in-person learning/school, of which I am opposed.

I am a mother of four (ages 12, 6, 5, & 2 weeks), living on Kaua'i. Two of my children are very young elementary students (kindergarten & 1st grade) who need constant help with distance learning and whose virtual classes are scheduled at the same time. As you can imagine, it is very difficult to manage going back and forth between the two virtual classes to assist my children, especially while caring for an infant. I am physically & mentally needed from 8am to 3pm in order to complete all of their work & ensure they attend all of their virtual meetings which means I will not be able to go back to work (once baby is old enough) to financially provide for my family should they still be distance-learning.

I do understand that other islands, particularly Oahu, have not been successful with keeping the number of active COVID-19 cases down due to their high populations so completely understand why you may be considering suspending in-person learning for those islands. However, I am opposed to it for our island of Kaua'i. Kauai has had very few active cases for quite a long time now so I am confident that our children going back to in-person school would be okay, as long as we maintain the proper safety precautions (wearing masks, 6ft. distancing, etc.) as we did at the beginning of the school year.

**Please do not suspend in-person learning for all islands/counties, but rather decide based on each island/county's individual current COVID-19 status/situation.**

Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony for the General Business Meeting: Telework

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**Robin Yogi** <robin.yogi@k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov  
Cc: Robert Davis <Bob.Davis@k12.hi.us>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 10:40 AM

Attached is a testimony for Robert Davis, Complex Area Superintendent for the Leilehua, Mililani, Waialua Complex Area, Department of Education.

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Thank you, Robin

Robin Yogi, Private Secretary  
DOE - Leilehua, Mililani, Waialua CA  
Central Oahu District - Administration  
[1122 Mapunapuna Street, Suite 200](#)

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"A smile is a light in the window of your face  
to show that your heart is at home."

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 **testimony telework BOE 10\_1\_20 - Opposed - Central District-LMW CA, Robert Davis CAS 9.29.2020.pdf**  
76K

Testimony by: Robert Davis, Complex Area Superintendent for Leilehua, Mililani and Waialua Complex, DOE

General Meeting

Agenda Item: Board action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions

Oppose with comment

Good afternoon, Chairperson Payne and Members of the Board of Education.

I appreciate this opportunity to share my perspective as a former Personnel Regional Officer, former principal, current Complex Area Superintendent, community member, and parent of a public school student.

I am confident with the safety of our schools and classrooms. My testimony today asks for the Board's support to follow the already established telework procedures we have in place.

The impetus for all decisions is doing what is safe for all and best for the students. The Hawaii Department of Education is primarily an in-person educational system. Given the health issues of the current pandemic, we are working to responsibly provide the best education possible in a very challenging environment. Therefore, we have a moral obligation to provide the best access to education possible to our students. Our teachers are working hard and giving this modality of instruction their best effort to minimize the learning loss of their students.

- Regularly reporting to work ensures teachers have access to devices, build relationships, and are trained to learn more skills in the instructional process going forward.
- Given the variation in the home environment and teacher capacity to simultaneously handle virtual instruction, the school is the hub for centralized support for technical issues and coaching support. Reporting to work ensures immediate support to the greatest extent possible, particularly for teachers who may not yet be experts managing the platforms they are using.
- Reporting to work allows teachers the ability to collaborate with colleagues. For example, new teachers can be in close contact with veteran teachers who can provide instructional support to them. Less experienced teachers can access supports for all aspects of instruction, not just virtual teaching.
- Staff who report to work have access to teaching materials and reliable network access in safe conditions at school.

- When teachers report to work, students see their teachers within the classroom, which emphasizes that school is in session and increases school connectedness. Teachers have been conducting synchronous virtual class and students have been able to see the classrooms.

The view I shared today reflects each and every school's relentless and tireless efforts to move in the direction of supporting all students. I have seen first-hand the creativity, collaboration, and connections that schools are making with their students. Teachers exercising innovation reconfiguring their classrooms to utilize school issued big screen tv's, I-pads, multiple laptops, their bulletin boards as "green screens" to engage students and more. School employees have ready access to instructional materials and colleagues in a safe work environment. All of this would be very difficult to organize if not conducted in school.

Our department already has an established telework procedure which our school personnel have been following.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Board today. We in the Central District continue to believe that our schools provide the educational environment where learning continues to be by design and not by chance.

Robert Davis  
9/29/2020



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

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**Shakti Brickland** <shaktibrickland@yahoo.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 10:53 AM

Reply-To: Shakti Brickland &lt;shaktibrickland@yahoo.com&gt;

To: "testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" &lt;testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

To Whom It May Concern,

I live in Kona and have many teacher friends. Most of them, if not all of them, feel concerned about being in a classroom with students, not knowing who might have had contact, knowingly or unknowingly, with someone carrying the corona virus. Students and staff are not all going to be compliant with mask wearing, distancing and hand washing which puts everybody at risk. Teachers ought to be allowed to work from home and students ought to be able to learn from home to keep everyone safe. The added stress in the classroom of trying to ensure everyone is compliant with the covid rules will be huge. Teachers are hard to come by in this Sate, we don't want them to have to resign over this issue. Please allow them the opportunity to telework if they choose to, like many other State employees, for the sake of their mental health as well as their physical health.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Robyn Brickland.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony for 10/1 meeting

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**Jill Jacobs** <jillybean05@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 10:58 AM

Board Chair Payne, and Members of the Board,

My name is Jill Jacobs and I teach third grade in a special education inclusion classroom at Kealakehe Elementary School in Kona. My classroom is a fully co-taught classroom. There are two full time teachers in the room as well as a part time Educational Assistant. I am writing today in full support of delaying in person learning for all students.

First I want to thank you all for holding this meeting. Especially Chair Payne for being proactive in promoting a safe school for our students, teachers, and community. All of the safety concerns that you have brought out and the list of expectations for what need to happen for a safe return to school is what we as teachers have been crying out for since this whole situation started. There is one additional criteria I would plead to be added to that list. That is that school be staffed with the number of people needed to ensure that all the safety plans can be enacted without adding to the overflowing plates of the teachers. At my school because our enrollment has dropped our admin sold back many of our casual hire positions. This will not leave us with the number of staff we need to safely monitor recess, lunch, monitoring people coming to campus, and an isolation room for students with Covid symptoms. We were already short staffed and our non-classroom teachers were being pressured by our admin to be cafeteria monitors for two grade levels. Now these same teachers have taken on teaching between 30-40 of our 100% distance learning students. How are they supposed to continue that job and monitor lunches for 2 hours of the day. It's not possible. The step my admin will take is to ask classroom teachers to give up our contractual right to a duty free lunch. They will tell our teacher that it's professional to give and give and give until we break.

Beyond all the safety reasons and my bigger concern about returning to a blended learning model is the loss of instructional time for our students who have already lost a quarter of last school year. In the current model of distance learning students at my school are receiving live lessons with new content in each lesson 5 days a week. Moving to a blended model at my school students will only receive live lessons with new content two days a week. However, at many other schools students would only receive one day of live instruction a week. This will be a huge disservice to our students and our community.

If we return to blended learning we will also lose the first few weeks of in person teaching to having to teach the students the new routines and to reteach them what school is like now. This puts our students even farther behind. Another reason that we should not shift to blended or any form of face to face learning in consistency. The ever changing status or the looming of the change adds so much stress to teachers and families. If we reopen school campuses and then they have to close again because of Covid this is increasing the stress. Just let things be consistent.

For those who say that distance learning is not work I have data that shows otherwise. For the first time in my 16 year teaching career I had everyone of my students pass the math assessment. Even the students with IEP's got an 80% or higher. I monitored the students through the videos on our live session and through the computer monitoring that our school uses. The students passed not with help from adults but because they knew what they were doing. My students are also all getting at least a 60% on every reading assessment. Our students with IEP's are meeting daily with my co-teacher to receive their SDI and are making growth towards their goals. Making them switch to only being in person twice a week is a huge disservice to all of them.

I beg you to please make clear statewide guidance on what must be in place before any students return to campus. I do not have faith in the DOE leadership at a state level or a local level to make wise decisions.

Thank you,,  
Jill Jacobs

Aloha Board Members,

I am a neighbor island elementary teacher writing to ask that you **do not** suspend in person learning for our students. Being online is having severe impacts on the student's academics and social emotional/mental health. Each island has its own unique circumstances with covid numbers and we are all isolated, I don't feel its beneficial or necessary to have the entire state on distance learning.

Going to distance learning for these few weeks has shown me the severe flaws and ripple effects we will be dealing with in the weeks, months and years to come. While we teachers have greatly improved our teaching on online platforms, it is nowhere near the caliber students receive in person.

Our students struggle to learn online and it's much harder for us to reach them online. I have had students not get online and miss instruction simply because no one was home to remind them to get on, I've had parents and kids melt down with me from the stress of doing online learning, I have family members telling students answers while I am teaching and/or giving assessment, students playing, eating and even leaving their computer on during instruction but walking away from it and missing lessons. I am not the only teacher dealing with scenarios like this.

Our school has set up for A/B rotation days limiting our class sizes. Classrooms and cafeteria are set up for distancing. We've modified our recesses to accommodate distancing protocols. Students and families know that masks are required and if forgotten we have extra in class to give to students. We have the supplies to disinfect out rooms and our custodians are also doing their part. Students are washing hands any time we enter our classroom, before eating and other common times like when they sneeze.

While I appreciate all the efforts all of you (BOE and HSTA) are doing to ensure all students and staff are safe, please keep in mind that not all teachers and staff feel schools should be closed. Please do not stop in person learning where it isn't necessary. I am thankful to have the option to still teach my students online in the event our covid numbers climb, but distance learning should only be considered when numbers are climbing, not when we have neighbor islands with low or no cases.



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

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## NO PERSONAL INFORMATION- Testimony

1 message

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To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 11:24 AM

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Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**BOE meeting testimony 10/1/2020**

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**Kileigh Sanchez** <kileighsanchez@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 11:34 AM

Aloha Board,

I am writing in reference to the agenda item regarding telework. I believe that there is inequity regarding telework approval across our islands, with some principals and CAS's being flexible and working with their teachers, and others completely denying any request. I am speaking from the standpoint of a teacher who believes that there should be flexibility for teachers' work options just like we are being asked to be flexible beyond belief as we bend over backwards to do everything we can for our kids through distance learning. It would be a sign of good faith from our Superintendent to allow teleworking to happen if you as the teacher so choose instead of just deciding to put the pressure of such a divisive issue on the principals and CAS's. Right now, teachers may apply for telework, but different teachers across the islands are being denied while still others are being approved, even if they have the same reasoning/illness/situation. I've heard countless stories of such unfair practices occurring on different campuses where some are being denied with zero reasoning given for their being denied for telework other than that the CAS may be denying telework across the board in their complex. I believe that the Superintendent should do what Board member Voss recommended in the last BOE meeting; allow teachers the opportunity to telework if they don't have students on campus and have the Superintendent make the call for all of us. Nobody is asking to stay home and not work. Teachers are asking to be able to do what's best for them right now in the middle of this pandemic and our voices are being ignored. I so appreciated Board member Voss for speaking up about giving teachers the chance but was so disappointed with Supt. Kishimoto for dancing around the subject and placing blame on others when it would be so easy for her to make a decision that helped teachers across the board. At a time when teachers are looking to jump ship, please encourage the Superintendent to make a definitive step in the right direction towards proving teachers' voices are heard by allowing telework for those who request it and are capable of doing so effectively at their homes.

Thank you.  
Kileigh Sanchez

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Kileigh Sanchez, M.S.Ed.  
Art Educator, Waianae Intermediate School  
Vanderbilt University '14, Communications and Studio Art  
Johns Hopkins University '16, Master of Science, Education

  
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**Testimony**

1 message

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**B A** <barb.abaya@gmail.com>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 12:12 PM

Subject: Testimony

Name, Position, and Organization: Barbara Abaya, Parent of Alika Abaya (Student at Ilima Intermediate School), [REDACTED], [barb.abaya@gmail.com](mailto:barb.abaya@gmail.com)

Meeting: Special Meeting, October 1, 2020 (Full Board)

Agenda Item: Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

Position: Comment

Please see attached testimony.

Thank you,

Barbara Abaya  
[REDACTED][barb.abaya@gmail.com](mailto:barb.abaya@gmail.com)

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 **BOE Mtg.pdf**  
94K

Subject: Testimony

Name, Position, and Organization: Barbara Abaya, Parent of Alika Abaya (Student at Ilima Intermediate School [REDACTED], barb.abaya@gmail.com

Meeting: Special Meeting, October 1, 2020 (Full Board)

Agenda Item: Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

Position: Comment

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Good Afternoon, Chairperson Payne and Members of the Board of Education

I appreciate this opportunity to share my opinion regarding challenges of this new online/virtual learning model. I am saddened to hear that the Leeward Complex Area of Campbell and Kapolei will be resorting to online learning for the remainder of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester.

I have a 13-year-old son in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade at 'Ilima Intermediate School. His experience with online/virtual learning since March 2020 has been difficult and frustrating for himself, classmates and faculty. I feel that my son is being cheated out of a proper education, integration, and lack of social skills. As a young man, this is the pivotal time in his life where he not only learns academically but should also be learning how to deal with adversity, hormones and social relationships. By not being able to attend in-person learning, he is showing negative signs such as lack of motivation, lack of self-direction and lack of communication skills. This concerns me because my personal experience in intermediate school taught me to learn how to cope with my emotions, social relationships with other students and gaining life long friends. I still can remember how much fun I had in each class, the teachers' names, what they taught and what I learned.

In-person learning is where I see my son flourish. He feels that he learns better with classmates and their teacher by his side. He is happier and confident. They support each other with their different learning styles, which helps them grow not only academically but also personally. Not supporting the integration of in-person/blended learning inhibits his growth mentally, creatively, physically and academically.

During this time of online/virtual learning, my son and his classmates have resorted to meeting on their Xbox playing games as a way of socializing. I don't like this type of socializing but due to all of the restrictions, I have allowed him to socialize this way because what other release do the students have? I feel that students should be able to go back to school, re-experience learning with a live teacher, learn to make good decisions and be able to socialize while still maintaining the 6-foot social distancing requirement, wearing a mask and washing/sanitizing their hands.

I received an email from my son's teacher and the CAS stating that the rest of the semester will be online only. I also learned that 'Ilima Intermediate is not ready yet for in-person instruction. Is online/virtual learning the best decision for our students? Private schools are currently integrating blended and in-person models of learning, I look forward to the day where online/virtual learning ends and in-person learning restarts. I believe that families should have the opportunity to be able to choose if they want in-person, blended or virtual only learning.

The view I share today reflects how I am feeling as a frustrated parent. I ask for the Board's support in integrating students toward a blended/in-person model of learning as soon as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Board today.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony for Special Board Meeting on October 1

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**Genevieve Javier** <gennajavier@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 12:40 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: Catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Hawaii BOE, DOE and HSTA,

I am writing again to make my voice heard as a parent who is disgusted by how the BOE, DOE and HSTA have hijacked our children's education this year and made children actually returning to in-person/blended learning their last priority. We are scheduled to have travellers return en masse to Hawaii in just 2 weeks, yet I received an email from my son's elementary school (Sunset Beach Elementary) that he will not be going back to blended learning until NOVEMBER 23rd!!!! Being that this date has continually been pushed forward since MARCH 2020, I have no faith that my child will be going back at all ever!! Is education not essential? How are we expected to work and provide for our families when we parents are doing the essential work that teachers are being paid for?! Acellus, Zoom, and Distance learning are subpar alternatives and our children are suffering greatly because of this.

I understand that Covid-19 is a Novel virus that we have been continually learning about, so the actions of completely shutting down the schools and economy made sense in March, but after 9 months of learning about Covid-19 and how it affects children, and even adults that are healthy, the actions taken by the DOE, BOE and HSTA do not support the science and studies out there. We are in a unique position living in Hawaii, where we can teach children outdoors or with windows open and trade wind powered ventilation. I have seen no one propose any of this, and it seems that the DOE and HSTA refuse to think outside of the box to institute and present meaningful ways of educating our children in person among their peers.

Study after study of peer reviewed science and evidence coming from children in schools from across the world- Spain, France, Sweden, and Korea- are showing that children are not driving the pandemic and they are less likely to become infected and seem less infectious.

It's time to reopen schools and give families CHOICES and OPTIONS.... We need to move forward. Teachers are still getting paid, yet all of the families enrolled at Sunset Beach Elementary are losing money because of how we have had to step up as assistant full-time teachers. We deserve options to help us cope with these trying times.

Frankly, it is exhausting writing letter after letter without any change. The parents and student's voices are not being heard. Parents do not have the luxury of using taxpayer money to hire their own union to defend them tooth and nail on everything, or to prepare long winded and confusing protocols that seem to change every other day, all with the intent of continual delay and obstruction.

Our kids are suffering; families are struggling; and mental health will be on the rise. The longer we wait to resume; the longer it will be for our children and families to recover from this. We can't keep waiting because we are losing faith, morale, and confidence.

PLEASE DO NOT LET THIS CONTINUE AND RE-OPEN OUR SCHOOLS, OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION IS MUCH MORE ESSENTIAL THAN HOSTING TOURISTS, which inevitably will bring more Covid-19 cases counts and further ruin our chances of returning to in person learning even more!

Aloha and Mahalo,

Genevieve Javier  
Parent



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

### Testimony for Special Board Meeting on October 1

1 message

Kiele Maria <kielemaria@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 1:09 PM

To: boe\_hawaii@notes.k12.hi.us, Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov, Catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Hawaii BOE, DOE and HSTA,

I am writing again to make my voice heard as a parent who is disgusted by how the BOE, DOE and HSTA have hijacked our children's education this year and made children actually returning to in-person/blended learning their last priority. We are scheduled to have travellers return en masse to Hawaii in just 2 weeks, yet I received an email from my son's elementary school (Sunset Beach Elementary) that he will not be going back to blended learning until NOVEMBER 23rd.!!! Being that this date has continually been pushed forward since MARCH 2020, I have no faith that my child will be going back at all ever!! Is education not essential? How are we expected to work and provide for our families when we parents are doing the essential work that teachers are being paid for?! Acellus, Zoom, and Distance learning are subpar alternatives and our children are suffering greatly because of this.

I understand that Covid-19 is a Novel virus that we have been continually learning about, so the actions of completely shutting down the schools and economy made sense in March, but after 9 months of learning about Covid-19 and how it affects children, and even adults that are healthy, the actions taken by the DOE, BOE and HSTA do not support the science and studies out there. We are in a unique position living in Hawaii, where we can teach children outdoors or with windows open and trade wind powered ventilation. I have seen no one propose any of this, and it seems that the DOE and HSTA refuse to think outside of the box to institute and present meaningful ways of educating our children in person among their peers.

Study after study of peer reviewed science and evidence coming from children in schools from across the world- Spain, France, Sweden, and Korea- are showing that children are not driving the pandemic and they are less likely to become infected and seem less infectious.

It's time to reopen schools and give families CHOICES and OPTIONS.... We need to move forward. Teachers are still getting paid, yet all of the families enrolled at Sunset Beach Elementary are losing money because of how we have had to step up as assistant full-time teachers. We deserve options to help us cope with these trying times.

Frankly, it is exhausting writing letter after letter without any change. The parents and student's voices are not being heard. Parents do not have the luxury of using taxpayer money to hire their own union to defend them tooth and nail on everything, or to prepare long winded and confusing protocols that seem to change every other day, all with the intent of continual delay and obstruction.

Our kids are suffering; families are struggling; and mental health will be on the rise. The longer we wait to resume; the longer it will be for our children and families to recover from this. We can't keep waiting because we are losing faith, morale, and confidence.

PLEASE DO NOT LET THIS CONTINUE AND RE-OPEN OUR SCHOOLS, OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION IS MUCH MORE ESSENTIAL THAN HOSTING TOURISTS, which inevitably will bring more Covid-19 cases counts and further ruin our chances of returning to in person learning even more!

Aloha and Mahalo,

Kiele Muraco  
Parent



Reply

Reply all

Forward

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Kiele Maria  
[kielemaria@gmail.com](mailto:kielemaria@gmail.com)





Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony on Items B & C for October 1 BOE meeting

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**Eric Iwasaki** <eric.iwasaki@k12.hi.us>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 1:09 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

I am submitting written testimony on Items B and C

- B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions
- C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

I am a 7th grade social studies teacher on the island of Maui.

I am in support of Chairperson Payne's proposals to the teleworking arrangements for teachers and to the transition process from Distance Learning model to Hybrid/In-Person Learning models. More importantly, I am also in support of Chairperson Payne's attention to details in regards for the Superintendent to meet the BOE directives before even considering changing the learning model for any school in the state.

My hope is while discussing clarification on the teleworking arrangements, there will be time for a discussion regarding the vulnerable population on campus and how it affects a teacher's teleworking request. At Kalama Intermediate, teachers have been approved for teleworking with the understanding that teachers will report to the school site if vulnerable students are taking the teacher's class on that day.

For example, I can telework for Period 4 but need to report to the school for Periods 5-7 since I have students from those classes that will be on campus.

Some teachers, like the Life Skills teacher and mostly affecting all of the SpEd teachers, the teleworking option is basically not an option for these teachers. It is not fair for those teachers to have to report to the work site especially if they are personally immune-compromised and/or if family members such as children or an elderly parent could use their support at home from time to time throughout the day without causing a major disruption in their teaching duties.

Thanks for supporting us troops on the ground with educating our students.  
southpaw living in a right-handed world

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Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

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**Kristen Kimura** <akikohoku@hotmail.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 1:13 PM

To: "testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" &lt;testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

To Whom It May Concern,

The guidelines that have been shared to reopen schools are not clear. It seems as though the DOE is requiring face to face learning with numbers that do not ensure the safety of the teachers or the students. There are cases of COVID 19 in schools when teachers and students are not even present. Going back to campus would only increase the amount of cases in schools and endanger the health of our families at home. The criteria for the amount of cases that would be able to withstand a return to school needs to be met before reopening. Individual schools need to understand how to deal with cases and when it is reasonable to shut down if anyone's safety is at risk. And everyone on campus should have to adhere to CDC guidelines without exception.

I am not sure why some teachers are offered the opportunity to telework and some are not. I am also not sure why some schools are being allowed to continue online learning throughout the second quarter while others are not.

The back and forth about scheduling and the chance of flip-flopping with DL and FTF after reopening is going to be a huge adjustment for teacher and students. Distance learning is not ideal but it is the safest option available. Many students are doing well without the distraction of their peers, they are getting more individualized attention, they are learning to become more tech savvy. And they are simultaneously becoming more independent while receiving the highest amount of support from their families that want to ensure their success. The teachers are also available outside of school hours and have office hours to support ALL students.

Kristen Kimura



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Reopening of schools

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**Beate Arendale** <barendale@kkhs.k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 1:57 PM

Dear Board of Education Members,

I am concerned about the premature reopening of schools because at King Kekaulike High School we only have about 100 vulnerable students on campus at the moment. Most of the students are compliant with wearing their masks, however there is a small group of students who refuse to follow the rules. Administration has been trying to address the issue, however some of these students continue to take their masks off in class (especially in Special Education classes). One of my colleagues has a high risk pregnancy and I myself will be 61 years-old next month and am at high risk for contracting COVID-19. I would like to ask you to seriously reconsider reopening schools during the 2nd quarter.

Respectfully,

Beate Arendale (AP Literature teacher)  
NHS Advisor



Virus-free. [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)



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

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## Testimony - Telework

1 message

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**Rachelle Matsumura (via Google Docs)** <drive-shares-noreply@google.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 2:10 PM

Reply-To: Rachelle Matsumura <10015089@k12.hi.us>

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: Scott.Tamura@k12.hi.us, Kori.Takaki@k12.hi.us, Rory.Souza@k12.hi.us, Michelle.Barber@k12.hi.us

10015089@k12.hi.us has attached the following document:

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State of Hawaii - Board of Education  
Special Meeting Testimony for October 1, 2020  
Honokaa Complex Area Principals

September 29, 2020

**RE: BOE Agenda Item B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions**

**Position: We oppose board approval of item B**

To Our Honorable Board of Education Members,

It is with strong opposition and great concern that we submit this testimony to the BOE for consideration. As Complex Area Administrators, we are appreciative of the countless hours and dedication it takes to support and provide clarity for all educators in our state. We would like to collectively submit testimony on item B in hopes that it provides the clarity you seek when making decisions about Telework.

Principal's in Hawaii have worked tirelessly to ensure that schools remain focused on safety and security as a number one priority. As you read our testimony, we feel that you need to know that changing or approval priorities will compromise school operations and for plans to reopen schools in a phased manner beginning in Quarter two.

**We oppose a board directive to liberally approve teachers for telework for the following reasons:**

- Approving telework for some teachers while requiring others to be on campus just because they happen to be assigned to students who need in person instruction creates a climate of inequity and unfairness.
- In order for all employees to maintain positive working relationships, expectations reporting to campus must be consistent in and among groups (Teachers, EAs, Custodial Staff, Cafeteria Staff, Office Staff, Security, Casual Hires, etc).
- Teachers need to be on campus to support each other and the health and safety practices that we are implementing as we are planning for a return to learn.
- Without being on campus to create automaticity in the health and safety practices, we will not be prepared to bring more students back to campus and ensure their safety. It is with daily practice of these systems that we become efficient in our approach.
- It is not a contractual right for a teacher to be afforded telework.

If this Board item is approved, it will derail the empowerment for principals that the board has supported and encouraged. As Principals we understand that voice is limited to the numbers of Administrators in the state; and other voices are often louder than ours. However, we ask that you take this moment to recognize and acknowledge our perspective as we humbly ask you to not approve item B.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Michelle Barber, Principal - Paauilo Elementary and Intermediate*

*Rachelle Matsumura, Principal - Honokaa High and Intermediate*

*Rory Souza, Principal - Honokaa Elementary*

*Kori Takaki, Principal T/A - Waimea Elementary*

*Scott Tamura, Principal - Waimea Elementary*



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

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**Stephen and Effie Spiegler** <thespieglers@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 2:20 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Effie Spiegler, parent 4 boys  
Sunset and Waialua High and Intermediate

Our kids NEED to go back to school! These kids are so vulnerable right now and things are really starting to break down with at-home learning. My kid's teachers have been great and doing their best during this time but it is just not the same. The strain this is putting on our family is too great. My 3rd grader was lying face down on my carpet yesterday sobbing his eyes out about how he just wants to go back to school and that he does not want to watch any more videos on his computer screen. Our kids deserve better than this! We know so much more about COVID now then we did before and time and time again it has been shown that kids do not transmit the disease at rapid rates. The benefit to our kid's mental and emotional health far outweigh the risks of sending them back to school. Please get our kids back to school. This has gone on long enough



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Holland Henderson** <hollandhenderson@yahoo.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 2:48 PM

To: "testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" &lt;testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony on

- B. [Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions](#)

While I understand that schools have take measure to ensure teacher safety, the fact remains that the safest place for the teacher and her community is at home. Aside from potential spread from shared spaces such as bathrooms and main offices, you are sending teachers into the community every time they stop for gas, pick up lunch, or otherwise circulate in common areas around their work and home. I thought this was what the State was trying to avoid. We are safer at home, period. And if we can successfully execute our duties from home, there is no reason we shouldn't telework.

Above all, the hypocrisy of each Department and Board member who is telecommuting is astonishing. It's not safe enough for you to return to your building, but we must go in? I have yet to hear a valid response to this glaring double standard.

Holland Henderson

Castle High School



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Taryn Imai** <taryn.imai@k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 2:58 PM

I am testifying in favor of both actions B and C.

Name: Taryn I.  
Status: Teacher (Washington MS) and Parent (Manoa ES)

B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions

Teleworking should be allowed to all teachers who request it during 100% distance learning or hybrid learning models. Teleworking reduces the amount of people you have on campus, which prevents 100% the spread of COVID or any other germs that could possibly be transmitted. If teachers are able to continue to provide the same level of teaching remotely, there should be no reason to deny the teachers request to telework. The overall health of the teachers is at jeopardy when you deny their request to telework. Taking care of one's mental health is at the forefront of this pandemic. Teachers need to be overall healthy to be able to meet the needs of their students. If being able to telework helps a teacher's mental health, why take that away from them?

The government requested employers to allow their employees to work from home. Why are teachers exempt from yet another guidance set from the government to prevent the spread of COVID?

Teleworking also reduces the amount of electricity that is being used daily since the AC and lights will not be turned on, reduces the amount of classrooms, trash cans, and/or bathrooms the custodians need to clean daily, as well as strengthen the overall health and safety of all faculty and staff.

C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

I, 100% agree with BOE member Payne on her 13 measures on reopening DOE schools.

The following are other concerns of mine which support continuing 100% distance learning through 2nd quarter.

The metrics created by the DOE and DOH to reopen schools does not align to what we are currently experiencing. According to their numbers, we would not have done 100% distance learning. It is unrealistic for Hawaii to follow high numbers of cases when the mainland uses lower numbers as their guidance.

The tier system the government issued does not allow gatherings larger than 5 people or operating at 50%. Why are schools exempt from that?

The staff, teachers, students, and parents/guardians need more than 1 weeks notice prior to changing learning models. A letter was sent home from a principal in the KMR complex stating that the school will notify the change in learning models one week prior. This is unacceptable. One week is not enough planning for teachers to flip their curriculum (again), students to readjust and mentally prepare for this type of change, and parents to notify their employers know or to arrange for childcare.

On the island of Oahu, how does it make sense to allow one complex to reopen "slowly" while other complexes remain 100% distance learning through the 2nd quarter? This decision is also based on each complex CAS view on reopening schools, not with the over health and safety of all stakeholders.

Teachers have been put through the ringer these past months. We have been working harder, putting in a lot more hours, and pushing ourselves which often leads to neglecting our own personal health needs all to make sure the students are taken care of, first. The work load that is expected of teachers during this pandemic has increased easily by a 100%, yet goes unnoticed by many who is not in our profession, who are not on the front lines, executing the ridiculous guidance set

by the "shot callers" and "decision makers". How is it a good idea to disrupt teaching and learning mid quarter to transition students and teachers from one model to the next? These decisions are not thought out. Administration needs to create a solid plan now, to be executed no sooner than third quarter. This is allow teachers a respectable amount of planning time to flip their curriculum (again) and not during the week of Fall Break or regular school days when we should be focused on the curriculum that is already presented.

Lastly, the students finally found their footing in distance learning. They have gained confidence, established routines, and are learning. Navigating through technology is the path of our future and the students are given this opportunity to run with, only to their advantage. If it is "all about the kids" transitioning them mid quarter will only set them back, again. They worked through the kinks, their frustrations with distance learning, and got to a point they are comfortable with their new way of learning.

Please continue distance learning till at least 2nd semester and allow all teachers who request to telework, to telework. I am 100% in favor for both proposals made by BOE chair Payne for actions B and C.

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Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Lenn Uyeda** <10053523@k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 3:20 PM

Hello,

My name is Lenn Uyeda and I am the Principal of Maemae Elementary School.

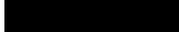
I wanted to write to the Board of Education (BOE) to submit a comment in regards to student achievement. I feel it is important to share with the BOE that we, as a school, are continuously working on plans to have the students back in school in the safest and most healthiest way possible. As we put together our plan, we take into consideration the amount of students we will have on campus at any given time along with making sure students are aware of their personal health and hygiene. We are also taking into consideration how the teachers feel and their confidence in implementing the roll-out of our plan.

Currently, our plan is to bring back the students incrementally in Phases, starting October 12, 2020, with the vulnerable students we currently have on campus (Phase 1). If the school community is comfortable with moving into Phase 2, we will bring in the Kindergarteners for two weeks with the first week being half-day orientations. Once they understand their procedures and are comfortable with their daily routines, we will move into Phase 3 with the addition of the 1st graders.

Each Phase will be evaluated before moving on to the next Phase which includes having the rest of the school (Grades 2-5) returning on a Blended Rotation of approximately half the students in each grade level at a time. These Phases would be spread out over a 4-5 week period. At no time will we have more than 50% of the students on campus, and if we feel the school is not ready to move forward, we will remain status quo.

I hope this helps with understanding what schools are currently working on and each school is working on a plan that works best for their school communities. The opening plan is a starting place and it is always revolving to make adjustments according to what's happening at any given time.

Thank you for your time!

Lenn Uyeda  
Principal  
Ma'ema'e Elementary School  
[319 Wyllie Street](#)  
[Honolulu, HI 96817](#)  


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Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Kaylani Pascua** <kaylani.pascua@campbell.k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 3:36 PM

Aloha, my name is Kaylani Pascua. I am a student at James Campbell High School. I am emailing regarding Action Item C. Board of Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19(revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery models, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning. We should not return back to school for face to face learning because students can still get infected and sick by COVID-19 just as adults, there isn't a cure, and cost for safety.

We shouldn't return back to school for face to face learning because students can get infected and sick by COVID-19. Though kids get infected with coronavirus at much lower rates than adults, children of all ages can become ill with coronavirus. In the U.S. children represent 9% of all coronavirus cases. Children don't spread the virus like adults do. In Iran, fewer than 10% of children were the primary spreader. When kids can get infected by coronavirus I don't think it's safe to have kids at school.

We shouldn't return back to school for face to face learning because there isn't a cure yet. We don't even have a cure for the flu virus. We have developed medicine that can make us feel better and stop the coughing or headache, but nothing to cure it yet. If we don't even have a cure for something like a flu or cold how are we going to find a cure for coronavirus? The coronavirus spreads so rapidly how will we stop it from spreading, by not just social distancing and wearing a mask? If a hypothetical group of 100 people were tested, 40% would be uninfected and 60% would be infected. Out of that 60% 8.3% of the infected people would die of infection. No cure means more infected people can die and even more people can get the virus if it's spreaded.

We shouldn't return back to school for face to face learning because there is a cost for safety. The estimated cost for an average school district in the U.S. to reopen this year during the pandemic would cost around \$1.8 million according to the Association of School Business Officials International and the School Superintendents Association. And nobody has that kind of money laying around. Admin can require students to bring their own supplies(hand sanitizer, masks, and wipes), but that isn't practical. 8.7 million Americans lost their jobs during this pandemic and this hit hard financially for some families. The cost to reopen schools safely in Hawaii would be a great cost.

Students and admin shouldn't return back to school for face to face learning because kids get infected, there isn't a cure for the virus, and there's a cost for safety. We live on an island where all it takes is someone who has been off island and around other infected people to spread it to a few people who spread it to more people. At school all it takes is one student to be infected and spread it to his/her friends who spread it to their families. Though there have been many difficulties during distance learning, teachers and students are trying their best to make the most out of the situation. I think it's better to be safe than sorry.

Mahalo,  
Kaylani Pascua



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Testimony for BOE Meeting 10/1/20**

1 message

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**Farrah Krovoza** <fkrovoza@hawaii.rr.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 3:43 PM

Please allow schools the ability to re-open and bring students back in a face to face hybrid model based on the guidelines provided by the DOH. I work at Kilauea School on Kauai and we are ready to welcome our students back after fall break. Distance learning is incredibly challenging and I don't believe that it is a sustainable model for education. Many, many students are not getting their needs met, and it is not due to lack of effort from the schools. A lot falls on the shoulders of the parents and families and there are some in certain situations (homeless, working parents) who aren't able to support their children in ways that will build up their success. We need to get students back in school or we will surely see a continued decline of academics and social skills and connections.

Thank you,  
Farrah Krovoza



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Testimony**

1 message

**Rosenlee, Corey** <CRosenlee@hsta.org>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 3:54 PM

To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

Included are:

Testimony #1: Telework

Testimony #2 Metrics which should include powerpoint

Thank you,

Corey Rosenlee

HSTA President

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**3 attachments****BOE TESTIMONY OPENING SCHOOLS OCT1 telework.docx**

83K

**BOE TESTIMONY OPENING SCHOOLS OCT1 Metrics.docx**

85K

**Reopening Indicators version 2 TI (4).pptx**

3877K



Corey Rosenlee  
President  
Osa Tui, Jr.  
Vice President  
Logan Okita  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE STATE OF HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2020

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

AGENDA ITEM: Board action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions

To Chair Payne and Members of the Board of Education:

**Currently, there is no statewide standard or policy regarding the appropriate reasons for approval or denial of an educator teleworking, leading to inconsistent and arbitrary implementation.** As evidenced by our teachers through their testimony, some schools, teachers who have no in-person instructional responsibilities have been forced to report to campus and teach, being told that it “doesn’t benefit the kids if they are teleworking” and to remain in their classrooms, while other schools are allowing educators in the same situation to telework. Many, even those with high risk health conditions have been denied the ability to telework from home, despite being knowledgeable, capable, and having the internet and technology resources they need at home to enable them to telework successfully. Some CAS have unilaterally denied telework for any classroom teacher, and others. This is not fair, equitable, or in the best interest of our teachers, staff, and our keiki.

**Thus HSTA supports the criteria outlined for telework in action item B. [Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions.](#)**

**Administrators will approve teachers that request telework during distance or hybrid learning modes if the following criteria is met:**

- a. The teacher has a location at home where the teacher can work or conduct instruction online with minimal disruptions during school hours.**
- b. The teacher has reliable internet connectivity that is adequate for the instruction being provided and to engage with their administrator and others.**

**c. The teacher provides a written commitment that their administrator will be able to: (1) monitor the teacher's instruction and/or instructional material provided to students**

These are the criteria that should, in fact, be used by principals, to determine if a teacher/counselor/registrar etc., including classroom teachers, not just teachers outside of the classroom with no roster, should be allowed to telework.

Allowing our teachers and other staff who are able to telework, will reduce the amount of people on campus, which is what we should be doing to minimize exposure to COVID-19. Remember, those on campus still share several shared spaces such as bathrooms, workrooms, and yes, some classrooms, thus the less people on campus, the better we are at flattening this curve and preventing outbreaks of positive COVID-19 cases.

**Give teachers the option to telework or not.** Sure, some teachers will choose to come to campus as for them, it works better, or maybe they need the technology infrastructure at school, and that is fine, but give our teachers the choice, as many, have the technology infrastructure needed at home, and will be able to effectively lead their classes safely from home. They should be treated as the professionals they are, not second-guessed by some arbitrary metrics that no one can cite.



Corey Rosenlee  
President  
Osa Tui, Jr.  
Vice President  
Logan Okita  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE STATE OF HAWAII BOARD OF EDUCATION

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2020

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

AGENDA ITEM: Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in person learning

To Chair Payne and Members of the Board of Education:

The current plan to reopen schools for in-person instruction is disorganized, chaotic, not based in science, lacks basic safeguards and accountability, and because of all these factors not safe for our keiki, our teachers and our HIDOE staff.

In the next few days, schools across Hawaii will be opening seemingly based not on science or measurable safety metrics, but based on the personal whims of complex area superintendents. On Oahu, you have neighboring complex areas where one set of schools will be distance learning and the other set of schools will bring students back to campuses. How does this make sense from a public health standpoint? This hodgepodge situation is causing anger, resentment and distrust among the community, families, students, teachers and other school employees.

Therefore, HSTA urges the Board of Education to set a statewide, uniform and consistent policy about reopening schools for in-person instruction. These standards must err on the side of caution with the goal of safety being paramount.

HSTA supports:

- That "distance learning as the default starting instructional delivery mode and requires schools to fulfill certain criteria before progressing toward hybrid and in-person learning." This needs to include a checklist which should be presented and approved by the BOE.

- "That the Board suspend changes to instructional delivery modes (i.e., distance, hybrid, and in-person learning) for all schools until the Superintendent incorporates the directives stated herein into the applicable guidance documents."

HSTA does not believe that the DOE will fulfill the above criteria with due diligence, before reopening schools to in-person instruction, unless held accountable by this board. The lack of fidelity on teleworking, the inconsistency on defining vulnerable students and the current complex area reopening plans have only given the impression that some of the CASs will only give perfunctory acknowledgement of board policy in the drive to reopen schools regardless of the health risks.

HSTA does not support:

- The use of the Hawai'i Department of Health Guidance for Schools COVID-19 in the DOE's Proposed Minimum Thresholds for Instructional Delivery Modes.

The Hawaii DOH's guidance is not aligned with the CDC's guidance(see attached powerpoint). In one example in the data shared by DOH for the time period of Sept.1- Sept. 14, Oahu had 19.9 cases per 10,000, which would have put Oahu at the third out of five levels, allowing blended learning for elementary and secondary students. The CDC's standards would have put Oahu at the fourth level, and only 0.1 away from the highest level. The fourth level would allow blended learning for elementary, and distance learning for secondary, and if using the fifth level, would require distance learning for all students.

The CDC also requires other metrics that are omitted without rationale in the DOH's guidance. One of those criteria is the percentage change in new cases, which on the day of the announcement was at 10.4 per 100,000, and by CDC requirements would have put Oahu in the highest category, necessitating distance learning for all students.

The DOH does not cite a reference to their threshold numbers, so there is no way to research why they used the numbers they did, and why they choose not to include other metrics from CDC's guidance. The omission and the inflated metrics imply that the driving force was to find ways to increase in-person instruction irregardless of CDC recommendations.

Unfortunately, even the CDC's numbers are suspect. Recent reports in the last few days by multiple news outlets indicate that the White House pressured the CDC to play down the risk of sending children back to in-person instruction. New York Times article(9/28/20)

Since June 23, with limited students on campus, 123 cases, and one death have been reported on public school campuses. What will happen if we bring over a 100,000 students on campus?

HSTA continues to receive reports of inadequate staffing and supplies, both of which are absolutely necessary to ensure all mitigation procedures can be accomplished each day with fidelity.



**Corey Rosenlee**  
President  
**Osa Tui, Jr.**  
Vice President  
**Logan Okita**  
Secretary-Treasurer  
**Wilbert Holck**  
Executive Director

Right now major school systems are increasing their in-person instruction across the country in a major experiment to see if school buildings can reopen during this pandemic. The initial reports are not good, with large school systems opening only to experience surges in cases and then having to close down again. Hawaii's students, teachers and staff can't be lab rats in a massive experiment where our health and lives are on the line. The question on reopening is not whether in-person learning is better and is needed by our students. That is a given. The question is whether hybrid learning will increase cases on campuses leading to school buildings closing and students and teachers vacillating between hybrid and distance learning.

HSTA therefore respectfully requests that the Board of Education also take action to direct all public schools to continue in distance learning mode for the entire second quarter. This will allow the DOE to present to the board the criteria needed before progressing to hybrid or in-person learning, to verify the superintendent incorporated the BOE directives into the applicable guidance documents, to verify changes in the DOH's school reopening metrics and allow Hawaii to see the results of other large school districts reopenings. A cautious approach is the best way forward during this pandemic.



# Dissecting the metrics:

The staggering disparity between the Hawaii State Department of Health and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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A presentation for the Hawaii State Board of Education

# Metrics at a glance: DOH vs. CDC

| DOH   | Elementary      | Secondary       | CDC    |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|
| 0–5   | In person       | In person       | 0–<0.5 |
| 6–15  | In person       | Blended         | 0.5–<2 |
| 16–25 | Blended         | Blended         | 2–<5   |
| 26–35 | Blended         | Learn from home | 5–<20  |
| 36+   | Learn from home | Learn from home | 20+    |

- CDC uses number of new cases per 100,000 individuals over the last 14 days.
- DOH uses number of cases per 10,000 individuals over the last 14 days.
- CDC numbers in this chart have been adjusted to be per 10,000.

# Oahu

19.9 cases per 10k • Sept. 1–14 (DOH)

| DOH   | Oahu (DOH)                    | Oahu (CDC)                                                                                   | CDC    |
|-------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 0–5   |                               |                                                                                              | 0–<0.5 |
| 6–15  |                               |                                                                                              | 0.5–<2 |
| 16–25 | Elem: Blended<br>Sec: Blended |                                                                                              | 2–<5   |
| 26–35 |                               | Elem: Blended<br>Sec: Learn from home<br><i>0.1 away from full learn<br/>from home (red)</i> | 5–<20  |
| 36+   |                               |                                                                                              | 20+    |

- CDC uses number of new cases per 100,000 individuals over the last 14 days.
- DOH uses number of cases per 10,000 individuals over the last 14 days.
- CDC numbers in this chart have been adjusted to be per 10,000.

On Sept. 18, Honolulu's daily new case metric of 10.4 would put Oahu in the highest risk category.

#### DAILY NEW CASES

Very large number of new cases

● **10.4** PER 100K

#### INFECTION RATE

Active cases are decreasing

● **0.75**

#### POSITIVE TEST RATE

Insufficient data to assess

● **Unknown**

#### ICU HEADROOM USED

High risk of hospital overload

● **73%**

Beta

#### TRACERS HIRED

Insufficient data to assess

● **Unknown**

Beta

# Statewide breakdown by island

(Sept. 1-14)

| DOH   | Island (DOH)           | Island (CDC)                                         | CDC    |
|-------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 0-5   | Lanai<br>Kauai<br>Maui | Lanai<br>Kauai                                       | 0-<0.5 |
| 6-15  | Molokai<br>Hawaii      |                                                      | 0.5-<2 |
| 16-25 | Oahu                   | Maui                                                 | 2-<5   |
| 26-35 |                        | Oahu*<br>Molokai<br>Hawaii                           | 5-<20  |
| 36+   |                        | <i>*0.1 away from full learn<br/>from home (red)</i> | 20+    |

# Sources

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## **Hawaii State Department of Health**

<https://health.hawaii.gov/coronavirusdisease2019/what-you-should-know/current-situation-in-hawaii/>

## **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/schools-childcare/indicators-thresholds-table.pdf>



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Testimony: October 1 BOE Meeting**

1 message

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**Rochelle Mahoe** <rochelle.mahoe@k12.hi.us>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 4:32 PM

Aloha,

Please see attached document submitted for Written Testimony against BOE Action Item B: Telework.

Mahalo,  
Rochelle Mahoe, Ph.D.  
Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani (FKK) Complex Area  
Complex Area Superintendent  
[4967 Kilauea Avenue](#)  
[Honolulu, Hawaii 96816](#)

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 **BOE Written Testimony for Telework 100120.pdf**  
194K

September 29, 2020

Dear Hawaii Board of Education Chairperson Catherine Payne, Vice Chairperson Kenneth Uemura, and BOE members,

I am writing in opposition of BOE Action Item B: *Directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria and telework termination restrictions*. Up to this date, the prevailing narrative regarding telework has been dominated by the notion that schools are unsafe workplaces. Since June 1, principals have worked diligently with their school teams to prepare campuses for the return of all employees, including teachers and eventually students. Classrooms were de-cluttered to allow for proper social distancing. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), hand hygiene products, and cleaning disinfectant(s) were purchased and provided to individuals and classrooms. In addition, layouts of offices, classrooms, and other workspaces were rearranged with greater physical spacing allowances and retrofitted with physical barriers as an additional safety measure. Lastly, employee attendance procedures were modified to support remote sign-ins and prevent larger groups from congregating in common areas, such as the main office space. Administrative teams, with the support of teacher leaders and classified employees, worked diligently to ensure a safe working environment for all; something we are continuously revisiting and revising on an as needed basis.

Furthermore, when schools abruptly shut down in March, we instructed everyone to stay home and telework; a concept that was new to all of us. During that time, we provided students with remediation and enrichment, rather than “new learning.” Students were held “harmless” and many disengaged with their learning and disconnected from school altogether. In the same regard, we held our employees “harmless” as well. Some teachers were connected with students for multiple hours in a day, while others connected very little, if at all. While every effort was appreciated, it was quickly realized that the delivery of instruction from home was not equal to the rigorous curriculum educators had developed in their class environments and that students and adults were sorely missing the social/emotional components that only an interactive environment can offer. The “harmless” model was not the same as what we had done in the past and was quite possibly doing harm.

On July 29, all teachers returned to campus. We were excited to see all of them, but knew our task for preparing them for all scenarios (e.g., in-person instruction, blended/hybrid learning, and possibly distance learning) would be a daunting task. What was clear was that this first quarter of the school year would not, and could not, be a repeat of last school year’s fourth quarter. We required all teachers to remain on campus and work from their classrooms; to be

trained and prepare for our students. The following rationale was the driving force behind teachers reporting to the physical campus site: 1) Classrooms provide reliable internet service, 2) technology devices are readily available, 3) easy access to instructional resources, and 4) readily available face-to-face support from technology coordinators, administrators, and peers. Again, results were mixed. Some teachers, and students, flourished, while others struggled. Students were expected to learn new materials, and teachers were expected to assess their progress.

As the number of COVID-19 cases increased, we announced that all Oahu schools were going to *Learn from Home*, or move to a distance learning platform on August 7. School teams had to adjust again for the change in schedules. We would only invite back students who struggled with distance learning in the past, those identified as “vulnerable,” or those who did not have access to the internet. At present, the amount of students who are on our school campuses, in the Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani (FKK) Complex Area, range from 1%-5%, a miniscule portion of each school’s true enrollment.

I am writing to advocate that the Board of Education not revoke the authority of approving/denying telework from the Department. This is and should remain a management right. Each manager/supervisor at the school, complex area, and state office intimately knows the resources available, context of the situations involved, and the personal stories and struggles of individuals involved to make the most comprehensive, mindful determination regarding telework. Since mid August, FKK has received telework requests. Each request involves a reflective conversation between the employee and his/her respective supervisor; nearly all requests have been approved. We have also approved telework for those waiting COVID test results, those requiring quarantine, or those determined to be potential close contacts waiting for confirmation. At present, we do not have any substantiated reports of transmission originating from our school sites.

It is important to note that the main focus of consideration regarding telework is whether or not the individual is able to execute their customary duties from their remote work site, in the same manner and with comparable efficiency as from the central work site (i.e., school, or office). A secondary consideration is if their physical absence from the work site negatively impacts the site’s operations (e.g., responsibilities being absorbed by others). Attached is a draft of an FKK document used to help guide conversations when considering any telework requests. I hope you will take the time to read through it, and recognize that FKK has put great thought into the telework process to mindfully consider not just the employee’s request, but how this request will impact overall operations. I respectfully request that the BOE not provide any further directives regarding telework. It is the responsibility of our administrative leaders to provide all

of our students with quality education, while balancing our employee individual needs, and that decision should lie with those who know the individual situations the best.

Sincerely,



Rochelle Mahoe, Ph.D.

Complex Area Superintendent

Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani Complex Area.

Attachment: FKK Telework Guidance

**Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani Complex Area**  
**“Situational” Teleworking Agreements and Expectations**

**DRAFT**

**The employee participation** (as listed in the HIDOE Telework Program Guidelines) is based on, but not limited to:

- A work arrangement that allows employees the opportunity to perform their duties at a remote work site (e.g., home) during an agreed upon portion of the work week.
- Whether an employee is fulfilling their usual and customary job duties as if they were in their central work site (i.e., school or office).
- Work suitable for teleworking will be determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee (i.e., school principal and/or complex area superintendent), based on factors such as job duties and responsibilities rather than job title, type of appointment, work schedule, or the employee’s desire to telework.
- Approval or denial is based on the best interest of students and the Department when reviewing individual requests.
  - Teleworking is not suitable for employees whose positions require the employee who need regular access to restricted or confidential information, or have regular face-to-face contact with the supervisor, co-workers, subordinates, clients, students, or the general public in order to perform his or her job effectively.
  - Telework program may not be used to replace appropriate arrangements for dependent care (e.g., children, elderly, or person who requires significant care).
- Note: HIDOE has the right to refuse to make telework available to an employee, or to terminate an employee’s participation at anytime, with reasonable notice, if it is no longer in the best interest of HIDOE’s operations or an employee’s performance does not meet the performance expectations. To the extent possible, at least five (5) working days notice should be given.

**The employee performance expectations** include but not limited to:

- Ability to complete job duties and responsibilities (similar to the central work site) at remote work site, with:
  - A dedicated work space, that is safe, efficient and free of distractions, to provide quality distance learning instruction and/or related services to support students (and schools) for the duration of their work hours.
  - Access to reliable connectivity and technology devices, work supplies, and/or instructional resources and materials.
  - Technical skills to work independently, away from the central work site and hub of support (e.g, administration, technology support, etc.).
  - Teachers, engaging remotely with students, may be observed and monitored, virtually or in-person, by administration for professional support.
- Meet on a regular basis with a supervisor or as directed by a supervisor return to your central work site to receive work assignments, attend staff meetings, and perform any

other work that cannot be performed as expeditiously or thoroughly at the remote work site.

- Review all written materials, such as memos and announcements, and perform at the central work site any required work which is impracticable to do at the remote work site.
- Program and work performance shall be measured by focusing on quality, quantity and timeliness of work.

**Other processes:**

- **Duration:** Present date to the end of the Distance Learning period (e.g., September 11, end of quarter, or semester, if extended)
- **Work schedule:** Work hours should be consistent with the hours worked at the employee's central work site (e.g., school or office), or as designated on the Telework Agreement. Employees must be available and performing work tasks at their remote work site during scheduled work hours. **Please attach work/class schedule.**
- **Return to central work site:** Employees may be directed by their supervisors to report to the central work site to attend meetings or perform other duties that cannot be accomplished at the remote work site, when the use of the *remote work site is impracticable* (e.g., the computer is being repaired, power failures, Internet service goes down, etc.), or to *access restricted/confidential information* that shall not be removed from the central work site or accessed via the computer from the remote work site.
- **Attendance:** Employees will continue with the remote sign-in/out procedures as established by their central work site.
- **Absence:** If an employee is sick or not available to perform their expected duties during their regularly scheduled work hours (as listed on their telework agreement form), then the employee must request their appropriate leave of absence and follow the leave request procedures, as if they were at their central work site.

*I have read, discussed and understand these guidelines and expectations with my supervisor, and submitted Telework Agreement Attachments A, B, and D.*

---

Employee Name

Signature

Date

*I have discussed these guidelines and expectations, and observed the employee's performance using a virtual platform at least one time prior to this agreement.*

---

Principal/Supervisor Name

Signature

Date

*Complex Area/District Personnel only: CAS Acknowledgement*

---

Complex Area Superintendent

Signature

Date



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony - 10/1 Special Meeting

1 message

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**Kristina Hinson** <muxlowk@hotmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 4:46 PM

Kristina Hinson  
Concerned Parent  
10/1 Special Meeting  
Agenda Item "C"  
Comment

Good Morning,

I'm writing you today as an extremely frustrated parent with two children attending DOE schools in the Campbell-Kapolei Complex, one at Campbell High and one at Ewa Makai Middle. After being notified yesterday that the complex will NOT be returning to any sort of in person learning (blended, hybrid or full) for the entire Quarter 2, I am even more upset and frustrated. Distance Learning is NOT working, especially for my middle schooler. At what point do you acknowledge that you are detrimentally hurting our children by not allowing them in school? My children are not learning, some teachers keep them busy, and many are trying to do their best, but the bottom line is these kids aren't actually learning at the level they should and need to be at.

My middle schooler only attends virtual online classes every other day, and his off days are not challenging if any assignments are provided. So basically he's getting at best 1/2 the instruction he should be receiving. He was supposed to be placed in advanced math, but due to the school not being able to offer advanced math because of the A/B rotational needs it isn't even an option. To date he has not learned one new math concept the entire quarter. He struggles with English/Language Arts, and while the teacher tries to help him virtually, he needs to be in a classroom and able to work with her on a consistent basis.

How is it we can start to reopen the state, including tourism and major attractions to larger groups, but having our schools open (with kids wearing masks full time, limiting sizes and close contact) is 'too dangerous'? Why even bother with a reopening guidance plan if you aren't going to insist the schools follow it as the metrics allow? It sure seems like we care more about what will bring money back into the city/state rather than what is best and needed for our children.

It is past time to reopen our schools and do what is best for our children. Stop allowing HSTA and fear to control the decisions being made.

Thank you for your time.

Kristina Hinson



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Helena Costa** <keanuenue@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 4:56 PM

Aloha Board Members,

I am writing in regards to both items B and C.

In regards to item B, access to telework, I have been lucky enough to have been granted telework. My situation matched all of the criteria required, and I cannot express enough what a boon it has been. Distance learning requires long hours, and flexibility of time to properly implement. While I am directly engaged with my students during the regular school hours, I also work far outside of those hours. Working from home allows me peace of mind for the safety of my family, fewer distractions (as zooms and filming asynchronous videos benefit greatly from reduced disruptions like lawn mowers, school phones, etc) and to have all of my things in place- my cameras are set up to both zoom during the days and film during the off-hours, my curriculum is on hand so I can pivot or add additional digital supports into my lessons when necessary, and travel time has been converted to work time for me. Digital learning really requires a significantly heavier amount of content preparation, so everything must be done and tested ahead of time. The hours are still very long, but I appreciate how much teleworking simplifies the process.

In regards to item C, I am writing in support of remaining in distance learning until second semester. The concerns regarding safety on campus have not been further addressed since the decision was made in August to pivot to full-distance, and time in distance learning has made clear many issues that will arise in hybrid. Besides the health and safety issues, in distance learning I am able to work with all of my students every day. I am able to both deliver new content, create the digital instruction necessary for smooth delivery, and respond to work and individual needs. Hybrid would significantly reduce the direct contact I would have with my students. On their off days my students would have no contact with me, and only asynchronous assignments. For my struggling learners, this would be disastrous- it is the access to direct instruction, and the real-time assistance I provide daily, that is helping them move forward academically.

I will end by sharing some of the benefits distance learning has provided. There are drawbacks certainly, but here is what is working: in full distance, I deliver direct instruction to all of my students in both core subjects daily. I have split them into two groups, which has allowed for excellent differentiation- they receive our grade-level content tailored to their instructional level in a way that is often hard to do in face to face. Some of my most distractible students are helped by not being in a room full of other students. Over the last 6 weeks we have built routines, found a healthy learning pace, and built relationships. We can see each other's faces, and the children can work together in break-out rooms, which would be hard to do while adhering to the 6-ft rule. Additionally, my focus is not splintered between an online group and a face to face group- they have my full attention when we are together.

Obviously face to face, full class is optimal. But between the confusing, sporadic option of hybrid and the more consistent distance, it would seem best to choose the option that keeps us both healthy and moving forward academically, with daily instruction and clear routines. In either model, it is important to continue to put our money and efforts toward supporting those families who have digital access issues.

Mahalo for your time,  
Helena Costa



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony Submission regarding telework

1 message

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**Angie Tannehill** <angietannehill@hotmail.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 5:02 PM

To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

I am submitting testimony today in regards to the denial of telework by the department of education. I am a RTI Coordinator at an elementary school. My job is to work with students from any class school wide and help the struggling learners fill in gaps and help students to learn to read. My office is a portable that is shared with three other people. I feel unsafe and uncomfortable for the majority of the day in my working conditions. I also find it extremely difficult to do my job this way. I keep my mask on for the majority of the day except for when eating and drinking. Some of my colleagues are good about wearing masks and some are not. The stance of the school is this is my bubble and I should be fine to take off my mask. We also have two grade levels who are teaching on campus in person daily. I go to the bathroom as little as possible and I don't feel comfortable to go to check my mailbox or use the teacher lounge on campus. I limit my trips into common areas as much as I'm physically able. There are many teachers who feel this way on our campus.

Throughout a typical day I work with students virtually as well as have meetings virtually. I do this with my mask on. I have a desk near a window that I open fully rain or shine, even though the chickens crow loudly outside of my window and we get a lot of rain in our area. I do this to maximize airflow in this confined space. I am concerned once winter comes that I will catch colds from the wind and rain exposure. I find this very problematic when helping students learn phonics and when reading aloud. I am told I can take my mask off, yet I feel my safety is more important so I struggle with teaching online through a mask. I do the best that I can, but I find this situation both physically challenging and greatly demoralizing. I have been an above and beyond dedicated teacher to the DOE since 2005 and know these students deserve more, especially right now. This school year I have requested repeatedly to telework and I have been denied repeatedly without justification.

Recently I was denied on the vague grounds that school is a technical hub. However, I find my home office has far superior access to the internet, privacy, and office ergonomics than the conditions I have to work in at school. The much better conditions at home have been noted in my numerous telework requests, but thus far this has not been addressed in the slightest. Perhaps you are curious as to my teleworking situation being adequate or not. At home I have a gigabit internet connection. For video conferencing there is nothing better on the island, and my home connection outperforms the school network on all major video conferencing networks. For years, I have often done things at home due to poor connectivity at school, and find I am far more productive at home largely for this reason. I know some others have problems with competing needs of bandwidth at home, but for me this is not the case. In fact, I have far more issues with this at school than at my home. Additionally, I have no kids or pets to interrupt or distract me while working. Lastly, I have a dedicated space to work in with air conditioning and hardly any outside noises (which is certainly not the case at school). At school, I am limited to the 13-inch laptop to work on. At home, I can plug this 13-inch laptop into my 42-inch monitor which would allow me to see my students and my instructional screen-share fully at the same time (without having to juggle them around on a small laptop). I also have access to another personal computer and a personal iPad with Apple Pencil. This allows me to have more engaging instruction. Also, I have an ergonomic standing desk to work from so that I don't get headaches and backaches like I do from my student desk which is all I have in my work space at school. Whether I am at school or at home, I have to use my personal cellphone to make phone calls to student's parents or the school office. We have one shared school phone in our portable that one of the individuals must use often. She asked that the rest of us not use it now because she is worried about covid so we let her use the school phone for our room. It should not be overlooked also, that at home I have no need to wear a mask. Since I'm working with students virtually anyway, this means I can now interact with them sans mask and properly teach phonics. As you can see there is literally no benefit to my working at school currently.

I will not service kids from many bubbles in person until this pandemic is over. If I am told I must do so, I have resolved to take a leave or quit. Many of our students on campus come from homes where parents work in hotels so I feel the risk is far too great once we reopen for tourism with no vaccine or highly effective treatments in place. I am getting older and I have already sacrificed my health too much for this job for over 15 years by working long hours and working second jobs that gave me less time and energy for exercising, sleeping and eating healthy. This is where I must draw the line. I am fortunate that I am currently able to have this option if I feel it is necessary. For now, I am still working as this is not the choice I want to make. I love teaching and I love helping my community, but I can't do so at the expense of my health. My heart breaks for many of my colleagues who are not in a financial position to take leave or quit if they need or want to. I was in their position for the majority of my career. I am truly grateful that I am able to have this choice if necessary, during this pandemic. If I were allowed to telework, I could be an effective part of the school team indefinitely. Teleworking for positions that are able to do so like mine is even more important if there are more bodies on campus.

Furthermore, I am thoroughly confused as to why the DOE wants to take on more risk when there are ways to mitigate risk by permitting telework where it makes sense. After experiencing telework during the fourth quarter, I will admit it is definitely a harder way to work. However, in my opinion, safety and minimizing risk should always come first over convenience and blanket policies. I think we all know with this hard stance on telework (and general lack of compassion by the DOE), when schools reopen there will be many more retirements and departures. In my area there is already a teacher shortage, and a severe sub shortage. It seems in everyone's best interest to find a middle way.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter. Anything you can do is greatly appreciated by myself and many others who may not be submitting testimony but share these concerns and issues.

With a Warm Aloha & Mahalo,  
Angie Tannehill



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Tristian Villanueva** <tristian.villanueva@campbell.k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 5:14 PM

Hello, my name is Tristian Villanueva I am a student at James Campbell High School. I am emailing regarding Action Item C. [Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's \*Guidance for Schools COVID-19\* \(revised as of September 16, 2020\), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning.](#) I oppose the decision of going back to school for the safety of my family and fellow classmates. I believe distance learning is the most safe option right now despite the struggles I am finding in it. The new information on the virus is being released is contradicting what was previously said, and thus tells us how little we actually know about the virus. I really do miss school in person but if it means risking the health of my fellow classmates and my teachers or our overall community I will have to take the sacrifice and try to keep everyone around me safe. PS: Stop wasting money on pointless platforms when there are plenty of free options out there, you are confusing students, I barely know how to use half of the new platforms being introduced, I would love for you guys to spend your money on things that are actually applicable and useful for example: masks, hand sanitizer which are in high demand right now.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Testimony**

1 message

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**Laura Ahn** <laura.ahn@k12.hi.us>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 5:17 PM

Please see attached testimony. You may call me at [REDACTED] if there are any questions.

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Laura Ahn  
Niu Valley Middle School  
Principal/Head of School  
An International Baccalaureate MYP World School

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 **BOE Testimony - Teleworking.pdf**  
76K

September 29, 2020

To: The Board of Education

From: Laura Ahn, Principal/Head of School   
Niu Valley Middle School  
An International Baccalaureate MYP World School

Subject: BOE Action Item B: *Directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria and telework termination restrictions.*

I would like to share my stance on teleworking for teachers and staff in the schools. I believe that teleworking should be a supervisor's and ultimately the school principal's approved decision.

Each school is unique and responsive to the needs of its school community. The current COVID-19 situation has challenged all schools in meeting the educational needs of all students. An area of concern questions whether schools have the capability to deliver a rich learning experience through distance learning. Schools differ in teacher expertise in technology and not every teacher has the capability to distance teach and learn successfully and effectively from home, even if they feel they can.

At the Middle School level, teacher presence on our campus contributes collectively to supporting the social, emotional and academic needs of young adolescents. Collegial support is equally valued and respected. Teachers help with student supervision during non-instructional time such as yard duty in order to keep those students attending in-person safe. Teachers on campus are able to readily offer enrichment opportunities which include student participation in after school clubs, programs, and tutoring. Vulnerable students on campus are provided with additional support in meeting their specific needs for success.

Niu Valley Middle continues to provide ongoing support and resources for teachers to navigate and deliver a meaningful and rich International Baccalaureate learning experience for our students. Teachers and staff continue to receive support as requested and needed.

At Niu Valley Middle School each telework request has been granted. All but one request were situational due to COVID testing and waiting for results. The majority of my teachers have found it advantageous to Distance Teach from their classroom because support and resources are available from bell to bell. I felt fortunate that CAS Mahoe provided all our schools with guidance and talking points to have conversations with teachers who requested telework. In addition, I communicated with my teachers and staff the expectations of teleworking and what would be needed for approval. One of the biggest considerations is the school environment. I informed teachers that if we could not provide a safe environment, I would approve telework. Our

schools are safe. If I am on campus every day, it must be safe; not just because I am present on the campus, but because I require it to be safe for everyone who is present.

When all teachers are informed via a blanket statement that teleworking is available based solely on connectivity, location, and commitment for monitoring, it communicates a want rather than a need. Classifying telework under these vague requirements only leads to confusion amongst the teachers and devalues all the hard work that they have done on site up to this point.

I value the work and commitment of all teachers and staff at Niu Valley Middle. We have worked tirelessly to build a sense of trust and openness; where decisions are based on the needs of students first. It is in the best interest of our school, and any school, that telework needs are determined at the school level with a conversation between the teacher and administrator; with the administrator having the final decision. I implore the Board to reconsider their recommendation regarding removing decision making authority from administrators and/or supervisors regarding telework. Thank you for your consideration.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Please open schools now!**

1 message

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**Stephanie Anfinson** <msanfinson@icloud.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 5:33 PM

To: Testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Educators,

Please open schools for learning NOW! My three grandchildren emotionally, socially and academically need to be with their teachers! If we are opening Oahu for tourists in mid-October, our schools need to open now! We have no Covid cases here on the Northshore. Let's open before we have tourists! No more waiting until November as Sunset Elementary has planned. Fall Break is next week and let's come back to in-person school October 12 or 13. No more tears, sleepless nights, and stress from too much screen time for our children. Businesses have opened and parents are back to work. The kids can't be distance learning without a parent! Our needs to be at school are greater now! Educating our children in person should be a priority.

As a retired Elementary teacher of 38 years, I can see what our neighbors and family need... and that's to be at school!

Thank you,

Stephanie Anfinson

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony; Oppose Action Item III B

1 message

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Linell Dilwith <linell.dilwith@k12.hi.us>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 5:48 PM

KMR CAS Linell Dilwith

September 29, 2020

Dear Hawaii Board of Education Chairperson Catherine Payne, Vice Chairperson Kenneth Uemura, and other BOE members,

I am writing in opposition to BOE Action Item III B: *Directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria and telework termination restrictions*. Since Superintendent Kishimoto's May 26th memo, principals have worked diligently with school teams to prepare for the return of teachers on July 29th, and ensure a safe working environment for all. Classrooms, offices, and other work spaces were rearranged and retrofitted with physical barriers to facilitate social distancing. Personal protective equipment, hand hygiene products, and cleaning disinfectants were all purchased and provided to both individuals and classrooms. New procedures, like remote sign-in and teleconferenced faculty meetings, were implemented by schools to discourage the congregation of staff in common areas.

When teachers returned to work on July 29th, our schools felt confident in the steps taken to ensure staff and student safety. We required all teachers to remain on campus, and to work from their classrooms to receive training and prepare for our students. Their classrooms provided adequate space for social distance, access to reliable internet service, technology devices, and instructional resources. In addition, having the teachers on campus allowed for in-person support from their technology coordinators, administrators, and peers as needed. All teachers, whether they excelled or struggled through this time, did their best to conform to the changing times.

When it was announced on August 7 that all Oahu schools were going to *Learn from Home*, or move to a distance learning platform, school teams pivoted again to adjust for the changes. We agreed as a complex to bring back vulnerable students who struggled with distance learning, or those that did not have access to a reliable internet connection. This allowed schools the ability to provide quality instruction to all students; not just those with access to resources within their homes.

Since mid August, KMR has received many telework requests. After a reflective conversation between the employee and his/her respective supervisor, nearly all requests have been approved. The primary basis for all these decisions has been whether the individual is able to fulfill all their job duties as if they were at their designated work site (i.e., school, or office). The secondary consideration is if their physical absence from the worksite negatively impacts the school operations. KMR has also approved telework for those awaiting COVID test results, potential close contacts, or for those requiring quarantine.

I am writing to advocate that the **Board of Education does not take away the authority of approving/denying telework from school Principals. It is, and should remain a management right.** Each school, complex area, and state office knows the resources, context, and individuals to make a determination.

It is my hope that the BOE will not issue any directives regarding telework. It is our responsibility to provide all of our students with quality education, while balancing our employee individual needs, and that decision should lie with those who know the individual situations best.

Sincerely,

*Linell Dilwith  
Complex Area Superintendent  
Kaimuki-McKinley-Roosevelt Complexes*

*"Don't fear failure.  
Fear being in the exact same place next year as you are today."  
-unknown-*

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Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## TESTIMONY

1 message

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**Justin Bergonio** <jbergonio@waipahuh.k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 5:49 PM

Good day, Honorable Chair, Members of the Board, and Superintendent Kisihimoto.

Thank you again for taking the time to hear from us again. My name is Justin R Bergonio, a sixth-year math teacher at Waipahu High School, and I am testifying on Action Item III.B ("Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions") and III. C ("Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning")

I will try my best to be concise: this year has not been easy, but we're trying to make the most of it. There are so many things to take into consideration when it comes to this school year, things we would never have to worry about before: the number of students in our rooms, our position in the room while we deliver instruction, how loud we speak to avoid creating excessive amounts of droplets, adequate amounts of hand sanitizer, cleaning protocols, how to get feedback with limited interaction with student's papers, and more. I've never feared so much in my life than I do almost every other day of 2020--especially the days leading up to the start of the school year.

However, in the mess of stresses and fears, serendipity arose in the delayed reopening of school campuses to students and the privilege to telework that has been offered by my school. This privilege, however, despite the mayor's and governor's work-at-home order, is not given to everyone. Some school's, such as mine, requested doctors notes from myself and some of my colleagues in order to work from home. For myself it took about a week after I submitted my paperwork to get approval. Other school's, such as my wife's, required very little in which she submitted the bare minimum paperwork, and was approved within days. And yet, from stories I continue to hear, others are denied telework, despite having similar work loads and situations. I hope that the BOE can work with the DOE leaders today to solidify a more consistent and fair definition in which teachers can work from home, if possible.

I can speak positively to working from home. Although it's hard to separate work-life from home-life, I am much more comfortable and am able to direct all my efforts towards supporting my students. I am able to think more about their educational and emotional well-being when I am okay. I can take the time to get to know them, read their responses to the Question of the Day, plan different modes of instruction such as playing a Kahoot, teaching an interactive lesson with Pear Deck, or giving them time to work on assignments in their breakout rooms, and just feeling like life is normal: the stresses and rewards of being a teacher.

This is only possible when we feel safe, which brings me to my final point: I can only teach when I feel okay. I know this sounds really selfish, but I've learned since I first started teaching that what comes first is my own well-being. I've gone through the gamut of emotions when it comes to teaching: from excitement of standing in front of a new group of students to the anxiety of not having a plan for the next day to the depression that I am not good enough as a teacher/son/brother/boyfriend, and the list goes on... In the mess of those emotions I have learned that, at the end of the day if I want to be as effective as I can and as caring as I can for my students, I need to first take care of myself.

During this current pandemic, taking care of myself means finding time to do teacher-things (planning, grading, meetings, collaborating, etc.), taking a walk, eating more veggies, and giving myself some me-time--and making sure I limit my exposure-risk to COVID-19. I haven't seen my extended family--cousins, aunts, uncles--since the lockdown in March. I only go out when I need to for groceries or for food. I have not dined-in at any restaurants since March. I am doing everything within my power to limit my exposure because I know I need to take care of myself so I can support my parents who are in their 60s, my wife, and my students. As a health professional once told me when I was suffering from health ailments and anxiety in 2018: "If there's no Justin, then there's no Mr. Bergonio to teach your kids." I want to be there for all them--my parents, family, wife, brother, sister, colleagues, friends, students...everyone.

I'm sorry that these have been troubling and challenging and turbulent times, but thank you for hearing from us. Thank you for remembering us. Thank you for what you do and for always considering the safety of those "on the ground". Please don't forget us. We're here. We're trying. We want to see this through, but we can only do that only if we feel safe. Please continue to keep us safe. Please.

9/30/2020

Dell Marketing LP Mail - TESTIMONY

Sincerely,  
Justin R Bergonio



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Connor Storozyk** <connor.storozyk@campbell.k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 6:11 PM

Hello, my name is Connor Storozyk. I am a student at James Campbell High School. I am emailing regards of action item c the debate of whether we go to school or not. I believe we should not return to face to face learning .

isn't it a schools #1 priority to make students feel safe and be safe?

keeping **schools safe** allows children to look forward to being in an encouraging environment that promotes social and creative learning. When their basic **safety needs** aren't met, children **are** at risk for not **feeling comfortable at school** and may stop showing up, or they may remain on edge throughout the day. Not to mention that i'm pretty sure you don't want a child to get the virus and end up dying and it would be at your fault to some degree and you would have to feel the consequences but so would the parents who have to suffer from your decision.

were not in any state of thinking about sending kids back to school.

If we keep on trying to open up restaurants and beaches but having to go back because you can't open up places properly. I don't think you're in any state to think of opening up schools because that will put 3,110 kids JUST from one school at risk. My school where I attend and people I know attend would be at risk of getting sick.

All in All i just really don't think it would be a smart decision to send kids back to school during these times. Thank you for listening to my rant email.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**re: testimony for upcoming BOE special meeting**

1 message

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**Funtanilla Sabas Family** <funtanillasabas@gmail.com>  
To: TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 6:56 PM

Aloha to the members of the Board of Education,

I am submitting a testimony in regards to the reopening of public education schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. At this time, I am respectfully asking that our schools NOT be reopened and to continue distance learning, at least through the second quarter.

I would like the BOE to know that I am writing this testimony on behalf of my family, as I am an elementary school teacher and have been for the past 17 years, a parent of two school-aged children and a spouse of a public school teacher.

Throughout the start of the pandemic, we as a family, have had many conversations about what school may look like for us. The uncertainty and the constant changing plans have severely put the teachers and the members of our family (including our children and their grandparents) under a state of constant stress. I myself have underlying health concerns and am immune-compromised due to the rare disease that I have. We are very careful about what we do, constantly sanitizing everything, washing our hands, not attending gatherings and not allowing anyone into our small circle of family that we trust.

During this time, I would like to share with you what our first quarter has been like in my family. My husband works as a classroom teacher in another complex area from my own. While it is a known fact that he works in a zip code with a high number of positive COVID-19 cases and clusters, his administration believes that vulnerable children should still be allowed back onto campus.

During the Phase 2 plan from our superintendent, students who were considered vulnerable were going to be allowed back onto campus in "learning hubs". His administration views "learning hubs" as the teacher's classroom. Therefore, he and many other teachers have had students in their classroom during this time. They did not have one area of the school set aside only for these students as the public believes or as other schools have done. Their teachers were not supplied additional materials to keep themselves safe that other businesses are required to have—like sneeze guards. So, we ourselves made several trips to the home improvement stores, spent our own money, in order to build sneeze guards for these students in hopes to keep everyone in the classroom safe. This already shows a lack of safety and no faith in our DOE providing teachers and students what they need to reopen.

Alarmingly, they have already had several teachers put on quarantine because they were exposed to students who tested positive on campus. This put unnecessary stress on these teachers, as well as my husband who is afraid of being infected and bringing it home to our family. And through this, teachers were still expected to teach either at home or work. What also angers me is that these teachers paid for COVID-19 tests out of their own pocket, even when it was known that a possible infection came directly from working in their school.

On the other hand, I work in a school where our principal was more cautious about letting students on campus. He understood the complexity of the families and the students that attend our school—many of them come from larger housing complexes and/or live in bigger multi-generational homes. Our complex area schools purchased hot spots for families that needed them in order to keep our staff safe and so we had the minimal amount of students on campus as possible. We lent out devices to families that didn't have the technology at home to do distance learning. While distance learning isn't perfect, our school has remained fairly safe. We did not have the instances of teachers getting infected because no students were allowed on campus.

But my question is, why is this even happening? Why is there even a difference in what is happening at my husband's school and what is happening at mine? In the middle of a global pandemic, our leaders should have made the decisions to be clear, precise and concrete about the health and safety protocols in EVERY SINGLE SCHOOL. Within just looking at my experience and my husband's there is a BIG discrepancy and it should not be allowed to happen. It is clearly evident that one administrator's personal views about this virus can truly put their teachers at greater risk than another's.

I would also like to add that I understand that we all have been dealt a rough hand this year. Even after teaching 17 years, this is by far my most trying school year ever... and I know it's the same for all educators, whether it's your first year teaching or your 20<sup>th</sup> year. I do understand that there are certain hardships as parents have to make a difficult choice about being home with their children or going to work.

These parents often fail to remember that many teachers are parents themselves and are in similar situations. However, the argument that parents are making that distance learning is not working for them and that their children need to be in school is very short-sighted. In some cases, it is very apparent that they want their children back here for teachers to be their babysitters. They don't see what will happen when their child gets back into school. It will not be the same as it was before. They will not be socializing with their friends as teachers will be trying to keep them apart. They will not be able to run freely on the playgrounds and fields of campus as they used to.

I also think parents forget that their child will not be allowed on campus for the whole week. They will only be here for part of the time. They do not see that I will now have to split my time between two groups of students—the ones in school and the ones at home, whereas I am able to teach all my students simultaneously and devote this time through distance learning. Teachers are already working hard and overtime with doing distance learning lessons. Splitting us into the hybrid option will require teachers to now be doing a double job and we're already burning out and exhausted.

I myself, am afraid of what students may be bringing to campus as we already know not all families are honest with asking questions regarding their child's health in order for them to be here. Who will then suffer from these consequences? It will be their teachers, their teacher's families and countless other students who are in the classroom with them. No one is holding these families accountable when they knowingly are sending their child to school with the possibility that they may infect others. I believe holding families accountable for this kind of behavior is one other protocol that needs to be in place before students are allowed face to face.

The other short-sightedness of parents wanting their children in school is that the hybrid option will put further risk to the most vulnerable of our population—our kupuna. For our family, we are lucky. My parents are both retired and have agreed to have our children do distance learning from their home while my husband and I teach from our own classrooms. As of right now, we have opted for both of our children to continue distance learning through the rest of the first semester. This is because we are not willing to risk our children being in school for one to two days of the week and being exposed to other people and then bringing something home to grandma and grandpa on the days they have to distance learn. We have already heard of the countless stories around the nation where family members unknowingly brought the virus home to loved ones and some of them never recovered.

Another reason, I would like to stay with the distance learning option is because of consistency. I am really hoping that our positive case numbers of COVID-19 start going on a downward trend. However, with reopening schools and reopening tourism, it is highly likely that our numbers will start to tick back upwards again. When the numbers begin to tick back upwards and we have decided that schools be reopen school again, will schools then again be subject to shutting down? Teachers cannot be living in this state of constantly pivoting every time the numbers aren't where we want it to be. We have already been there during 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, and we were definitely not prepared. Then the beginning of the school year came around and we teachers had a difficult time preparing because of our superintendent's decision making and lack of empathy to the people who work under her. At this point, keeping schools closed is the better option, so parents, teachers and community members can prepare.

Lastly, the biggest reason distance learning should continue is because of the lack of safety protocols still put in place. Even throughout this quarter, we have not been given any updates on what bringing students face to face will look like from the DOE or the DOH. Instead, we got some metrics that really make me question

that these people really don't know what happens in a classroom, let alone a school, and somehow they are allowed to make decisions about us. I don't like the cavalier attitude that some people take, saying kids aren't as susceptible to getting COVID-19 as older people. It's just not right that we are basically playing Russian roulette with the lives of everyone within a school community because there are still so many unknowns about this virus.

I greatly appreciate you taking your time to hear me out and what I have to say. I hope you take to heart my concerns as a mother, spouse, and a teacher. While I would love for things to go back to the way they were before March 2020, the reality is that probably won't happen for a while. I think that we have a chance to get it right... how schools transition back to face to face learning will eventually happen, but right now is not that time.

Very respectfully,

A mother, wife of a public school teacher & 17 year elementary school teacher



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony / comment on agenda's C item for October's 1st meeting regarding opening of schools

1 message

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**Raimar Bylaardt II** <raimar2000@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 7:05 PM

Aloha,

My daughter attends the 4th grade at Kainalu Elementary school and she misses being in class, a lot!

The stay at home orders is causing her mood and behavior to change and I am concerned about long term effects. The burden extends to us, parents and also uncles and aunties who have to watch her at times. It is preventing some of us to go back to work for lack of care options as well.

Our family believes the schools should open (face-to-face) as soon as possible and that following simple precautions as sanitizing, temperature checks, staff tests, social distancing and wearing a face shield should be enough to keep our keiki and staff safe.

Please consider this plea and reopen our schools.

Sincerely

Ray

Sent from my iPad



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony for Board Meeting

1 message

**Scott Moore** <scott.moore@k12.hi.us>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 7:06 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov, Bob Davis &lt;Robert.Davis@k12.hi.us&gt;

My name is Scott Moore and I am the principal at Waialua Elementary School. Just in case it adds any weight, our school has won two National Blue Ribbons in the last ten years.

General Business Meeting

Concerns regarding distance teaching and learning at schools.

I am advocating that teachers should provide distance learning from their classrooms.

I am surprised that this is still a question. It would seem obvious that the best thing for students enduring distance learning at home would be to have access to a teacher in a professional setting with access to all of his or her curriculum resources, a full array of technology and the support of curriculum coaches, administrators and - most importantly - tech coordinators and their assistants.

I don't see how any sensible person could argue that a teacher conducting distance instruction alone at home could do so as well as in their own classroom on a school campus. Of course, that only matters if your priority is to give students relegated to distance learning the best educational experience possible.

What would justify giving students who are already experiencing an inferior level of learning - distance instead of in person - an even more inferior experience of instruction by a teacher alone at home?

Teacher safety? First of all, the state of Hawaii has an infection rate of about 1% and most teachers are not in the settings, professions or socioeconomic groups that are most likely to get infected. Sitting alone in your classroom to conduct a virtual lesson is not exactly a dangerous duty. And what if you have a half dozen vulnerable learners in your room? Again, children are the least likely group to get or spread the virus. Students and staff have PPE and are socially distanced. The risk, compared to the benefit of student learning, is minimal.

Worse case scenario, you are in the unlucky less than 1%, then you are doomed, right? Here are the most recent Covid 19 Survival Rates from the CDC.

- 0-19 years old survivability rate is 99.997%
- 20-49 years old survivability rate is 99.98%
- 50-69 years old survivability rate is 99.5%
- 70 years old or older survivability rate is 94.6%

**Read More:** [New CDC Data States COVID-19 Survival Rates Extremely High](https://wbckfm.com/new-cdc-data-states-covid-19-survival-rates-extremely-high/?utm_source=tsmclip&utm_medium=referral) | [https://wbckfm.com/new-cdc-data-states-covid-19-survival-rates-extremely-high/?utm\\_source=tsmclip&utm\\_medium=referral](https://wbckfm.com/new-cdc-data-states-covid-19-survival-rates-extremely-high/?utm_source=tsmclip&utm_medium=referral)

I apologize for my tone. But I do not believe we have put the needs of students first during this whole scenario. I do not believe we have approached things from a rational data driven fashion. I do believe that this has damaged our students. And I believe, at the very least, teachers can report to work to more effectively educate children who are distance learning.

Thank you.

This is a staff email account managed by Hawaii Department Of Education School District. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.



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

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## TESTIMONY - October 1 Special Meeting

1 message

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**Dylan Kunz** <kunzdylan22@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 7:32 PM

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 **Kunz BOE Special Meeting Testimony.pdf**  
42K

**To:** Hawaii State Board of Education

**From:** Dylan Kunz, student

**Subject:** Testimony for BOE Special Meeting, October 1, 2020

**Agenda Item:** Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

**Position:** Support return to school

Dear Board of Education members,

My name is Dylan Kunz. I am twelve years old and I go to Kailua Intermediate. I believe that our school community deserves to go to in person school. I think that we should not be scared of the virus but we should respect it.

I do not think that we should have an education online only because we cannot show our full potential online. It is hard to get the teachers instruction because our internet is slow. Others in my house are using the same internet. I think that students have a voice. I think you should send out a form and ask the students if they want to go back and I guarantee you that almost every student wants to go back. I believe that students should get the biggest say in this. I think that it is safe enough to do the split group.

My point is that we deserve to go back and have a real education. We have to respect the virus just like the flu and any other sickness. But we cannot be scared. We can't let it get in our head and shut down like we have been. I want to live life and a lot of us want to. School is all about the experience and right now I am getting no experience. I hope that you guys read this and feel my passion and my frustration. We want to get the experience.

Thank you,

Dylan Kunz



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 8:11 PM

[REDACTED]  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Dear Honorable Board of Education Members,

I am testifying on the following items:

- B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions
- C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

I am a teacher with the Hawai'i DOE and I am beyond thankful to you all for taking the time to meet and address these concerns. I have asked my principal on numerous occasions to be able to telework, and I have been told no because our administration does not trust us to do our job from home. I take great offense to that considering how hard I worked during school closures as a Special Education teacher. I worked late into the night supporting my students and their families, and I am given no option to telework because my admin does not trust me? If I am trusted to be solely responsible for students in a classroom, then why can I not be trusted to support them virtually from the safety of my home?

I also have a very big concern about the current DOE school reopening plan. I have a feeling that there is talk that we need to bring students back to school because I have noticed the sudden urge to bring our FSC students back to my school. We currently have one FSC student on campus that does not have a medical condition preventing them from wearing their face mask, and I noticed an EA working closely with this student, who was not wearing a mask. When they asked our admin about what they should do, our admin said if they are comfortable working closely with a student without a mask on then they can. This is unacceptable! It put the EA in a very uncomfortable situation, and I fear that it will be the norm for students to return to school without masks and there will be no repercussions for them not wearing their masks.

We need more guidance and stronger safety policies before we should consider bringing students back to campus for in-person instruction.

If children cannot go into a grocery store without a mask, how are schools any different?

Thank you for being the voice for so many of us teachers that are scared for our lives and also live in constant fear of retaliation if we voice our concerns at the school level.

Thank you,

Anonymous DOE teacher

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony for BOE meeting

1 message

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**Ashley de Coligny** <ashley.decoligny@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 8:12 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: calvert de coligny &lt;guerricde@me.com&gt;

Aloha,

We would like to submit testimony as parents of two children in the Kailua/Kalaheo complex public schools. Our son attends Aikahi Elementary and our daughter attends Kailua Intermediate. We absolutely love our schools, teachers, principals, and staff. Our schools' administrators informed us of this BOE special meeting, and encouraged parents to participate. So therefore, while we understand there are no good or easy decisions on anyone's part, we would like to respectfully voice our opinion that our keiki should return to hybrid and/or in-person learning as soon as possible.

Parents who don't want their children to return should still be able to opt-out, of course, but those of us who strongly desire a gradual, hybrid return to in-person learning should have some options as well. There are so many of us who are deeply concerned about the social, emotional, and educational impairments that our kids are suffering out of school. We also feel our schools have made so many wonderful updates and precautions to make a return as safe as possible. We were especially disheartened to learn that other local Oahu complexes will be returning in the second quarter, but that our children can't. Even non-essential businesses and tourism are reopening, so it seems woefully wrong and unfair that our children have to stay at home, away from teachers and friends, and falling further behind than their peers. Our whole family, with many other families, are brokenhearted and deeply worried about stunting the social and educational growth of our children.

We believe the benefits of slowly returning with a blended approach far outweigh the risks. Our children have already, and will continue to, fall behind their peers, developing anxieties and bad habits that will be very difficult to undo.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask you to allow our keiki to return to school. Our children's well-being depends on this. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Guerric & Ashley de Coligny  
Parents of two children in Kailua/Kalaheo complex schools  
Owners of local business The Glass Guru of Honolulu



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Mel O** <melmobayashi@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 8:17 PM

I am writing to testify on action items B and C.

Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions

Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

Thank you Board of Education for holding this special meeting. I am very hopeful after reading Catherine Payne's recommendations. While I am nervous to write a public testimony, I feel that it is the right thing to do to help keep everyone safe, not just teachers.

After the DOH and Kishimoto came out with these metrics, it felt as though, this chart was the end all be all in getting public schools started. It still left teachers with uncertainty and I agree with Catherine Payne that teachers need more information about reopening schools, minimum thresholds for transitioning to hybrid or in person learning, and notify teachers/parents with enough time to plan curriculum or figure out childcare.

This whole process of hurrying to get students back to school is haphazard. In the end, it brings confusion and frustration to teachers and parents. Reopening schools needs to be well thought out. And honestly, it may take the DOE a year to figure out safety measures to bring back students.

The metrics provided by the DOH and Kishimoto are very concerning. I'm interested in hearing where they gathered their research from. 35+ per 10,000 active cases for Oahu is roughly about 3,400 active cases. About 240 cases everyday for fourteen days on Oahu would have public schools do full distance learning. 240 cases everyday for fourteen days would surely strain the hospital staff. I find it baffling that under 240 cases is safe for students to return to blended learning. These metric cause unnecessary stress having teachers constantly revise our curriculum every two weeks. The metrics created by the DOH and Kishimoto needs to be revised.

I also agree with Catherine Payne about teleworking. If teachers have access to internet connectivity and have all the materials needed to teach, then teachers should be granted the option to telework during distance learning without having to ask administrators.

2020 has proved to be a very trying year for everyone. Why must the DOE put added stress and make things harder for teachers. We are mentally and emotionally exhausted and this is only the ending of first quarter. We work hard to collaborate with our colleagues after school hours to create rigorous curriculum to make sure our students do not fall behind during covid. The DOE has the audacity to undervalue our profession. We are human, have precious family members to care for, we don't appreciate the backlash, and we are doing our best in this new way of teaching.

Thank you again for your time and I am so grateful that the BOE is considering our perspectives.

Thank you,  
M. Obayashi



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**TESTIMONY**

1 message

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**Jenny Michaels** <jennymichaelsmorgan@gmail.com>  
To: TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 9:00 PM

I am a Special Education Teacher and I am testifying on action item B and C: I am in favor of both of these proposals. Allowing teachers to telework will provide the opportunity to have less of a spread of Covid-19 cases. We can eradicate the virus if we stay home and work from home. I believe we will see less cases if more teachers are allowed the opportunity to telework. The danger of having teachers on campus is that we are still around a lot of people. A University of Hawaii student just died from Covid-19. An office staff member died of Covid-19 in Honolulu. Schools that have tried to have staff and students return face to face have seen cases sky rocket and have to shut down again. It is safer to telework and there are less people to interact with face to face that might have been exposed. Many of us have reliable internet and also have experience teleworking because of having taught summer school. I am also in support of the BOE recommendation to suspend transitions to hybrid and in person learning. The cases are still high for Covid-19 and it is still not safe to return face to face. Students are working hard to get used to the routine of online learning. We need to continue to give them time to implement their routine of having classes online. Many of the students, including special education students, are very successful with distance learning and are making academic gains. This shows that distance learning is working and it is the safest option for students and teachers. I believe all teachers would love to have students face to face but at this time, it is still not safe. It would be much harder for students to transition into coming back on campus, learning a different schedule, navigating to different classrooms, then having cases rise and be forced to shut down again, and have to learn the distance learning routine all over again. We have a very good supportive system and bell schedule in place for students for distance learning. Right now I believe that is the safest option for students and staff to telework and also continue distance learning and not transitioning yet back to hybrid or face to face.

Thank you for doing what is right for our keiki and our community.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Please Open schools on Kauai

1 message

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**Jennifer Walton** <jenniferwalton808@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 9:35 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

I am a parent of a 1st grader at Kapa'a elementary school on Kauai and I'm writing to express that I really feel like our kids need to be back in school! We haven't had any recent COVID cases and our children are falling behind for no good reason. Yes I understand we absolutely need to protect our children but there hasn't been a reason for them not to go back.

It is much more of a danger for them not to be in school learning and interacting with peers and teachers.

Please concern opening Kauai schools back up.

Thank you for you time,

Aloha



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**school reopening**

1 message

**Camas Cook** <camascook@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 10:20 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

I am writing as an exhausted and defeated teacher. The BOE needs to stop listening to the DOH for "guidance" or "mandates" on how our children can go to school. Doesn't anyone in the BOE listen to other doctors around the world who are sharing their stories of successful treatments and the extremely low probability of children getting sick or dying from Covid? Even the WHO and the CDC have released extensive data on how rare it is for a child or teen to get sick or die from Covid (alone). The CDC has also released data that says it's rare for an asymptomatic person to transmit the disease. Isn't the Hawaii DOE taking into consideration how this virus is less serious for children than older people? Why are children the ones who are being punished? It shocks and saddens me that ANYONE in the BOE or DOE thinks that kids aged 5,6,7,8,9 years old can get an education through a computer. I don't understand how it has become acceptable to completely disregard the mental and emotional health of thousands of children around Hawaii who are being forced to isolate and stare at a computer for hours. This is not an education - it's cruel.

And every time there is a "case", the DOE panics and wants to close everything again. There was an article in the New York Times this week by Dr. Michael Mina who stated that "up to 90% of people who test positive are no longer contagious". Why are we making all of our decisions based on "cases"?

On Kauai we have very few cases, enough hospital beds, and the entire world is reporting on effective treatments, when administered early, that can prevent hospitalization.

Again, children rarely get sick from this. I understand the argument that "children can pass it on to their elderly family". Perhaps, but many scientists and doctors say this isn't necessarily true. Even so, isn't it more important to allow children to develop normally? I don't understand why the BOE does not consider the other horrible effects of how they are running the schools. Students are suffering, frustrated, tired, bored, depressed, and worse. The single parent, low socio-economic, English learners are suffering even more (not that the others are doing well). What happened to "no child left behind"? 90% of my students are being left behind and the DOE keeps sending out congratulatory letters to teachers and staff on how well we are doing with our "creative technology" and counseling support (virtual). None of this can substitute for students being at school 5 days a week, in person, with limited screen time, no masks, and freedom to socialize with their friends and teachers. The leaders of the Hawaii DOE are completely ignoring all the things that make a young child's education successful. And for what? We haven't had a single person die from this virus on Kauai. People may say that's because we have locked everyone at home. But unless you compare two similar communities who kept kids at home or didn't, you cannot state that this "learn at home" has been successful. I am dismayed at what this is doing to children. It breaks my heart to see children sitting in front of a screen for hours, sometimes at school, being left alone most of the time, with a mask on. How is this healthy? Is Covid the only thing to consider? What about depression and suicide? We've had far more suicides on Kauai since March than Covid deaths (zero). What is the end goal? When will we get to return to school without masks or staying away from each other? The handling of school in the State of Hawaii will have long-term harmful outcomes that no one seems to be considering.

PLEASE let children come back to school with NO "new normal". Let's go back to the old normal where children can thrive, learn, play, and grow without worry and fear.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Leanna Agcaoili** <leanna.agcaoili@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 10:18 PM

Aloha BOE Chairwoman Payne and Board of Education,

My name is Leanna Agcaoili, and I am currently teaching at Mayor Joseph J. Fern Elementary School. I am writing to you in support of Action Items B and C.

- B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions
- C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

In regards to Action B, I support teachers being approved for telework. My school is located in your beloved Farrington Complex, where the COVID-19 cases are the highest in the state and the first COVID-19 death was reported. Our families live in close quarters in multigenerational households that do not allow 6 feet apart in distance at all times. When we receive emails that a COVID-19 case has been reported, my heart stops and always calls the office to hear if my building and/or grade level is affected. We should not have to work in fear of our physical and mental health, and your support for approving telework provides many of us and our loved ones peace of mind that we can have a constant safe workplace environment.

In regards to Action C, I support the Board's Action to suspend hybrid and in-person learning. As stated earlier in Action B, my complex has the highest COVID-19 cases in the state and I am terrified that Farrington Complex has announced we will be doing a phase in approach to in-person learning possibly beginning November. Honolulu is the most populated city and many students are geographically accepted into our district. There is a lot of movement in and out of multiple cities due to the hustle and bustle of Honolulu. In my opinion, the spread occurs in Honolulu because we are the urban core of the state. Therefore, I am flabbergasted at the idea that our district is emphasizing hybrid or in-person learning in a very dangerous manner. One COVID-19 death is too much within our own complex community, and I would be heartbroken to hear of more. I appreciate our principals creating plans that they feel will best fit our complex needs, but they are not medical experts. When our principal did provide medical and cleaning experts, there were mixed messages between the two and it caused more confusion. In addition, one of my families has shared that there is not enough cleaning and assistance being done for our housing community. This has weighed heavy on my heart hearing that there are interventions being done, but it is still not enough to also make my families feel safe. With all this occurring throughout the past several months, your proposals allow us more time to assess our community's COVID-19 situation, develop and create thoughtful reopening plans to provide safe learning environments, and provide an adequate supply of PPE for all of our faculty and staff.

BOE Chair, I would personally like to thank you for continually thinking about our Farrington Complex. With your background and knowledge about our school community, I appreciate your support in making sure Honolulu (and the state of Hawai'i) will have a safe workplace when we are ready to return to learn in-person safely.

Mahalo,  
Leanna Agcaoili



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony Action Item B and C

1 message

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**sara choi** <sara2281@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 10:12 PM

To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

Aloha Chair Payne and BOE members,

I am writing this testimony as a teacher and a parent to two young children. As I read through testimonies for this upcoming meeting, I noticed some parents really do not understand the current situation at some schools. As a parent, if I was aware that schools still do not have adequate PPE, cleaning supplies, janitors, proper ventilation in classrooms, and no clear guidelines yet, I would not be demanding to have schools open up for face to face learning for my children.

I understand what it means to have kids at home on distance learning modes. It's not perfect and at times challenging. However, there are things just out of teachers' controls. Teachers are working more than ever before and having connection issues and faulty equipment is just as frustrating for teachers. Teachers are trying their best to provide the best education possible under the circumstances. We are given orders to change things in a heartbeat. We feel immense pressure and some days, personally, I feel like giving up because of all the anxiety and stress. DOE and parents need to realize that not all schools are ready to open and there should be clear guidelines and proper preparation before anything changes. We cannot just demand schools to open and force students and teachers to be in unsafe environments.

As a teacher I know what goes on in schools and how teachers and students are not following proper protocols even now. In fact I just saw several groups of students sitting 2 feet across from each other with masks off, eating, and talking. These are students that come on campus due to connectivity issues or failing grades. Imagine if hundreds of students were on campus, how will we make sure they all stay 6 feet apart? All of this is even more alarming because today in the news, there was an announcement of a young student at UH who died of COVID19. This student is close in age of many students I personally teach.

I support telework for teachers and delaying of school openings for face to face learning until we can honestly say schools are safe to open.

Mahalo for your time and support.

Sincerely,  
Teacher and parent



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

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## Testimony Special meeting Suspension of all in person learning Opposed NO PERSONAL INFORMATION

1 message

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**[REDACTED]**  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 10:39 PM

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 **Notes\_200929\_223758\_bcb.pdf**  
22K

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you today to voice that I am opposed to the suspension of all in person learning in the state.

First off, I would like to commend all of Hawaii's education system for stepping up to create a system to keep our keiki learning as fast as they did. Yet, despite their efforts, I feel there are flaws in the iPad based home learning. I feel my son is not able to truly concentrate learning from home, which is what it takes to teach a 6 year old anything. The difference of being with his peers, in the classroom, and having the group motivation is hurting his education. Im convinced the amount of distractions because of technical difficulties, or user errors is cutting his learning time significantly.

This is one of the few times that I feel blessed to be laid off from my career. I'm an executive chef, a husband, and a father of two. I couldn't imagine having to work 70 hour weeks, juggle regular life, and be able to handle distance learning. Let alone give my son the help and care that he needs from his teacher, which I have recently become. I really feel for those essential workers, and single parents that have this burden. I fear that this may be my reality, as well as many others, if the BOE passes this suspension. Especially as our islands begin to open up, and the call to return to work is looming.

I feel that Kauai should not be categorized as the same Covid 19 risk as Oahu and other islands. We have such low case counts, that there is no reason for us to have to hurt our children's education any further. Please oppose the suspension of all in person learning statewide, or at least on the outer islands with no active cases. The keiki deserve to be back at school.

Mahalo



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Testimony**

1 message

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**Inga Park** <ingapark@me.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 11:15 PM

Aloha Chair Payne and Members of the Board of Education,

I am submitting testimony on action item B: Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions.

My name is Inga Park Okuna, and I am the HSTA Honolulu Chapter President and a school counselor at Kalihi Uka School. I am also the parent and grandparent of public school students. I am writing on behalf of the teachers in my chapter who have expressed a desire to telework and were denied or wanted to ask but felt they couldn't. I think that the proposed criteria is very reasonable--a teacher must have a place to work with minimal distractions, must have a reliable internet connection, must be willing to make a written commitment with their administrator to allow for monitoring (while protecting teacher's rights), and must be able to be contacted. And it is only fair that if this fails to work, then the teacher would no longer telework. The vast majority of teachers doing telework would end up putting more time into their teaching because they have more time. They wouldn't lose an hour or more commuting, they aren't spending time taking younger students to the bathroom, wiping down surfaces and/or asking students to put their masks back on. Teachers want to teach! Telework will allow teachers to do their job while feeling safe and valued.

I expect you will have hundreds of emails to read so I will keep it short. Thank you for meeting to discuss this. Thank you for caring about your teachers and students.

Mālama Pono,  
Inga Park Okuna



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**BOE October 1, 2020 1:30 p.m. , Special Meeting III C**

1 message

Lynn Otaguro &lt;lmotaguro@yahoo.com&gt;

Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 10:49 PM

To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

October 1, 2020

Board of Education  
State of Hawaii

**Testimony for BOE Agenda, October 1, 2020, 1:30 p.m., item III, C.** Board Action on Directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

Honorable Chair Payne and members of the Board:

I am writing as a retired teacher, former deputy attorney general, and someone who is deeply concerned that we reopen schools in a manner that is responsible and as safe as possible.

I want to thank the Chair, the Board, and its staff for your work and care in the reopening of our schools. **I am writing in support of Chair Payne's recommendations to this Board, and ask that this Board also consider the following.**

**The recommendations should also apply to students, teachers, and staff now on campus.** We must acknowledge that while the recommendations provide a safer approach for most of our students and staff, there are special education and other vulnerable students, teachers, and staff who already are on school campuses for in person instruction. The same requirements for assurances that a school has met the health and safety guidelines of the DOE and DOH when moving to in person instruction for general education should apply to these students, teachers, and staff as well.

**DOH Learning Model Parameters out of sync.** With regard to the recommendations made, the DOH needs to explain how it determined its Learning Model Parameters, which appear to be out of sync with the parameters of other school districts and and inconsistent with other authorities. While these parameters are just one criteria for transitioning to in person instruction, it is concerning that they are so different from other accepted metrics.

**The DOE should also state all other criteria** that is being used to determine whether a school should transition to a different learning model. This is necessary so that the public can understand how decisions are being made and for transparency and trust.

**Public health considerations.** In addition, because our schools do not exist in a vacuum and are an integral part of the community, it is important that among the considerations for transition to in person instruction, public health parameters such the availability of staffed hospital capacity across the state be considered. While a school complex may have a lower infection rate, if Oahu's hospitals are overwhelmed, it may not be a safe time to have in person instruction in that complex.

Likewise, if our contact tracing efforts are not fully in place and effective, when cases come into the schools, this presents problems as infection could spread within the school and into the community.

**Health and safety procedures and communication.** As noted in the recommendations, health and safety procedures need to be clearer and presented to the public in a more comprehensive and consistent manner. There also continues to be a need to work on increasing understanding about COVID-19 and making guidelines for the handling of COVID-19 cases and contacts clearer for school administration, teachers, and staff. Communication with and among administration, teachers, and staff also must be improved to ensure that cases and contacts are handled properly when detected and then are cleared of infection when returning to campus.

As our state opens up for tourism and the rest of the economy, it can be expected that our schools will face increased risk of infection, which makes it even more important that our schools and our systems are prepared. Chair Payne's recommendations are a step in the right direction.

Thank you for your work, and for your commitment to our schools and communities.

Sincerely,  
Lynn Otaguro  
Oahu, Hawaii



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**testimony for action item B or C**

1 message

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**Janel Hauk** <janelhauk@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:08 AM

**Janel Rice-Hauk, Speech-Language Pathologist, Windward-Oahu District****BOE General Business Meeting****Agenda item IIIB: Telework****Position: Support**

I have dedicated the majority of my 20-year career span to working in the Hawaii Department of Education and improving the communication skills of our island's keiki. I returned to working as a school-based speech-language pathologist from the clinical setting last school year, as I sent my youngest child to kindergarten. I want to ensure that I can continue to provide my services, but remain in good health for myself, my family, and my community. This is ultimately my priority and should be everyone's. Speech-language pathologists' most important "tools of the trade" are our own facial features, breath support and vocal resonance to teach students to learn how to communicate effectively and model speech and language. We do not get substitutes when we are ill or quarantining. Our students miss services and we get further behind. We typically work with students who have disabilities and are either cognitively impaired and/or have physical impairments. Many of these students are also immunocompromised. Since the onset of the COVID19 pandemic last school year, teleworking has been the safest and most appropriate practice and service delivery modality for a good majority of each or our caseloads.

In 2006, I dabbled in contracted, "travel therapy" work assignments on other islands and had considered providing teletherapy services to remote schools in the Caribbean for additional income...in 2006! My point being, teletherapy has been around for a while now. There already exists a promising body of evidence to support telehealth for delivering clinical and school-based speech-language pathology intervention services to school-age children in remote locales. I would also like to also attest to the many successes that my students, families as well colleagues' have experienced with this truly individualized form of service delivery. I am not saying that teletherapy is without challenges, there are plenty - but none of these challenges include death.

Supporting the continuance of this valuable service delivery option is IMPERATIVE not only for my profession but for the health and safety of students and teachers alike. Whether we continue with distance learning or begin transitioning students back to campus, teleworking is a viable option for those service providers and teachers who can effectively deliver their services. It will aid in having less people on our campuses - therein minimizing "bubble" or cohort intruders. Safest practices, as specified by the World Health Organization and Center for Disease Control, would look like: service provider at home-student at home, service provider at home-student at school, service provider at school outside -student at school outside. Service providers providing services in schools would require N95 mask + face shield and student in face mask because science has proven COVID-19 is transmitted by aerosol or droplet. This method of service delivery is counterintuitive to modeling speech and language, when teaching our students how to pronounce/enunciate and communicate effectively, and feels like an oxymoron. When I have had to or attempted delivering my services in person, outside, from 6 feet away - I would say that it is the least natural method of communicating I have ever engaged in and attempted to have others engage in - overcoming technology challenges is a much more welcome barrier than likely exposure, transmission or diagnosis of COVID-19. Speech-language pathologists often service multiple schools and have a caseload that reaches all grade levels of the school(s) thus, we could definitely be identified as potential super spreaders by entering/exiting our student's cohorts/ohana "bubbles". If we pull back on any and all humans gathered in shared airspaces however, wherever and whenever possible - it will show that the HODOE does hold our children's *and* educators' safety paramount. I implore you to keep telework approved and push the Department to continue to allow for this practical service delivery option, while we await the second wave of this pandemic.

Janel Hauk, MA, CCC-SLP  
Speech-Language Pathologist

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 **BOE testimony- telework.docx**

9/30/2020

Dell Marketing LP Mail - testimony for action item B or C

15K



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Telework approval for teachers**

1 message

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**Lizzy Laliberte** <puchanus@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:24 AM

To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

Aloha Chairwoman Payne and Board Members,

Thank you for considering this testimony in favor of adopting a policy for telework approval for teachers. There are many benefits to this the least of which includes minimizing the risk of COVID spread among school staff members. Teachers who have young children not in school full-time will be able to supervise their children while working from home. Furthermore, older teachers with health conditions themselves, or family members who are in the vulnerable categories will have peace of mind if able to teach from home. Please keep in mind teachers want to do a good job. We want to be effective and reach our students. Telework requests do not equal a desire to work less or get out of being accountable. In fact, in many cases teachers make this request because they want to do the right thing by protecting their health and the health of their loved ones. Please honor the professionalism and dedication of teachers by encouraging the DOE to adopt a telework approval policy.

Thank you very much,

Liz Laliberte

Hilo High School

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**RE: Testimony in Support of Schools' Safe Reopening by End of October**

1 message

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**MHONG** <meeganation@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:05 AM

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

My name is Maggie Hong and I have children who attend Koko Head Elementary and Kaiser High School. It is my understanding that the directives proposed by Chairperson Catherine Payne, request the DOE to formally adopt the Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* into specific handbooks and documents for principals. Now that the DOH has finally provided detailed written guidelines for schools' safe reopening, I urge that we move forward and allow for the transition of complex areas to a phased return of students on campus soon after the start of the second quarter in October as announced by Dr. Kishimoto in mid-September!

On September 28th, we received from Kaiser High School a letter via email from Complex Area Superintendent, Dr. Mahoe. In it, she detailed the intention of gradually phasing in students for on-campus instruction during the second quarter. It is also evident that the DOH's recently released guidelines were able to bolster Dr. Kishimoto's September 16th announcement to bring our keiki back to schools. The same letter also affirms that the Farrington-Kalani-Kaiser complex area will use the *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* in conjunction with "the Governor's Reopening Status, the Mayor's Four-Tier Framework, and input from our school communities as part of the decision making process." Our CAS is already looking to these other metrics for protection in addition to the DOH's Learning Model Parameters, even without the BOE's directives.

After reading the letter and then learning that if passed, Chairperson Payne's motion could suspend transition to hybrid and in-person learning, I combed through the language of the BOE's demands to determine what is at stake here: 1) It makes our area complex's letter premature and potentially invalid; 2) Will the BOE's demands delay yet again an opening date for all grades to return in January in spite of our CAS's approval for hybrid learning? I argue that this motion only causes further unnecessary confusion for families and further undermines public trust in the DOE's operations.

I can only speak for our schools. At a time when school administrators have floundered about trying to determine their own safe school reopening plan due to the lack of clear direction and communication from DOH and the DOE's guidance, it is clear to me that our school administrators have done an outstanding job in already outline and implementing the many "mitigation strategies" listed in the *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* and echoed in the BOE's directives.

Whatever the case may be after Thursday's vote, I know the HSTA and HGEA are protecting the health and interests of the teachers and are fighting hard to push back reopening as long as they can. Although I can sympathize with the general anxiety many teachers may have at the prospect of catching the virus from their students, I have to advocate for our children. Our keiki's education have been abruptly curtailed in March. **Schools exist because education is children's essential right; teachers have a profession because they are in the essential business of educating these same children. I urge the BOE and the DOE to work quickly together** to adopt measures necessary and to incorporate formal guidelines in handbooks to ensure that schools have trustworthy data and benchmarks they can rely on in creating their plan for the safe reopening of schools. The formality of inserting the language of DOH's Guidelines should not have

to push back plans for a second-quarter reopening, if the metrics indicate schools are safe to do so and the CAS has determined all criteria have been met!

If a complex area (such as Farrington-Kalani-Kaiser Complex) believe they are ready and have met the thresholds and criteria for reopening, let them reopen as planned in the second quarter. Asking the DOH for scientific evidence on how their guidelines are derived seems it will only unnecessarily delay decisions to reopen for any complex area, and suggests BOE's mistrust of the DOH, which in turn undermines DOE's directive to trust the DOH as its primary source for guidance on schools reopening. I fear this particular directive casts doubt on the DOH as an unreliable source of authority and breeds public mistrust of DOH and DOE.

It is a fact that until we have a vaccine, we will have to learn to live with COVID-19 in our midst. We are going to expose ourselves to the virus while shopping at Costco. We are going to be exposed when we go into the air-conditioned office (prop open a door, open a nearby window, purchase a HEPA air filter!). We may be exposed when we get our teeth cleaned, eat at a restaurant, go to church or go to school. But these are risks we can gradually take to resume some normalcy; we have had many months of living with the COVID restrictions as families. Children propped in front of a computer screen for most of the day is not the best way to learn. They are eager to be active in organized sports at school, to enjoy the social-emotional health benefits of being with their peers, to have PE outdoors engaged in *doing* physical fitness instead of **hearing about** physical fitness. I have friends who have left the islands to enroll their kids in school on the mainland because their children did not thrive virtually. It is mentally unhealthy, emotionally distressing for kids to keep this up beyond the first semester without mentioning the undue stress 100% distance learning puts on families, especially double-income families. Communities have generally been very patient with all the last minute changes, and doing our part. We trust that the complex areas, if already approved by their CAS, to be able to mobilize plans already in place for transition to blended learning or emergency quarantine/shut down should the occasion occur. Iolani has so far successfully reopened for a few weeks.

Surely, we can allow our children to be on campus once or twice a week to start no later than January for an optimal learning experience while controlling what we can, like masking up, implement good hygiene practices, social distance, and prop our doors open for increased outdoor air intake. Regarding the need for better ventilation in Hawaii classrooms--that I think is a moot point since our facilities are sorely outdated, with 5000 of our classrooms still without air conditioning in the 21st century. We rely solely on opened jalousies, opened doors, and fans for cooling so there is generally plenty of ventilation.

More concerning to me is the health hazards that masking up during hotter days ahead will present to our keiki and teachers--this is a potential liability our state has so far averted because of the 100% distance learning from August to the present.

I urge the BOE to support the DOE in helping our children to gradually return to school during the second quarter, especially if the transition to hybrid learning models are already approved by the complex area superintendent. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Maggie Hong



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

## Testimony- Items B and C

1 message

Voncile Ching &lt;4oursonslegacy@gmail.com&gt;

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:33 AM

To: "testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" &lt;testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

Aloha, BOE,

I am in support of what you folks shared here below to ensure all guidelines are mapped out, safety measures in place, and very clear and detailed guidelines of how the public schools could reopen when it is much more safer for our children, teachers, faculty and everyone including the parents to have the peace of mind knowing everything has been discussed and changes will occur to keep them safe! 🍎 I chose both options B and C

My name is Voncile Ching, I am a concerned parent for my son, my nephews and nieces and their friends and family.

My son attends Farrington High school.

He is doing the distance learning program and he is

"BOE chair recommends suspending in-person learning until directives met

She also proposes teacher telework approvals during distance learning

The Board of Education will hold a special meeting next week during which it will vote on a proposal to temporarily suspend changes to in-person or hybrid learning at schools, set up clearer reopening guidelines, and consider a measure making it easier for public school teachers to be granted telework options during the pandemic.

Please submit written testimony in favor of these proposals

The HSTA applauds the BOE chair's action items and supports efforts to further support telework in addition to clear health and safety measures.

"HSTA thanks the BOE and Chair Payne for holding a special meeting to discuss telework and the needed requirements before schools can reopen for hybrid or in-person learning," said HSTA Corey Rosenlee.

We say mahalo to the thousands of HSTA members, other school employees, parents, students, and others who've submitted written testimony and testified virtually before the board in the last several months. The proposals being considered by the BOE specifically cite testimony from our members as part of their rationale.

"We are asking members to send in written testimony, but to refrain from oral testimony so that the BOE will have time to discuss and pass these action items. We appreciate all the testimony from all of our members that have highlighted these issues and have advocated for the BOE to take action. It shows the power of our collective action," Rosenlee said.

If you feel comfortable sharing your name, school, and testimony publicly, please email [testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov](mailto:testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov) by noon on Wednesday, Sept. 30.

Include the word "Testimony" in the subject line and at the top of the email, explain that you are testifying on action item B or C:

Please be aware that all testimony submitted to the BOE becomes public record and is posted on the board's website."

Mahalo,

Mrs Voncile Ching 🙏🌺🌺🌺



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Testimony**

1 message

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

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:57 AM

- Name: Janette Snelling/Complex Area Superintendent
- Special Meeting, Oct. 1, 2020
- Agenda item B.
- Oppose

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**Janette Snelling**  
**Complex Area Superintendent**  
**West Hawaii Complex Area**

This is a staff email account managed by Hawaii Department Of Education School District. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.

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 **10-1-20 Testimony.pdf**  
92K

September 29, 2020

Dear Chairperson Payne and Members of the Board of Education:

I am writing in opposition to the approval of BOE Agenda Item B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions for the following reasons.

During the first quarter, I visited schools across the West Hawaii Complex Area and witnessed teachers utilizing their classrooms while teaching virtually. Teaching from the classroom allowed teachers the ability to readily utilize the resources in the classroom (white board, television, multiple computer screens, manipulatives, chart paper, etc.) with ease. Being in the classroom allowed teachers who are not as confident with technology to utilize the classroom in a similar manner they would use for in person direct instruction with the difference just being in front of the camera. I also observed teachers collaborating with one another on campus. For students, being in the classroom albeit virtually, is important in providing normalcy to their experience.

The proposed new criteria will literally stymie efforts of our schools to execute their transition plans to more in person learning, beginning with expanding services for our vulnerable students. It will definitely create a forced disparity between teachers that need to be at school and those that do not--unnecessarily damaging climate and culture. Further, getting protocols in place will require teachers to be in school in order to understand how the protocol works in implementation and to identify areas that need to be adjusted in order to bring our students back safely. Transitions cannot happen safely if the staff are learning to implement the protocols at the same time as students are returning.

Our principals have put sincere effort in considering telework requests with fairness and empathy keeping health, safety, and quality services for our students as priorities. Please reconsider taking away what they have been entrusted with and have been carrying out with integrity. As leaders for their school community are in the best position to make decisions that are in the best interest of their school and students.

Respectfully submitted,



Janette Snelling

Complex Area Superintendent

West Hawaii Complex Area

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Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony for Action Item C

1 message

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**Katherine (Katie) Jagger** <katie.m.jagger@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 5:27 AM

Dear Board,

I am submitting written testimony for Action Item C. First, I want to commend Board Chair Payne for showing leadership during this time and establishing clear standards and criteria for reopening schools safely.

I am a special education teacher on Oahu and a SPED Department Head. To say I'm exhausted is an understatement. Since March, teachers have had to fight for the safety of our faculty and the families that we serve.

By now you've realized that efforts of the DOE to safely invite students on campus has been mismanaged. It's been reactive, not proactive, with measures being taken only after teachers have had to fight. The DOE continues to fail to provide what we need to be safe, and they continue to gaslight their teachers into thinking we are over-reacting. The only reason I can think of as to why this continues to happen is that our leadership at the DOE doesn't believe that this public health crisis isn't real. This terrifies me.

**I am asking the board to vote in support of action item C. There needs to be clear criteria at the highest levels to establish readiness for reopening schools. These decisions should not be put on school faculty. We are already working every day to provide virtual learning opportunities for our students. Many SPED teachers have students on campus everyday. We are tired of discussing reopening at the school level because officials \*\*who get paid to set these policies\*\* keep dumping their duties down to schools. Quite frankly we don't have the time and we are overwhelmed.**

Please vote in support of action item C to have our DOE do their job for once regarding safely bringing students back on campus.

Respectfully,

Katie Jagger, Special Education Teacher

Sent from my iPhone



**S E A C**  
**Special Education Advisory Council**  
1010 Richards Street Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129  
email: [spin@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:spin@doh.hawaii.gov)  
October 1, 2020

**Special Education  
Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*  
Ms. Susan Wood, *Vice Chair*

Ms. Andrea Alexander  
Ms. Sara Alimoot  
Ms. Brendelyn Ancheta  
Ms. Virginia Beringer  
Ms. Mary Brogan  
Ms. Deborah Cheeseman  
Ms. Annette Cooper  
Mr. Mark Disher  
Dr. Kurt Humphrey  
Ms. Tina King  
Ms. Bernadette Lane  
Ms. Sarah Man  
Ms. Dale Matsuura  
Ms. Cheryl Matthews  
Ms. Kaili Murbach  
Ms. Kiele Pennington  
Ms. Carrie Pisciotto  
Ms. Kau'i Rezentos  
Ms. Rosie Rowe  
Dr. David Royer  
Ms. Ivalee Sinclair  
Mr. James Street  
Mr. Francis Taelle  
Mr. Steven Vannatta  
Ms. Lisa Vegas  
Ms. Paula Whitaker  
Ms. Jasmine Williams

Ms. Annie Kalama, *liaison to  
the Superintendent*  
Dr. Bob Campbell, *liaison to  
the military community*

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff  
Susan Rocco, Staff

Catherine Payne, Chairperson  
Hawaii State Board of Education  
P. O. Box 2360  
Honolulu, HI 96814

RE: III. C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of  
Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools  
COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020)

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) applauds your leadership in addressing urgent and widespread concerns regarding student and educator health and safety and a lack of clear criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes. We support your proposed directive to the Department to incorporate the latest Department of Health (DOH) COVID-19-related guidance for schools into key HIDOE guidance documents, while at the same time seeking greater clarification and scientific data pertaining to the rationale behind the DOH determination of its Learning Model Parameters.

Establishing minimum thresholds and clear criteria for transitioning schools from distance learning to hybrid or in-person learning are necessary to ensure a safe, effective and consistent response to the ever changing impact of COVID-19. Providing some predictability and planning time for families and school staff related to changes in instructional delivery modes is equally important.

SEAC's one concern with your proposed motion relates to proposal numbers 3a and 3b related to the mitigation strategies of mandated physical distancing between all individuals on campus and mandatory mask wearing. This proposal does not acknowledge exceptions for some students with underlying physical, cognitive and mental health disabilities.

The Board is aware from listening to numerous testimonies from special education teachers and educational assistants providing in-person instruction to preschoolers and students with significant physical disabilities, that they are required to physically support these students



with direct instruction, toileting, and other essential activities. They are often unable to maintain a six foot distance from their students. Nor are they able to always prevent students from moving closer than six feet to other students.

With regards to mandatory masking, the September 25, 2020 version of the Return to Learn: School Reopening Plan - Health & Safety handbook contains this note:

*There are exceptions for face coverings/masks due to physical or mental health conditions with a note from a U.S. licensed physician, APRN, or PA. Refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s “Additional Considerations for the Use of Cloth Face Coverings Among K12 Students.”*

The referenced CDC guidance includes the following statements:

- *CDC recognizes that wearing masks may not be possible in every situation or for some people. In some situations, wearing a mask may exacerbate a physical or mental health condition, lead to a medical emergency, or introduce significant safety concerns.*
- *Some people, such as people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions or other sensory sensitivities, may have challenges wearing a mask. They should consult with their healthcare provider for advice about wearing masks.*
- *People who are deaf or hard of hearing—or those who care for or interact with a person who is hearing impaired—may be unable to wear masks if they rely on lipreading to communicate.*
- *Younger children (e.g., preschool or early elementary aged) may be unable to wear a mask properly, particularly for an extended period of time.*

The CDC also recommends that “adaptations and alternatives should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a mask or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading, if it is not possible to wear one.” Some of their suggested adaptations and alternatives include:

- Wearing clear masks to facilitate communication with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing,
- Prioritizing wearing of face masks for younger children at times when it is difficult to maintain a distance of 6 feet from others (for example, during school drop off or pick up, or when standing in line at school).
- Ensuring proper mask size and fit for younger children and providing them with frequent reminders and education on the importance and proper wear of masks.

SEAC offers the additional adaption that principals be given guidance on how to allocate classrooms, so that students with disabilities who are unable to tolerate mask wearing are given adequate space to promote mitigation strategies.



In keeping with the CDC health and safety considerations for individuals with disabilities, SEAC recommends that you acknowledge in your proposal the need for exceptions for mandatory social distancing in the provision of direct support for students with disabilities where it is not feasible to maintain a six-foot distance between individuals. We also recommend a similar acknowledgment of exceptions to mandatory mask wearing for students with disabilities when it is not advisable or recommended by a physician. This will help to provide greater awareness in schools and in the larger community that certain accommodations may need to be afforded very young students and students with disabilities and/or medical conditions, while still making every effort to maintain health and safety.

Mahalo for this opportunity to express our views. SEAC stands ready to work collaboratively with the Department and the Board to find creative solutions to the delivery of quality educational services to students with disabilities.

Respectfully,



Martha Quinan  
Chair



Ivalee Sinclair  
Legislative Committee Chair



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 7:16 AM

  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Meeting #1269108037 Oct. 1, 2020

Agenda items : B and C

I support telework options for educators. Currently, our administrators have communicated they will not approve telework. This position was taken as early as July 2020. Even educators that may have extenuating circumstances, were discouraged to apply for telework options. Many committed educators spend personal time planning and collaborating, to create lessons. There should be a professional reciprocity, from administration, to recognize, as well as, enable skilled and capable teaching.

I support more stringent directives regarding the DOE's use of DOH's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (with regard to Reopening Thresholds, etc). At our school I specifically inquired "What further directives has the DOE communicated since August about transitions of learning.. should there be yet another positive at the campus?" I was told-"No further directives." The DOE either isn't being transparent with the media about positive cases in the schools, or the media chooses not to report it. In any event, the community isn't informed. The reality for the grade in which I teach, is there is not enough physical space, to safely bring students back for face to face instruction. This reality has been repeatedly brought up with administration, yet, the solution, is to bring very young learners back, in multiple groups... hardly a optimum model for very primary students. Additionally, there is no enhanced PPE materials funding. When plastic barrier options (solely for the teacher) were asked about, the answer was no funding. Another teacher was advised to pay for it themselves. The community in which I teach has been described by health practitioners as "COVID LAND", yet, leadership and the DOE continues as if it's business as usual. Please support our students, families and the dedicated teachers by requiring the DOE to adhere to a relevant criteria (distance learning now), instead of a popular rhetorical theme of reopening schools, devoid of data that would make reopening safe.

Anonymous

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Boards, Departments and Presidents—oh, my!**

1 message

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**Jane** <mccallisters@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 7:33 AM

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

I support allowing students to go back to school with only one caveat: I need a couple days' notice to buy PE sneakers since my boys outgrew their shoes and live in their bare feet or slippers.

I keep hearing from adults with important-sounding titles (Board of this, Department of that, President of yada, yada) about the potential dangers of having kids physically in school—regardless of the many reasonable safety precautions set in place. But what about the clear and present dangers of having them out of school? The one that concerns me the most is having an entire generation of uneducated and unmotivated children.

My grade eleven son is a bright and talented student. He should be in the classroom doing hands-on labs for his AP Biology class—obtaining building blocks of knowledge that could perhaps solve or prevent future pandemics. Instead, he is sitting in front of a mind-numbing computer screen for six hours a day, not including homework. My sixth-grader, who is also bright and talented, spends a good portion of the school day chilling on a bean bag. Will he be able to adjust to the rigors of being in a classroom and sitting on those hard chairs? The longer he is away, the more difficult it will be for him to even want to go back.

The rising generation has the potential to be inspired like none before to find meaningful solutions to the dynamic problems of their childhood: fighting disease, building responsive governments, finding solutions to environmental and socioeconomic issues, creating fluid educational curricula and inventing adaptive teaching methods. Inversely, they also have the potential to be ignorant and afraid to leave their houses.

Either way, Hawaii's students are being robbed of precious minutes of irreplaceable face to face instruction because of what exactly? Because of Covid-19? I don't think so. In fact, it is because *the very adults who should care the most are putting themselves and their reputations above the welfare of children*. The safety measures are good enough. And if or when they aren't good enough, the Boards, Departments and Presidents can reevaluate.

I am a substitute teacher with the DOE. I am ready and willing to step into a classroom and do my part to get kids the education they deserve.

Kindest Regards,  
Jane McCallister, Honolulu



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

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## Testimony

1 message

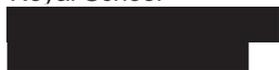
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**Eleanor Gonsalves** <eleanor.gonsalves@k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 7:40 AM

Please see attached testimony.

Eleanor Gonsalves  
Principal  
Royal School



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 **BOE testimony (2).docx**  
16K

I am testifying on agenda item 3B. I continue to support the DOE current Telework Policy. I believe telework is a management right, and administrators may deny requests if they determine it is not in the best interest of students or the school operations. One of the primary roles of a school administrator is to oversee the daily operations of their school. This includes personnel. The current process allows those teachers who feel that they are not able to return to campus to apply for telework. Their application is reviewed by the principal and a collaborative conversation takes place. This conversation provides both parties with rich information that may ultimately support the teacher which in turn will support students. If we are to ensure that quality education is provided for our students everyone needs to work together.

As a Principal I am committed to working with my faculty and staff to provide our students with the best education we can under the current conditions. While working from home may seem like a great opportunity during this epidemic, it has been through collaborative conversations that we have been able to work together to effectively deliver rigorous instruction from their safe classrooms.

To change the current telework policy and issue a directive that takes the decision and opportunity for a Principal to collaborate with their employees is wrong. If Principals are expected to maintain a safe school climate on our campuses we need to be able to make the final decision on whom, how and what is needed on our campus.

Thank you for your consideration.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony - Action Item C

1 message

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**Naomi McCall** <naomi.mccall@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 8:05 AM

Dear Chair and Members of the Board of Education:

I am a teacher at Maui High School. This is my 24th year as a high school teacher and I can honestly say this year has been my most difficult year ever. My twins began their high school journey at King Kekaulke High School.

Both my students and I would love to be face to face. But the majority of us do not currently believe it is safe to do so. It would definitely be easier to be face to face. The extra time it takes to plan and execute a distance learning lesson is far more time consuming and requires skills and expertise I am building as we go. The metaphor of flying a plane as we are trying to build it is not inaccurate. The students have been extremely forgiving and understanding as delivery does not go as planned despite hours of preparation.

That being said, my plea is for a decision so I can plan my instruction for at least the second quarter, ideally longer. One of my greatest frustrations is not knowing if I need to plan for face to face or distance learning because those are two different plans. A hybrid rotation model would be a huge disservice to ALL our students.

Initially, I didn't think a hybrid would be that difficult. Now that we've had a quarter to experience distance learning I don't see how we can educate everyone in a hybrid rotation model. Here's why: In 100% distance learning or 100% face to face, everyone has the same experience. In a hybrid/rotation model, who gets instruction because I cannot teach online and in-person at the same time. In theory, it sounds possible, maybe even easy. I have been trying to figure this out along with my colleagues since the school shutdown began last school year. We have not been able to come up with a workable idea. The best one we can devise is we act like we are 100% virtual, so the students we have face to face will be on their devices and all be masked.

The health risks do not make sense. The DOH reopening guidelines are not in line with the CDC recommendations. Why would we put students, their families, the community, and teachers at unnecessary risk? Why add the stress of additional exposure risk to everyone?

People in our community are already dying. Why would we want to increase those numbers unnecessarily?

As a parent, I would love for my children to experience all the social aspects of high school. They miss seeing their friends on a daily basis and yet, they still don't feel safe returning to school. They have chosen not to participate in their usual activities because of possible exposure. They have not gone to birthday parties because they are afraid.

Trying to navigate this new world is a challenge. Please help us by maintaining the status quo, preferably for the remainder of the school year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Naomi McCall, NBCT



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Jessie Garcia** <melenahe@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 8:25 AM

Dear Members of the Board

I am a proud member of HSTA and work on Hawaii Island on the Kona side. Thank you for taking the time to hear and address our concerns around school reopening. You have heard thousands of voices calling for clear guidance from the DOE around their reopening plans and telework. We have heard from hundreds of parents concerned that this year their child will be "left behind".

Members of the board, We are teachers. Our job is to meet a student wherever they are at and get them to where they need to be. No one is being "left behind" because EVERYONE in the WORLD is dealing with this situation right now. As teachers we will meet these students where they are and do our job to get them back in the swing of things once the pandemic is under control. The pandemic is NOT under control right now.. We have seen across the nation and across the world what happens when schools open with a half baked plans...PEOPLE DIE! Distance learning is doable, it is not ideal, no teacher will say it is the most effective way of teaching but it is working. Students are learning and making progress. But if we go face to face and outbreaks happen our small hospitals will be overrun. People will die, many people will not die but will be fighting the effects of this disease for who knows how long. And worst of all, we can't teach a child if they are dead. We can't teach a child if WE are dead. I live on the big island. Our hospitals can not afford an outbreak like Oahu.

As I hear from colleagues across the state their work situation is becoming more and more difficult and strained. It seems like the DOE's plan is to rip apart our school communities from the inside, setting teachers against administration, administration against superintendents. Why? Yes, face to face is ideal but NOT in a pandemic, I personally have applied for ADA and been denied, Luckily our principal has been very understanding. I have friends and colleagues who are at their breaking point due to the lack of support and clarity from one school to another. We know this year is hard but next year will be even worse if we lose our teachers because they hit their breaking point and leave the profession. If that happens we won't just lose a year...we will lose the whole decade trying to fix that and the people that will suffer the most are our Keiki. Has the DOE even asked or gotten a rough number of how many teachers would take leave or leave completely if they force us into an unsafe situation? Is it worth it to lose our teachers? Members of the DOE and DOH have said opening schools there will be an outbreak and not just on one island but on many. Their current reopening plan is off by a magnitude of 10! The outer islands cannot handle an outbreak like Oahu. Dr. Anderson even said "Teachers will get this, not that that helps them." Really!! I feel like that shows how little they care for our lives. I should NOT have to choose between my job and my life!

Members of the board, please, keep us distance learning until there are CLEAR, REASONABLE, and COHESIVE plans around reopening. Please, let us telework...not just some people, but give all of us the option!

Thank you for your consideration  
Jessica Lee Loy



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Testimony**

1 message

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**Kris Kosa-Correia** <kris.kosa-correia@k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 8:38 AM

Kris Kosa-Correia - Principal, Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School, West Hawaii Complex

Agenda Item - Telework for Teachers

Postion - Oppose

I oppose changing the Telework protocols that are currently in place. You will be taking away the rights of the principals, basically giving every teacher the right to work from home, just when we are trying to bring the kids back to school.

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

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## HE`E Coalition testimony for Board Action Item C

1 message

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**Cheri Nakamura** <cheri.nakamura@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 9:17 AM

Aloha,

Please see the attached HE`E Coalition testimony for Board Action Item C.

Best regards,  
Cheri Nakamura  
HE`E Coalition



**HE`E Testimony BOE Meeting 10 01 2020.pdf**  
126K



October 1, 2020

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board of Education,

C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

We support the BOE's proposed positions and directives outlined in this memo and applaud the BOE for trying to provide clarity and transparency for the reopening of schools. We think that this BOE directive will help the DOE set needed state level requirements and guidance which should help the schools with their re-opening plans.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

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.*



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

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## Testimony Regarding School Reopening

1 message

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**Tammy Holt** <tammyholt@waikikischool.org>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 9:30 AM

Dear Board of Education  
Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony. Please see the attached testimony.

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 **Dear Board of Education.docx**  
74K

Dear Board of Education,

I am writing this testimony in favor of 100% distance learning until January.

My children have adjusted to their routine and we know that they are safe, receiving daily instruction and that my family is safe. I feel the same way about my students. I have 100% attendance and participation every day. As a teacher, my grade level and I have worked hard to develop a comprehensive online curriculum. Please let us teach in safety with consistency.

As a parent, do not agree with having my children back to a hybrid model. We prefer the consistency of daily online instruction. Here, they are receiving more instructional hours and support than they would be should they return to school.

I am writing in favor of allowing Principals to determine what is best for their school community. I am advocating for fair metrics to be in place that will support our principal's decision. These metrics must be published, approved and understood by all stakeholders. As of now, we have been subject to arbitrary decision making which has caused angst and confusion in the community.

I am respectfully asking for realistic cleaning methods and materials to be provided. I am asking for proper PPE to be provided for staff and students and I ma asking for clear and fair guidelines regarding COVID – 19 in the schools. Remember, each person represents an entire household. I am asking that these guidelines be in place before we begin to open our schools for instruction.

I urge you to please hear and consider the collective public testimony put forth when making decisions.

Mahalo,  
Tammy Holt



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**TESTIMONY**

1 message

**Emily Klein** <birthinsight@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 9:32 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov, catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov, Matt.Ho@k12.hi.us, Christina.Kishimoto@k12.hi.us, email@hawaiiethics.org, histatepts@gmail.com, kkerr@hsta.org

Aloha Hawaii BOE, DOE and HSTA;

I am a concerned mother of three kids that attend Sunset Beach Elementary School; 6th, 3rd and kindergarten. I'm an educator myself, and unfortunately I had to quit my job back in March when all of this began and my children couldn't go to school anymore. It pains me every day that I can't do what I love and help support the community and love on the kids (when they need it most).

Back in August, I was very worried about taking on my own three children as their teacher at home, everyday, I cried for days. BUT THEN.... We made lemonade out of lemons and the first 4 weeks were ok. My childrens' teachers ( Baker, Carroll, and Camit) deserve to be recognized. THEY ARE DOING A FANTASTIC JOB- each in their own ways, with their own strengths. I have felt very supported, and I've chosen to try and squeeze every beautiful aspect of this out that I can.

BUT.... The past few weeks things have shifted. After giving it our all, making the most of zooms, doing our work and taking breaks when needed; my kids are NOT happy. They are sad. They are having anxiety over online test scores because they hit the wrong button. They are not sleeping well at night because of all the screen time. We are financially struggling as a family because I can't work. The kids don't have a connection with their teachers or classmates, which has affected their inspiration, hope, and enthusiasm for learning. They dread starting school every day. (Please note that my two older children Gavin and Deia are excellent students and have earned high grades each quarter of each year at SBES. They are well liked by friends and teachers).... And now there are tears almost every day at home! From all of us! There are unimaginable fights between siblings. We are academically, emotionally and mentally VULNERABLE, sad, tired, hopeless, worried, and discouraged. (And we are one of MANY families struggling. And I know there are many other stories that are worse than mine which breaks my heart).

Based on statistics as of September 1st ( and as you know numbers have gone down since then); The community within the Kahuku Complex Area has had minimal cases of COVID-19 in the past 6 months. THIS IS NOT ENOUGH OF A REASON TO KEEP OUR SCHOOLS CLOSED AND NOT GIVE ALL CHILDREN AN OPTION TO COME TO SCHOOL!!!!

We recently received a letter from our school principal with a plan for reopening but not until NOVEMBER 23!!! This is AFTER THE ISLAND OPENS UP TO TOURISM?!!!!!! So we are giving tourists and visitors priority OVER OUR CHILDREN?!!!!!! This is absolutely unacceptable and you should all be ashamed of yourselves. How can we give the children this message that they are not safe to return to school but that we can let people fly in and be on vacation here and frequent our shops and restaurants? You have had SIX MONTHS to work on reopening safely. Schools all over the world have done so SUCCESSFULLY. Including private schools on Oahu!

It's time to reopen schools and give families CHOICES and OPTIONS.... As soon as Possible. And it IS possible right now. We need to move forward. Teachers are still getting paid, yet all of the families enrolled at Sunset Beach Elementary are losing money because of how we have had to step up as assistant full time teachers. We deserve options to help us cope with these trying times. Our kids are suffering; families are struggling; and mental health will be on the rise. The longer we wait to resume; the longer it will be for our children and families to recover from this. We cannot wait any longer. We know it's possible. We believe in the teachers. We believe in you. But we can't keep waiting because we are losing faith, moral, and confidence. Every family and teacher deserves to make a choice on how to move forward, and we know that you and your staff are capable of coming up with a brilliant and creative plans to move forward ASAP. The time is now.

Thank you,

Emily Klein  
Concerned Parent and Educator





Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony for BOE meeting 10/1/20

1 message

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**Cheryl B** <burgharc@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 9:57 AM

To: Testimony BOE &lt;Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

Aloha,

If all of you on the BOE, would take just a few minutes to think about the connections between what is on your agenda for this week and the many issues that have come before the BOE over the past decades, you will see that it is all connected.

There are solutions, if the BOE and the community, as well as the DOE are willing to change the lens from which the issues are viewed. As has been stated too many times, trying to use a solution that works on the continental USA is not the best answer. This goes for health metrics to removal of educators from classrooms to inequitable resources. Here in Hawai'i, we have a strong sense of place and values long standing from the Hawaiian community but in addition, there are the Asian systems of communication and values as well. A suggested place for you to look for ideas might be San Francisco, their BOE has done some valuable lens changing. Board member, Alison Collins, I am sure would be willing to talk with any of you. We just can't keep doing things the way we always have.

**Right now, the system is asking all of us to put a square peg in a place where square pegs always fit before , yet they no longer do.**

Our educators are doing their best under very challenging times. It's not just about Covid. This pandemic is bringing to light issues that have been around forever. Covid and the Acellus online program are the symptoms. The greatest gift this BOE can give to our future keiki is to stop right now and address the heart of the issues of inequity and racism. I know that Acellus is not on the agenda, but it like so many other issues are part of the large issue. The system dictates that the BOE, DOE admin. and educators, staff are adversaries, which is the farthest from the way it should be. Egos do not have a place anywhere in the DOE, we are here for the students. Views can differ but digging in heels, egotistical "I'm in charge" has no place. Educators are being asked to be flexible, to try new ways and be open to change. The BOE and DOE need to be role models in this quest.

While I realize not everyone on the BOE identifies as a white person, I believe the Ted Talk that I am attaching would give an inkling of what "the system" looks like. It also gives some historical background from which we can possibly start adjusting the lens used in Hawai'i. It should also give you information to back any further use of Acellus and to look into current resources used. Other large districts understand the implications of using a racist program like Acellus, there should be no hesitation in dropping it. \$\$\$ vs what is right.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/john\\_biewen\\_the\\_lie\\_that\\_invented\\_racism?fbclid=IwAR3eZobgd1fXZepOzcpTmyxHos1Caz\\_\\_G6mQp5Ri6ewVHZhHt9IZgeWJyc](https://www.ted.com/talks/john_biewen_the_lie_that_invented_racism?fbclid=IwAR3eZobgd1fXZepOzcpTmyxHos1Caz__G6mQp5Ri6ewVHZhHt9IZgeWJyc)

In closing, I strongly recommend conversations around our islands with the community. It is also important that the BOE and DOE begin to look outside their usual comfort zone of folks to talk with and get some real insight into issues. We need a committee or office on Equity..not just put it in a statement... actually act on it. There are many who are willing to help because of our belief in public schools.

As always, thank you for reading.

C. Burghardt  
Retired Educator



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Testimony Item B**

1 message

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**Richard Nakatsu** <richardnn1@yahoo.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 9:58 AM

Dear BOE

Since day 1, we have placed value on Health and Safety in the schools. The COVID-19 spread continues and in the latest reports, contact tracers are having a difficult time getting information from those infected to trace and potentially contain or stop the virus from spreading in the community. Therefore, a health and safety risk exists with people coming to any of the 260+ public school in the Hawaiian Islands.

Therefore I urge u to approve telework to avoid any further infection or death that could happen until a viable plan that is in the works is in place to re-open schools.

Thank you

Richard Nakatsu, Ed.D  
Teacher

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Jeenna Canche** <jeennacanche@gmail.com>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 10:06 AM

Wednesday, September 30, 2020

Aloha Board Members,

I am submitting testimony for action item #III C regarding Board Directives on DOH Guidance regarding transitioning from distance to hybrid or in-person learning. In reading the many pages of documents outlining metrics and other factors, I fear that there are some very basic components that may be getting lost along the way. To keep this letter short and to the point, I would just like to outline factors that I feel should be considered carefully before any transition is made to hybrid learning.

1. Currently, my experience as a high school teacher has been very positive with distance learning. Attendance is excellent, students are getting the same number of hours of instruction as they would have in regular face-to-face (maybe even more since more are showing up regularly), and in informal surveys my students have indicated that although not ideal for every student, distance learning is working generally. Approximately one third of my students are telling me that they prefer distance learning to regular school.
2. If we move to hybrid, I will see my students half or even a third of the time as compared to distance learning because they will not be able to attend full time due to social distancing requirements. Social distancing is not something that will be going away until there is a vaccine or until this virus is eradicated.
3. The expectation from my understanding if we move to a hybrid model is that students will be doing in-person on an AB or ABC rotating schedule and will be expected to do virtual work the remaining time. Having taught using distance learning now for the entire first quarter, I do not feel that I would be able to do this for my students because I will be dedicating 100 percent of my time to face-to-face instruction. I will simply not have the time to create, assign, and assess the virtual instruction while simultaneously providing face-to-face instruction. This is a workload issue that I feel would be impossible in the 40-hour work week.
4. The superintendent has already shared that any parents who do not want to send their students back to school will be able to continue with distance learning. This would mean that teachers would be charged with teaching Face-to-Face, partial virtual, AND fully virtual all simultaneously. Once again, this is a workload issue and would be impossible to complete.
5. Should we assume a hybrid model, I fear that there will not be enough substitute coverage to cover teachers. This is due to at least two factors. First, there will likely be fewer subs since many will choose not to work due to COVID. Second, there will likely be a higher number of teacher absences for those teachers who need to take two-week long absences to quarantine if or when exposed to COVID (this is something that recently almost happened in my household when one of my family members became ill).
6. Right now, with distance learning, I do not have to wear a mask and students are able to see me speaking on the screen. In the classroom, not only will students be far away due to the six-foot distancing rule, but we will all be wearing masks, making it difficult, if not impossible to understand one another in the physical classroom. I teach Spanish, so it is vital that students understand my words. I am also thinking about the many English Learners who will suffer terribly by not being able to see the mouths of their teachers as they speak.
7. If we assume a hybrid model and then we are forced to go back to full distance learning, the transition is likely to create many challenges for students, parents, and teachers. Currently we have a routine, and it is generally working.

In closing, I would just like to express that each school's unique situation should be carefully considered before transitioning from distance learning to any other type of instruction. If the school is experiencing success, then it just does not make sense to interrupt that success given all of the challenges that we would face in a hybrid situation as outlined above. A hybrid plan will likely hurt instruction, cause chaos, and will probably not be sustainable anyway as

9/30/2020

Dell Marketing LP Mail - Testimony

COVID evolves over the next few months. In my opinion, based on my experience with teaching distance, we should continue full distance learning until the social distancing restrictions can be removed.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Jeenna Canche

Spanish Teacher, Maui High School



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

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## Lets get these keiki back in school

1 message

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**angela.surfdiva@gmail.com** <angela.surfdiva@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 10:19 AM

Aloha!

I would like it to me known that my view is that our keiki should start the transition back into face to face learning in the school setting.

It is my belief it can be done safely.

Mahalo,

Angela and Kon Xoinis

Parents of two young boys at Ka'ōhāo School, Kailua



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

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## Testimony NO PERSONAL INFORMATION

1 message

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 10:17 AM

[REDACTED]  
To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions

C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

Dear Ms. Payne and Board of Education,

Please find my attached testimony for the October 2nd BOE meeting in regards to Items B and C above. If possible, please do not include my personal information.

Thank you so much!

[REDACTED]

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 **BOE Testimony for 100120.docx**  
17K

- B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions
- C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

Dear Ms. Payne and Board of Education,

Thank you so much for calling a special meeting to take action on directives regarding telework for teachers and on directives regarding the suspension of in-person learning. The recommendations in the prepared documents are both comprehensive and compassionate, and are evidence of the significant amount of time and thoughtfulness that went into its creation.

I am submitting written testimony in support of telework for all teachers and distance learning for all students and teachers until there are consistently low COVID rates for an extended period of time and scientifically based metrics and safety protocols in place.

Re: Item B Telework

I have applied for telework at the school level and with the DOE Civil Rights Compliance Branch. I continue to be disappointed and utterly perplexed by the lack of compassion for the health and safety of both teachers and students on the part of the Department of Education.

When I first requested telework at the school level, I was informed that approval was not being granted for daily telework. My understanding was that the complex superintendent wanted teachers to stay on campus so that they could be watched and managed. How can we expect the community to respect and value teachers when our own employers do not respect and value us? When I am working in the evenings and weekends at home, who is watching and managing me? The DOE does not express any interest in the countless hours that I spend grading papers, recording grades, calling parents, planning lessons, creating assessments, uploading material to Google Classroom, responding to student emails...at home. I requested telework so that I could be in the safest possible environment while teaching my students who are also in their safest learning environment...not to shirk my teaching responsibilities. Since I am meeting the students online every day, there is nothing that I do virtually at school that I am not able to do exactly the same at home. To suggest that teachers who spend so much of their own time at home doing work for which they are not compensated would suddenly stop being conscientious during the school day if they are allowed to work safely from home makes no sense at all and deeply offends me.

My principal suggested that I apply for telework through the DOE Civil Rights Compliance Branch since I stated that my doctor confirmed that I was at higher risk for complications should I contract COVID. After I filled out my application, the DOE Civil Rights Compliance Branch office sent my doctor a questionnaire in which they reported falsely to her that my classroom is cleaned daily and that frequently touched areas are cleaned and disinfected daily. My doctor stated that proper physical distancing protocols should be enforced on the entire school campus and if it could not be ensured that it would be properly done, then daily telework would be the accommodation that should be considered. The DOE said that they were told by the principal that safety conditions would be met so my request for telework was denied. Unfortunately, I do not believe that safety conditions will be met. I have only seen

the railings in the hallway outside my room being cleaned once since we began reporting to work this school year. I have not seen daily disinfecting being done in the classrooms or outside on campus. The restroom has not been blocked off to allow use of only one stall and there is no protocol for one person in the restroom at a time. Colleagues have reported that two stalls next to each other are often in use at the same time, lines waiting for the stalls are not uncommon, and faculty members pass within inches of one another when entering and exiting the restroom. I will continue to forgo using the restroom during the day and will continue to go up and down stairs without touching the railing. With few students on campus now and no students in the classroom, there have still been two occasions when students have appeared in my doorway. If safety protocols cannot be followed when there are few students on campus, I do not have confidence that they will be followed when students return to any form of face-to-face learning.

This has been one of the most demoralizing experiences of my life. I feel that I have been forced to “plead” for my life, only to be repeatedly denied the right to work in the safest environment. My genuine fear of contracting the coronavirus has been dismissed and I have had to defend the reasons for my request to telework only to be made to feel that my fears are unfounded. If a teacher shares that he/she is at higher risk for complications if they contract COVID or says that they feel unsafe coming to work during this unprecedented crisis whether they have underlying medical conditions or not, that should be enough to warrant being allowed to telework in these circumstances. The DOE has not shown any logic or compassion in their decisions but rather a total disregard for our safety, health, and lives.

Re: Item C Distance Learning/Transitions

After a recent meeting with the CAS, our principal informed us that the plan is to bring some students back to campus at the end of November or the beginning of December. I do not understand why our complex is not exercising better judgment. Kalihi remains a hotspot for the coronavirus and my students as well as my colleagues’ students have shared that members of their families have tested positive. Dayna Inouye from Dole Middle School tragically lost her life to COVID that her family believes she contracted at work. This was a totally preventable death and a heartbreaking loss from which her family and friends will never fully recover. For the health and safety of our teachers, school staff, students, families, and community, we need to be in 100% distance learning mode until at least the end of the semester. At that time, decisions regarding transitions of teaching/learning modes need to be made based on scientifically based metrics and safety protocols in place. If safety metrics are not adhered to and COVID counts are still not at a level with which I am comfortable, and students return to face-to-face learning, I will be forced to take a leave.

Unfortunately, through this experience, I have lost all trust in the DOE. Thank you for stepping in to make the right decisions that they are unable or unwilling to do. Up to this point, I believed that HSTA was the only voice speaking and fighting for us. Ms. Payne has truly heard our hearts and our voices as evidenced by the recommendations that she is presenting to the Board of Education this week. I urge the members of the Board of Education to vote “yes” for telework for teachers and for the suspension of in-person learning for now. These directives will help to keep all teachers and students safe during these dangerous times and will ensure that we will all live to teach and to learn in the future. Thank you for making our health and safety your priority.



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

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## WRITTEN TESTIMONY OCTOBER 1, 2020

1 message

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**Susan Pcola-Davis** <Supcola@hawaii.rr.com>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 10:23 AM

*Susan A. Pcola-Davis*

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 **Oct 1 BOE.docx**  
390K

**III. Action Items**

**B. Board action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions.**

**Note: The Telework Guidelines (15 pages) provided more direction and clarity than the Return to Learn Plan.**

**Request for Board recommendation:**

**BOE reviews Telework Guidelines carefully. Recommend DOE remove of all roadblocks to telework.**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Create a thoughtful and comprehensive support system for teachers during distance and hybrid learning modes.</b>                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Directs the Department to ensure that there is a comprehensive and thoughtful system of support for teachers, particularly during distance or hybrid learning modes.</b></li> </ul>                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Supporting teachers also includes “strategies and protocols for providing <u>backup support</u> for teachers who are themselves caring for children or elderly parents or who are sick themselves and cannot be as attentive to their jobs.”                | <p><b><u>Source: Exhibit C: Telework Guidelines [15 pages]</u></b></p> <p>Participation in the telework program may not be used to replace appropriate arrangements for dependent care.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <u>Anticipated</u> teachers would be struggling in distance learning mode to figure out how to care for family members and themselves while not only fulfilling their work responsibilities, but also trying to figure out how to do their job in new ways. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Telework implementation not aligned with Reopening Resolution.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The Board wants the Department to find ways to support teachers in all of these circumstances and not simply view options that could help as “management rights.”</b></li> </ul>                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Telework Approval Criteria and Starting Point</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| The criteria starts with the <b><u>assumption that requests will be approved</u></b> , provided that the three requirements are met.                                                                                                                        | <p><b><u>Source: Exhibit C: Telework Guidelines [15 pages]</u></b></p> <p><b><u>ATTACHMENTS</u></b></p> <p>A. Telework Agreement<br/>           B. Request for Participation in the Telework Program<br/>           C. Sample Teleworker Time/Attendance Sheet<br/>           D. Telework Safety &amp; Security Checklist – Self Certification<br/>           E. Equipment Issued to Teleworking Employee<br/>           F. Telework Status Report – Supervisor’s Report<br/>           G. Telework Status Report – Employee Report</p> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
| <b>Telework Termination</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  |
| <b>BIG PROBLEM:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  |
| <b>1. THE ADMINISTRATOR DELINEATES WHAT INSTRUCTION OR MATERIALS WERE NOT EFFECTIVE.</b>                                                                                                                                                         |  |
| <i>a. How is it determined that instruction or materials were not effective? This cannot only be based on parent complaints. Nor can it only be based on grades. The administrator must provide, in writing, what was not effective and why?</i> |  |
| <b>2. WHAT THE TEACHER HAS TO DO TO SATISFY IMPROVEMENT AFTER THE ADMINISTRATOR PROVIDES GUIDANCE AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES.</b>                                                                                                                |  |
| <i>a. Provides guidance: in what manner, how long, review of teaching instruction or materials. List guidance provided.</i>                                                                                                                      |  |
| <i>b. List of training opportunities, topic, and length.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
| <i>c. How will success or failure be measured? Completion of training?</i>                                                                                                                                                                       |  |

### III. Action Items

**C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning.**

#### **Request for Board recommendation:**

**1. DOE AND DOH CHANGE METRICS FROM 10K TO 100K FOR POPULATION, AS OTHER STATES ARE DOING.**

- **DOE AND DOH NEED TO ALIGN METRICS WITH**
  - “daily positivity percentage, which is the percentage of positive tests and total testing volume.”
  - A 7-day rolling average of the daily positivity percentages. The 7-day average rate smooths out fluctuations during the week and is a better indicator of a trend than daily numbers.

**2. Recommend that the Board suspend changes to instructional delivery modes (i.e., distance, hybrid, and in-person learning) for all schools until JANUARY 2021.**

**3. Recommend that the Board require the DOE to ADHERE to these definitions, where a teacher is involved in all three, i.e. discontinue the use ACELLUS OR OTHER PLATFORMS that are homebased for families decided early on to not bring their children back to in school learning. BUT ALLOW FAMILIES TO CHOOSE TO CONTINUE WITH ACELLUS**

- Distance learning: **The teacher** (NOT Acellus) delivers instruction virtually or online through web-based or internet-based mediums or delivers instruction through other remote mediums (e.g., paper instructional packets).
- Hybrid learning: **The teacher** delivers instruction using both in-person and distance learning methods.
- In-person learning: **The teacher** delivers face-to-face instruction in the same physical space as the students.

**4. Recommend that the Board suspend changes to instructional delivery modes (i.e., distance, hybrid, and in-person learning) for all schools until the Superintendent incorporates the directives stated herein into the applicable guidance documents.**

ALL STATE COMPARISON OF TESTING EFFORTS

Source: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/states-comparison>

Through up-to-date visuals, track how testing volume, positivity, and proportion give a sense of whether the occurrence of new cases is slowing or growing.

Testing Totals By Population (Measure is 100k not 10k)



| STATE                | TESTS | CONFIRMED CASES | DEATHS |
|----------------------|-------|-----------------|--------|
| Alabama              | 22839 | 3130            | 51.2   |
| Alaska               | 60316 | 1030            | 7.6    |
| Arizona              | 20201 | 3033            | 78.4   |
| Arkansas             | 33104 | 2722            | 44.1   |
| California           | 36618 | 2055            | 39.5   |
| Colorado             | 23060 | 1220            | 35.9   |
| Connecticut          | 43979 | 1600            | 126.0  |
| Delaware             | 29345 | 2108            | 65.6   |
| District of Columbia | 54530 | 2173            | 88.8   |
| Florida              | 24703 | 3293            | 65.9   |
| Georgia              | 27554 | 2997            | 66.2   |
| Hawaii               | 20666 | 859             | 9.3    |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>SOURCE 1: <u>Many Metrics to Measure Covid-19, Which are Best?</u> September 22, 2020: Christine Lehmann, MA</b><br/> <a href="https://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20200922/many-metrics-to-measure-covid-19-which-are-best">https://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20200922/many-metrics-to-measure-covid-19-which-are-best</a></p> <p><b>SOURCE 2: Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center</b><br/> <a href="https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/testing-positivity">https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/testing-positivity</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p>Many Metrics to Measure Covid-19, Which are Best?<br/>                 September 22, 2020: Christine Lehmann, MA<br/> <a href="https://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20200922/many-metrics-to-measure-covid-19-which-are-best">https://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20200922/many-metrics-to-measure-covid-19-which-are-best</a></p> <p><b>EXCERPTS FROM SOURCE 1</b></p> <p><b>“Metrics serve different purposes -- it depends on the purpose for using the data,” says Amesh Adalja, MD, a senior scholar at the Johns Hopkins University Center for Health Security in Baltimore.</b></p> <p><b><u>Positivity Rates:</u></b><br/>                 We feel that the ideal way to calculate positivity would be number of people who test positive divided by number of people who are tested.</p> <p>You have to adjust or control for that population size by using one case per 100,000 people.</p> <p>The positivity rate indicates how hard or easy it is to find a case, which reflects both the spread of COVID-19 and how widespread testing is.</p> <p>The more COVID-19 spreads, the higher the positivity rate.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p>Source 2: Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center<br/> <a href="https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/testing-positivity">https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/testing-positivity</a></p> <p><b>GUIDANCE FROM SOURCE 2</b></p> <p><b>This page was last updated on Tuesday, September 29, 2020 at 03:00 AM EDT.</b></p> <p><b><u>Positivity Rates:</u></b><br/>                 We feel that the ideal way to calculate positivity would be number of people who test positive divided by number of people who are tested.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <p><b>EXCERPTS FROM SOURCE 2</b></p> <p><i>We describe our methodology as well as our data source (COVID Tracking Project) clearly on the site.</i></p> <p><b><u>7-Day Averages:</u></b> <i>The CRC calculates the rolling 7-day average separately for daily cases and daily tests, and then for each day calculate the percentage over the rolling averages. Some states may be calculating</i></p> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>If a positivity rate is too high, that may indicate that the state is only testing the sickest patients who seek medical attention, and is not casting a wide enough net to know how much of the virus is spreading within its communities. A low rate of positivity in testing data can be seen as a sign that a state has sufficient testing capacity for the size of their outbreak and is testing enough of its population to make informed decisions about reopening. Which U.S. states are testing enough to meet the WHO’s goal?</b></p> | <p><i>the positivity percentage for each day, and then doing the rolling 7-day average.</i></p> <p><i>The reason why we use our approach is because testing capacity issues and uneven reporting cadences create a lot of misleading peaks and valleys in the data. Since we want to give a 7-day average, it is more fair to average the raw data and then calculate the ratios. Otherwise, days when a large number of negative tests are released all at once—and positivity is going to be very low—will have the same weight as days when data was steadily released, and the overall result is going to be lower. Our approach is applied to all our testing data to correct for these uneven data release patterns.</i></p> |
| <p><b>Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Recommend that the Board suspend changes to instructional delivery modes (i.e., distance, hybrid, and in-person learning) for all schools until the Superintendent incorporates the directives stated herein into the applicable guidance documents.</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <p><b>1) minimum thresholds and criteria for transitioning schools to hybrid or in-person learning,<br/>(2) clear decision-making responsibilities for such transitions, and<br/>(3) reasonable notification to families and staff of impending transitions.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p><b>BOE REQUESTS FOR METRICS</b><br/> <b>July 30: No Metrics provided</b><br/> <b>August 20: No Metrics provided</b><br/> <b>September 16:</b><br/> <b>Press release and then</b><br/> <i>The DOH released Guidance for Schools COVID-19</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <p><b>Learning Models</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Recommend that the Board suspend any transitions to hybrid or in-person learning until JANUARY 2021. CONTINUE WITH DISTANCE LEARNING</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distance learning: <b>The teacher</b> (NOT Acellus) delivers instruction virtually or online through web-based or internet-based mediums or delivers instruction through other remote mediums (e.g., paper instructional packets).</li> <li>Hybrid learning: <b>The teacher</b> delivers instruction using both in-person and distance learning methods.</li> <li>In-person learning: The teacher delivers face-to-face instruction in the same physical space as the students.</li> </ul>                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Regarding action B: Teleworking

1 message

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**Michael Oyama** <moyama12@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 10:23 AM

Dear Board Members,

My name is Michael Oyama, I am a 12 month elective teacher at Mililani Middle School.

Some background:

A. MMS is a multi-track school with 10 month and 12 month teachers.

B. Our hybrid plan (not currently in use) has 1 of 4 track's students coming to school, 1 day a week.

Yellow track students would attend on Mondays, Blue on Tuesdays, Red on Thursdays, Green on Fridays.

C. Many of our 12 month teachers, including myself, are elective teachers, who in our hybrid plan would see students only for an Advisory Class on M, T, Th, F for each track.

D. Our track team teachers (for example Yellow 7th grade core teachers) are located by teams in a classroom in their respective buildings. Typically, five in a room. Generally speaking, the 12 month elective teachers are in their own rooms by themselves.

E. Again, we are not using our hybrid plan at this time.

Our principal released on September 8th to our staff a teleworking "Pilot" program.

Using the Hybrid schedule as a guide, not our current situation of Distance Learning, she does **not** allow the following:

1. Any 12 month teachers to telework, even if they qualify under the guidelines given to telework. Counselors, as well, although I can not speak to whether they are meeting with students during the school day here.
2. Special Education teachers, regardless if they see students or not in person during the week.
3. No one can telework on the days they were to have students in the hybrid plan. For example, Yellow track teachers have to come to school on Mondays, because that would be the day in the hybrid plan that they would have students. Again - we are not using hybrid plan at this time.
4. No one can telework on Wednesdays. Why? Because of meetings that are held virtually.

As a result, 10 month teachers can telework 3 out of the 5 days of the week. They must come to school on Wednesdays and when the hybrid plan schedule has students attended school. See Letter E in the opening background.

When questioned why 12 month teachers could not telework, the principal's response was, that 12 month elective teachers have their own room.

This was not a criteria for approving or disapproving teleworking. Nor should it be.

If that was the case, one of those teachers who were working in a room with their teammates should not be granted teleworking, if all the other teachers are teleworking. That one teacher would have their own room at that point.

The premise to base our teleworking days on the hybrid schedule does not make sense.

It was used, as a rationale, to limit teachers' ability to telework.

Not allowing 12 month teachers to telework, despite meeting all the teleworking guidelines, is discriminatory.

In speaking with my colleagues at other schools, in fact, in another multi-track middle school, they are fully allowed to telework. Their principal's reasoning was the less on campus the better in dealing with Covid-19. Sound thinking in these times.

This "pilot" teleworking plan at our school is set to expire October 2nd. Well before any move back to our hybrid plan. The paragraph below was included in the pilot teleworking memo sent to us:

Per Memo dated July 24, 2020 - Dr Christina Kishimoto

"Telework is a management right and requests may be denied if it is not in the best interest of students or the Department. Telework is not suitable for employees whose position requires the employee to have face-to-face with the supervisor, co-workers, students, or the general public (e.g. a classroom teacher who is assigned a group of students on campus would not be eligible for telework). Teleworking is not suitable for employees whose positions require the employee to have physical interaction with systems, equipment, or their work site (e.g. a custodian would not be eligible for telework)."

Finally, as a 12 month teacher, I was working for 3 weeks in July, no students, no other teachers other than 12 month teachers. I submitted a request to telework. That was denied as well.

Thank you for your time,  
Sincerely,  
Michael Oyama



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

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**"Testimony" for Thursday 10/1/2020 1:30 p.m. Full Board meeting**

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**Testimony BOE** <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>  
To: deborah.anderson@k12.hi.us

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:07 PM

Received.

[Quoted text hidden]

Subject “Testimony” [Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov](mailto:Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov)

To: Member Bruce Voss via Chair Payne

Testifying on Full Board action item B: [Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions.](#)

Whereas, the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Article 11 includes “The right to protection of health and to *safety* in *working* conditions,” as a foundation for employee rights.

Whereas, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that one of the most effective ways employers can help reduce the spread of COVID-19 is teleworking.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidance suggests that during a pandemic telework is more commonly considered a reasonable accommodation.

Whereas, in Hawaii, “The Governor stated that he was asking employers to accommodate their workers’ needs for flexibility to be home with young children who are not able to be in school (C.4.a.)”

Whereas Hawaii Lawmakers seek uniformity in telework policy. The Senate Special Committee on COVID-19 held Wednesday briefing at the State Capitol. “There doesn’t seem to be a consistency in how the state is approaching telework and how it’s approaching working in the office,” said Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz.

Senator Donna Mercado Kim suggested during the hearing the state could be held liable if an employee who is not permitted to work from home contracts COVID-19.

Senators asked Ryker Wada, director of the state Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD), about telework allowances for state employees during the pandemic. Wada told senators, “DHRD is encouraging everyone to telework as much as possible as a health and safety matter.”

Article X.G. of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) states: “When students are sent home from school or are not required to attend due to emergencies which endanger health or safety, teachers *will not be required* to remain at, nor report to, said schools.” Thus the legally binding default is that teachers work safely from their homes, unless they opt-in to work on campus by notifying administration of a need for room cleaning.

A Contractual Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) states that ALL SY 2020-2021 meetings can be virtual. “All teachers will have the option to participate in any meeting, including but not limited to faculty, department, grade level, evaluation, parent/teacher, and curriculum-related meetings through teleconferencing.”

Therefore meeting in person cannot be an “essential” part of any position.

In addition, the June 27, 2020 MOU p. 14 Superintendent Kishimoto and Corey Rosenlee, elected Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) President, signed a letter that at-risk teachers “may be provided options to limit their exposure risk,” including telework. Not following through on the CBA or MOU may be considered failure to bargain in good faith.

Subject “Testimony” [Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov](mailto:Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov)

At a crucial time in this pandemic when leaders are urging telework, WHY are employee requests being DENIED? In particular, “Employers must provide a reasonable accommodation to otherwise qualified individuals who are able to perform the essential functions of the job (either with or without such accommodation) unless such an accommodation would create an undue hardship.”

Mahalo to Chair Payne and BOE members for holding a special meeting to discuss telework. “Overall, it does not appear that the Department has been implementing telework in alignment with the Board’s June 18, 2020 Reopening Resolution.” We applaud the BOE chair's action items and support efforts to further support telework in addition to clear health and safety measures.

Payne proposed the board direct the superintendent to adopt the following telework directives for educators:

1. In accordance with lines 240-243 and 268-273 of the Reopening Resolution, the Department should ensure there is a comprehensive and thoughtful system of support for teachers, particularly during distance or hybrid learning modes.
2. Administrators will approve teachers that request telework during distance or hybrid learning modes if the following criteria is met:
  1. The teacher has a location at home where the teacher can work or conduct instruction online with minimal disruptions during school hours.
  2. The teacher has reliable internet connectivity that is adequate for the instruction being provided and to engage with their administrator and others.
  3. The teacher provides a written commitment that their administrator will be able to: (1) monitor the teacher’s instruction and/or instructional material provided to students and (2) will be able to easily make contact with, communicate with, and get timely responses from the teacher.
3. The Department can subsequently terminate a telework agreement if any of the telework approval criteria are not met consistently during the term of the agreement or if the administrator determines that the teacher’s instruction or instructional material is not effective based on the administrator’s monitoring and that the teacher’s instruction or instructional material does not improve after the administrator provides guidance and training opportunities.

Mr. Voss, we are asking to add to this telework directive an item 4., Specifically for ADA accommodation requests which include telework to be denied only after meeting both of the two-pronged requirements of identifying both essential job functions (during this COVID pandemic) and the undue hardship to the employer of providing accommodation such as telework.

This is based on BOE POLICY 900-1 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION APPLICANT AND EMPLOYEE NON-DISCRIMINATION The Department of Education provides reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees with physical or mental disabilities, upon request, if needed and to the extent required by law.

Subject “Testimony” [Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov](mailto:Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov)

Example: No administrator should state, “I don’t do ADA.” This discrimination is egregious particularly at a school level where a Special Education Department exists.

Background: ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a comprehensive civil rights law that prohibits discrimination and guarantees that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. To be covered by the ADA, one must have a disability, which is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.

Title I: Title I of the ADA pertains to the rights of individuals with disabilities in employment settings. Under Title I of the ADA, an employer cannot discriminate against qualified applicants and employees on the basis of disability.

The EEOC offers [this guidance on Pandemic Preparedness in the Workplace and the ADA \(https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/work-hometelework-reasonable-accommodation\)](https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/work-hometelework-reasonable-accommodation). In the guidance, the EEOC notes that employees with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations in response to the risk of exposure to the coronavirus. For example, the guidance states that employees with disabilities that put them at high risk for complications may request telework as a reasonable accommodation to reduce their chances of infection during a pandemic. Within that document is the following Q & A:

10. May an employer encourage employees to telework (i.e., work from an alternative location such as home) as an infection-control strategy during a pandemic?

Yes. Telework is an effective infection-control strategy that is also familiar to ADA-covered employers as a reasonable accommodation.[\(35\)](#)

In addition, employees with disabilities that put them at high risk for complications of pandemic influenza may request telework as a reasonable accommodation to reduce their chances of infection during a pandemic.

The EEOC has ruled in this regard already: "In its 1999 Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (revised 10/17/02), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission said that allowing an individual with a disability to work at home may be a form of reasonable accommodation."

The Civil Rights Compliance Branch (CRCB), in the Office of Talent Management, is committed to the Hawaii State Department of Education's (HIDOE) overall compliance with Federal, State, HIDOE Administrative Rules, and Policies, which strictly prohibit any form of discrimination. The CRCB is committed to the HIDOE's overall compliance with Federal, State, HIDOE Administrative Rules, and Policies, which strictly prohibit any form of discrimination, including harassment and/or retaliation based upon a protected class, as it relates to students, employees, and members of the public who access our services, programs, and activities. Protected classes include: disability. Under Director Beth Schimmelfennig, the CRCB

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coordinates requests for reasonable accommodations under the BOE’s Resolution and Superintendent’s Directive for employees, statewide. Current CRDB procedure as is being applied is flawed significantly.

Qualifying disabilities:

The accommodation process for COVID issues can address the DOE’s most vulnerable “high risk” employees. The high-risk factors identified by the CDC and WHO are included as qualifying conditions for a reasonable accommodation. If an employee has a condition that puts them at higher risk of contracting or suffering from COVID, it is a qualifying disability as determined by the EEOC. If a condition would be exacerbated by COVID, it is also a qualifying disability.

The Equity Specialist letter sent to medical personnel is distinct from the EEOC/JAN samples: It requests medical personnel to go beyond the diagnosis within their competency to analyzing worksites, which is not their role. It can be a source of bias in the information it presents to represent a worksite without including more neutral sources such as photographs.

Denial is not meeting the two-pronged legal requirements. This standard for denial is harder for an employer to meet particularly for those with a designation of “non-essential” worker.

Essential Functions of the Job means the reasons the job exist, the heart of the job – factual, case-based determination, burden on employer to show these.

Undue Hardship criteria: 1. More than a financial analysis (i.e. not cost/benefit)  
2. Really look at feasibility or significant disruption to the business or production. Cannot be based on the morale of other workers – per se.  
3. An accommodation poses an "undue hardship" if it results in significant difficulty or expense for the employer, taking into account the nature and cost of the accommodation, the resources available to the employer, and the operation of the employer’s business.  
4. If a particular accommodation would result in an undue hardship, an employer is not required to provide it but still must consider other accommodations that do not pose an undue hardship.

Telework/Virtual/Work from Home as A Reasonable Accommodation

Note: The EEOC contracts with the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) to advise on workplace accommodations.

After determining what functions are essential, the employer and the individual with a disability should determine whether some or all of the functions can be performed at home. Emphasis is on that most tasks CAN be done from home. Flexibility by employers and employees is important in determining if some accommodation is possible in the circumstances. Temporary job restructuring of marginal job duties, temporary transfers to a different position, or modifying a work schedule or shift

Subject “Testimony” [Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov](mailto:Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov)

assignment may also permit an individual with a disability to perform safely the essential functions of the job while reducing exposure to others in the workplace or while commuting.

An employer may need to reassign some minor job duties or marginal functions. If a marginal function needs to be reassigned, an employer may substitute another minor task that the employee with a disability could perform at home to keep employee workloads evenly distributed.

An employer should not, however, deny a request to work at home as a reasonable accommodation solely because a job involves some contact and coordination with other employees. Frequently, meetings can be conducted effectively by telephone, and information can be exchanged quickly through e-mail. (See MOU with HSTA.)

Example: Denying telework because 100% of the job duties cannot be performed off-campus is an unacceptable determination.

If the employer determines that some job duties must be performed in the workplace, then the employer and employee need to decide whether working part-time at home and part-time in the workplace will meet both of their needs.

The “spirit” of the law, i.e. purpose for the existence of these protections is to keep employees with disabilities working, when they are able to work with accommodations. Accommodations lie on a continuum, with paid or unpaid leave being a “Highly Restrictive” Option. This action is similar to placing all students with disabilities into the far end of the services continuum, Fully Self-Contained classes. Placing an employee on leave should be only a last resort.

During the 45-day maximum “interim” accommodation period, simply being placed on leave is a denial of the spirit and purpose of the law.

We request that the Board of Education Chair Payne ask the CRCB to report to the BOE on all of the 2020 ADA accommodation applications which have been denied. We are asking for an internal investigation of complaints arising from alleged protected class discrimination, from our employer, statewide, in matters pertaining to Board of Education Policy 900-1.

We should not have to prepare a class action complaint to the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission (HCRC), as an external body to review the discriminatory procedures of the DOE’s CRCB. However, it is a legally required step before which we may request the right to sue the State of Hawaii, Department of Education, Board of Education and the CRCB for denial of disability rights. We anticipate that the CRCB will be required to follow up with corrective action plans and compliance requirements.

Sincerely,  
D. Anderson, M.Ed., M.L.I.S., NBCT



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**TESTIMONY for Oct. 1 Special Meeting**

1 message

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**Mireille Ellsworth** <ellsworthhsta@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 10:52 AM

TESTIMONY for Hawai'i State Board of Education Special Meeting on Oct. 1, 2020

RE: Agenda Items B. & C. **SUPPORT** with Comments

Dear Chair Payne and members of the Board,

Aloha. My name is Mireille Ellsworth, an English and acting teacher at Waiakea High School in Hilo for the past 16 years. I would like to express my support and appreciation for Chair Payne's suggestions for action on allowing telework and exceeding the inadequate metrics put forth by our Hawai'i State Department of Health to open or close school campuses. I'm tired of the inaccurate phrase "open schools" as it misleads the public to think that our keiki are not in school and learning. I have seen **an increase in my students' learning** (and therefore their grades) as we end the first quarter of instruction. I meet with my students daily online, and because of the expectations of my administrators, I have had flexibility that has enhanced learning and served my most struggling students very well.

Because I am allowed to dismiss some students toward the end of class to complete their assignments, I am able to keep some students back to get extra help without the disruption of having other students "in the room" who prefer to work independently or who need to be "noisy" as they work together in groups. This has been **a great advantage to students** who need my help on assignments that were difficult for them. I am also **not experiencing disruptions** to my lessons since the students are able to mute themselves. Some students who are shy **feel more comfortable participating and answering questions** via the "chat" function during class discussions. We are also **bonding through activities** like a "mask fashion show" (in my ENGLISH classes, not just in acting class) and then this led to a student suggestion to have a "pet show" in one of my classes. Our **school's clubs are thriving** and our Student Government Association has been doing a stellar job with podcasts and occasional videos for morning announcements each morning as well as student activities online that maintain a level of spirit among the kids. It's been a great year so far -- albeit quite different.

On a personal note, I would like to express my deep appreciation for being granted an interim **accommodation** because of my pending application for the **Americans with Disabilities Act** to conduct my classes from home. Since June, I have experienced levels of stress I have never felt before, so I began seeing a therapist twice a week. Anxiety attacks are no joke, and I never fully understood what they were until I had such episodes that scared me and compounded the fear and anxiety resulting from the initial symptoms. I was officially diagnosed with an "adjustment disorder with mixed depression and anxiety" but **symptoms have been controllable through telework** and sessions with my mental health care provider (although my blood pressure continues to be elevated despite three dose increases in my medication). However, as she has advised both my doctor and the Civil Rights Compliance Office reviewing my request to continue telework, my symptoms would likely return and get worse if I were to return to campus. Having multiple underlying health conditions that put me at risk for long-term damage to my body or even death if I were to contract COVID-19, I am thankful for the opportunity to be safe in my home to give my full attention and energy to my students and their progress.

As far as the **denial of accommodation to telework by the Hawai'i State Department of Education's Civil Rights Compliance Office**, I am greatly concerned that the ADA guidelines are not being followed. A few teachers have shared with me their denial letters acknowledging that they indeed are at great risk for dying from COVID-19 yet the language being to justify denial is not from the "Pandemic Preparedness in the Workplace and the Americans with Disabilities Act" document (available at <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/pandemic-preparedness-workplace-and-americans-disabilities-act>) where under III.A.10. that states, "Telework is an effective infection-control strategy that is also familiar to ADA-covered employers as a reasonable accommodation." Instead, denial letter from the HIDOE's Civil Rights Compliance Office are using the language, "although you have a medical condition of \_\_\_\_\_, you do not have a disability that limits a major life activity." This shows complete incompetence and expedience on the part of HIDOE to deny employees their civil rights under the law and **could easily lead to cases being filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**. I strongly advise the BOE to look into this and prevent such legal entanglements that could drain resources away from benefitting our students. The EEOC provides further guidance on telework as a reasonable accommodation under ADA at <https://www.eeoc.gov/facts/telework.html>. **I would greatly appreciate it if the BOE would provide oversight in this matter** so that teachers like me do not have to research these things and could instead focus their energies on their teaching and helping their students.

Regarding the metrics released from the DOH, I am so very grateful to Chair Payne for recognizing the serious kuleana to keep our keiki and their families safe in suggesting the BOE implement an approach that will protect our communities. I have been meeting more than once a week with a group of medical professionals, the **Hawai'i COVID-19 Healthcare Provider Taskforce (HICOVID.org)** educating myself on the latest research on COVID-19 and the ways to **prevent more fatalities and serious, long-term health conditions caused by the virus**. Through these meetings and networking with those recovering from COVID-19 as well as people who are informed about the status of testing for the presence of the virus and contact tracing efforts, I see that despite repeated attempts to help influence sound policies, the healthcare professionals and experts in public health are largely being ignored by our state's leaders. Because of these rash and reckless decisions, I fear (as do the experts) the people of our state are in for massive outbreaks and spikes in cases which will likely overwhelm our healthcare system. It is terrifying, and it's all I can do to maintain calm with my anxiety disorder. I have tried to stay away from being educated on these matters, but my symptoms become much worse when I avoid updates as I have always adhered to the belief that "knowledge is power." If I did not believe this, what business would I have being a teacher?

I was so pleased (and relieved) to see that Chair Payne's proposal includes **evaluating our indoor learning spaces for ventilation**: "Inspect and maintain local exhaust ventilation in areas such as restrooms, kitchens, cooking areas, etc." I do have a question about **who will be conducting these inspections and how often?** Also, **what kind of training will these inspectors have?** I worry that if these inspections are conducted by HIDOE employees, they may be pressured to declare that spaces are safe when actually there may have been corners cut due to lack of resources or in a rush to open campuses despite possible risks to health and safety. Perhaps some of the funds given to schools out of the CARES Act (money that must be spent before the end of 2020) can be used to **hire an outside company** experienced in such matters. I would also suggest that school administrators be provided **diagrams of recommended fan placement in classrooms** and other indoor learning spaces and that these diagrams be publicly available on HIDOE's website for classroom teachers to use as a reference.

There also needs to be transparency with informing the public about positive COVID-19 cases on campuses.

Please also require that Superintendent Kishimoto **have principals coordinate linking teachers who are teleworking with students who choose to continue distance learning**. Some schools have stated that when families chose the distance learning option at the beginning of the school year, they are “locked in” and that this was a commitment to stay on a distance learning track for the entire school year 2020-21. These families deserve the option to have real teachers delivering instruction to their children if at all possible, especially as programs like Acellus are discontinued.

If Chair Payne’s proposal is passed, **I encourage the BOE to meet regularly with healthcare professionals and public health experts who are not beholden to our state government for their paychecks**. That is how you can all get to the truth to guide the HIDOE in making sound, rational decisions based on science.

Thank you for your continued commitment to protecting our communities,

Mireille Ellsworth,  
Teacher,  
Waiakea High School,  
Hilo



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Laua'e Y** <lauaehula@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 10:53 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to request that you urgently review the DOE's recently released school reopening metrics. As a parent and teacher, I have serious concerns with the numbers the DOH/DOE proposed in their reopening plan. While this new plan has been revised and seems more thought out, I have serious issues with the numbers. It is preposterous that these numbers would never have closed the school system back in March. In March, we had SINGLE digit numbers of positive tests, and now we have an average of 100 cases per week! For the safety and health of everyone affected, I beg you to call directly on Superintendent Kishimoto and Dr. Kimble and require adequate responses on this matter. The numbers specified in the metrics do not add up nor do they align with CDC guidelines.

I believe our Superintendent is "passing the buck" when it comes to allowing the separate CAS in each area to decide when/if schools should reopen. Why leave that decision up to them? To allow them to be the scapegoat for the Superintendent's lack of decision making? Yes, the CAS should be looking out for the best interest of that complex, and should be looking at the positive case rate in their area. However, how does that help a school with a high military population? The military doesn't share their positive covid numbers to the state, so how can those schools determine the safety of their staff or students? I realize the military has national security on their side, but those unknown numbers equal that much more questions about safety. Therefore, if the DOE is asking staff and students to return, please look carefully at the known risks AND unknown risks as well. It isn't acceptable to play with human lives.

I am also writing to request that you demand equality when it comes to telework. I believe that the Superintendent is merely "passing the buck", by allowing the CAS to make these decisions. Giving them the power, or option to deny or allow telework based on bias is not acceptable. Rather, it should be based on clear directives. If the employee checks off these boxes, then they should be allowed to telework, and if they cannot check those boxes, then telework should be denied. It should never be based on subjective opinion.

As a parent, I am proud to see my child excel and learn online. Yes, it is a dramatic change. Yes, it is difficult and exhausting. And yes it is OUR job as parents to help guide our children through school! It is not merely the teacher's job alone to do this. When we decided to have children, we took on this responsibility to teach them. Let us not forget that, and applaud all of us who are making the best out of a crummy situation! Mahalo to all educators and parents who are stepping up and holding our children and each other accountable for their learning!!

Mahalo for your time.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Adrienne Hale** <adriannahale@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 10:55 AM

To the Board of Education:

I am a 4th grade teacher at Holualoa Elementary on Hawaii Island. I feel that it is very important that Hawaii School Educators be given the right to choose telework. Currently many principals who would like to allow telework for their teachers cannot because of decisions being made by their CAS. Many state workers including Superintendent Kishimoto are being given the right to telework. It's a double-standard, and a complete puzzlement that our public school educators are not being afforded this same right. Do teachers not have the same right to protect their health and safety and that of their 'ohana? Why is the state continuing to unnecessarily put teachers' health at risk while other state employees are able to work from the safety of their homes and mitigate the spread of Covid for their families? Many teachers are at the mercy of these senseless decisions and I beg you to make decisions that will protect our educators who care deeply for their students and would like to continue serving them without having to risk their health and well-being. Please support the choice for telework for all teachers, unequivocally.

In addition, please support detailed metrics that will clearly determine when it is SAFE to reopen schools for face-to-face instruction. I thank you for all that you are doing for our schools, our keiki, and our communities!

Mahalo nui loa,  
Adrienne Hale  
Holualoa Elementary



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**TESTIMONY**

1 message

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**Rebecca Marsh** <rebeccamarsh108@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 11:10 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a teacher at Kealakehe High School on the Big Island of Hawaii and am writing to advocate for telework and the continuation of distance learning. Across the country, as states open up, tens of thousands of new Covid-19 cases are being identified every day. We cannot pretend the threat has passed and try to resume on-campus instruction - this will put the lives of students, staff and the wider community in danger.

Even if the re-opening guidelines firmly committed to six feet social distancing and face coverings under all circumstances, I still don't believe on-campus instruction is safe. If even a quarter of the population of our school is on campus, that is over 350 students and staff, and there are many "unstructured minutes" which make it impossible to enforce safety measures, such as recess, bathroom/water breaks, passing, lunch, waiting for/boarding buses, and bus rides to and from school. Teenagers and young children are social by nature, and it is unrealistic to claim that they will honor distancing. They are "social" in every way and there is no way they will be able to regulate themselves in all the social situations presented at school. While I would never choose distance learning under normal circumstances, it is a tool that can be utilized right now to keep kids home and save lives.

This quarter we have been conducting online classes, and using google, I can safely provide quality education (connecting with my students and covering content). If we transition to in-person classes, I will likely have to take medical leave (because of my underlying conditions) and my students will be left with a substitute (if one can be found). Meeting online, I can connect with students four times per week according to our bell schedule, while if we go face to face, they will be broken into smaller groups and only able to attend one-two days per week (with a substitute). I think it is obvious which of those options is better for their education.

My other major concern is regarding the inconsistency of telework. I am a teacher with preexisting conditions, and while I and a few of my colleagues were granted telework, many were not, and we still can't figure out why. Why did some teachers at my school get it and others in almost identical circumstances get denied? Did our administration want to deny us, or did they feel their hands were tied because of directives from our superintendent? Why were some people initially granted telework, only to have it revoked? What is the criteria for telework? What is the criteria for denial? We still have no idea.

I urge you to create a uniform policy which would grant telework to all teachers. My school has over a hundred staff members reporting to campus every day. While I don't believe this is as dangerous as having students on campus, any amount of mixing with people presents risk and it is

completely UNNECESSARY. All the work we are doing is online, and there is no reason why teachers could not be doing this work from the safety of their own homes. Even if we are holed up in our classrooms, teachers are forced into public areas on campus, like the staff lounges and shared bathrooms. ALL risk for staff could be eliminated and jobs performed effectively if teachers were uniformly allowed to do telework. As many stated early in the pandemic (when the number of infections was lower than it is now), "Stay Home, Save Lives."

Please do the right thing. Continue distance learning and grant telework to all teachers.

Sincerely,  
Rebecca Marsh  
Kealakehe High School  
Big Island



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**BOE testimony- Telework by Role and Responsibility and Whenever It is Feasible**

1 message

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 11:19 AM

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

Aloha,

**Please redact all identifiable information from this testimony.**

Thank you for the opportunity to let me express my health and safety concerns about the plan for the return of educational officers to our work site. The reason we have been asked to return to our work site despite the fact that our roles and responsibilities have been fulfilled for the last six months via telework is that "others have to return" and so it is not fair for us to telework. This is not a meaningful justification in the middle of a pandemic. I personally live with vulnerable adults and share a small office at my work site. The purposely includes having us come in on a rotating basis, even with this there would be least three people in a small space during each workday. We would be sharing eating and bathroom facilities with a very large number of employees. I do not feel the air quality and the ability to maintain a safe physical distance are in place. Our administrators have not shown a great deal of leadership in keeping us safe by organizing a picture day during the most recent shutdown orders. This picture taking was not necessary and it took place inside the office building and unnecessarily brought a larger number of workers to the office space. Our jobs are such that they can be done with great success via telework. For the sake of the health of the community overall and for the impacted DOE employees we should not unnecessarily return to our physical work site. If people are asked to return to their physical sites - especially before schools are fully open- this should be done based on their roles and responsibilities and all adequate safety measures should be in place. Everyone, teachers, administrators, clerical staff leadership should work from home where their roles and responsibilities can be fulfilled from home until we have moved into a more comfortable COVID 19 tier.

Thank you



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Testimony: October 1 BOE Meeting**

1 message

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**Rochelle Mahoe** <rochelle.mahoe@k12.hi.us>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 11:25 AM

Aloha,

Please see the attached document. This is Written Testimony for BOE Action Item C: Reopening of Schools.

Mahalo,

Rochelle Mahoe, Ph.D.  
Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani (FKK) Complex Area  
Complex Area Superintendent  
[4967 Kilauea Avenue](#)  
[Honolulu, Hawaii 96816](#)

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 **BOE Written Testimony for Reopening plans 093020.pdf**  
359K

September 30, 2020

Dear Hawaii Board of Education Chairperson Catherine Payne, Vice Chairperson Kenneth Uemura, and BOE members,

We, the two Complex Area Superintendents for Honolulu Districts, are writing in regards to BOE Action Item C: *Directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's [DOH] Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspensions of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning.* While recently, Hawaii State Department of Education Superintendent (HIDOE), Dr. Christina Kishimoto, announced that schools will use newly released guidance from the Hawaii State Department of Health (HDOH) to develop appropriate learning models moving into the second quarter and beyond, the Farrington-Kaiser- Kalani (FKK) and Kaimuki-McKinley-Roosevelt (KMR) Complex Areas will also consider the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Indicators for School Decision-Making, Governor's Reopening Status, the Mayor's Four-Tier Framework, and input from our school communities as part of our decision-making process. Please see the attached four letters to the three respective complexes for FKK and the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB), and one for all of KMR.

We agree with most of the BOE's recommendations, such as use of consistent terms across our DOE documents and the push to update our plans and handbooks to be reflective of both the CDC and HDOH guidance. In addition to creating a transition between instructional delivery modes, all 53 Honolulu District schools are currently revisiting and revising their health and safety protocols and mitigation strategies. However, enforcing at least six feet of physical distancing between individuals on campus at all times presents unique challenges with our younger and most vulnerable students. Additionally, there will be times in which taking a temporary break from mask wearing during the day is necessary for some, if not all, of our students and should be considered allowable if physical distancing is adhered to.

We implore you to also consider in your proposed motion unique school situations, such as HSDB, who have provided in-person learning for all students since the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Being that American Sign Language (ASL) is a visual language, poor internet capabilities and limited technological devices contribute to potentially hindering learning even further. While HSDB has worked to accommodate for the needs of students and families, it is optimal to continue to offer all of our sixty students the opportunity to return to campus during the second quarter.

We ask for consideration under the *Decision-making responsibility* section, just as a principal must obtain approval from their respective Complex Area Superintendent (CAS), before transitioning his/her respective school to a more in-person learning mode, that CAS approval be obtained if a principal decides to move from an in-person model to a hybrid or distance learning mode. This would be aligned to our current HIDOE *School Closure Requests and Approval Protocol* (effective August 2015). That is, (1) the principal an assessment of the situation or emergency, (2) the CAS assess situation and decides whether to close the school [or part of the school], and (3) if school closure is necessary, the CAS will inform DOE state personnel (such as Transportation, School Food Service, Communications Director, and Deputy).

We gratefully acknowledge the dedicated work of our principals, faculty, and staff during the summer months and first quarter. It has been a challenging time and their commitment to our students is remarkable. We also extend an invitation to any BOE member to visit our Honolulu District schools as we continue to plan for our transition to a hybrid learning environment. Be assured that we are data-driven, and systematic in our planning. We take our schools' and our students' safety and success very seriously. Our timeline for allowing more students back on campus is dependent on health and safety, first and foremost, with careful monitoring and consideration of COVID-19 activity amongst our community; this data, along with appropriate metrics from the CDC and DOH will be used to guide our preparedness for health and safety.

Sincerely,



Rochelle Mahoe, Ph.D.  
Complex Area Superintendent  
Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani Complex Area



Linell Dilwith  
Complex Area Superintendent  
Kaimuki-McKinley-Roosevelt Complex Area

Attachments:

1. Farrington Complex Letter 09/28/20
2. Kaiser Complex Letter 09/28/20
3. Kalani Complex Letter 09/28/20
4. Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind Letter 09/28/20
5. Kaimuki-McKinley-Roosevelt Complex Area Letter 09/28/20



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
**HONOLULU DISTRICT OFFICE**  
4967 KILAUEA AVENUE  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816

September 28, 2020

Dear Farrington Complex principals, teachers, staff, students, and families,

I want to thank you for your continued patience, hard work and cooperation through the first quarter. As we began the school year *Learning from Home*, our commitment to serve our students by providing them the safest possible educational experience remains our highest priority.

Recently, Hawaii State Department of Education Superintendent (HIDOE), Dr. Christina Kishimoto, announced that schools will use newly released guidance from the Hawaii State Department of Health (HDOH) to develop appropriate learning models moving into the second quarter and beyond. Our complex area will also consider the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Indicators for School Decision-Making, Governor's Reopening Status, the Mayor's Four-Tier Framework, and input from our school communities as part of our decision-making process.

It is our intention to start with kindergarten at the elementary level, grade 6 at the middle school, and grade 12 at the high school. As HDOH metrics are met and campus capacity and resources are taken into consideration, Farrington Complex schools will anticipate slowly phasing in the return of students to campus. Each school team will continue to meet with their faculty and staff to plan for this transition, being mindful of current case counts, positivity rates, health and safety guidelines, mitigation strategies, facilities, and workforce capacity.

As a Farrington complex, the goal is for all complex schools to reopen at the same time. During the week of October 26, each school principal will communicate the school's hybrid/blended learning model and provide an outline the conditions for the school to reopen. While we continue to closely monitor COVID-19 activity to ensure a safe and successful transition, it is our hope to slowly and gradually phase in the number of students returning to campus during the second quarter, or when the HDOH metrics for our community deem that it is safe to open. Please note that student schedules may vary school-to-school, and start dates may change if the COVID-19 data does not improve. In addition, health and safety protocols at all schools will align to CDC, HDOH, HIDOE, and the Board of Education's expectations.

All schools will give families a two-week notice of the start date for kindergarten, grade 6 or grade 12. This tentative plan will allow for upwards of 25-35% of our students to return to

campus by the end of first semester. Other grade levels will remain on our *Learn from Home* (or current distance learning) plan, following the same schedule as the first quarter. Our goal is to ensure a smooth phase-in, so more students can continue to return in January.

We appreciate your support as we navigate through these uncertain times. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your respective school office.

Sincerely,



Rochelle Mahoe, Ph.D.

Complex Area Superintendent

Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani Complex Area



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
HONOLULU DISTRICT OFFICE  
4887 KILAUEA AVENUE  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816

September 28, 2020

Dear Kaiser Complex principals, teachers, staff, students and families,

I want to thank you for your continued patience, hard work and cooperation through the first quarter. As we began the school year *Learning from Home*, our commitment to serve our students by providing them the safest possible educational experience remains our highest priority.

Recently, Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE) Superintendent, Dr. Christina Kishimoto, announced that schools will use newly released guidance from the Hawaii State Department of Health (HDOH) to develop appropriate learning models moving into the second quarter and beyond. Our complex area will also consider the Governor's Reopening Status, the Mayor's Four-Tier Framework, and input from our school communities as part of our decision-making process. While we continue to closely monitor COVID-19 activity to ensure a safe and successful transition, it is our goal to slowly and gradually phase in the number of students returning to campus during the second quarter.

It is our intention to start with kindergarten at the elementary level, grade 6 at the middle school, and grade 12 at the high school. By December, we hope to also include our grade 1 students. Each school team will continue to meet with their faculty and staff to plan for this transition, being mindful of current case counts, positivity rates, health and safety guidelines, facilities, and workforce capacity. Each principal will communicate their school's hybrid/blended learning model on October 12, 2020, with a start date no earlier than Monday, October 26. Please note that models may differ school-to-school, and all school health and safety protocols will align to HDOH, HIDOE, and the Board of Education's expectations.

This hybrid/blended learning model will allow for upwards of 25-35% of our students to return to campus during the first semester. All other grade levels will remain on our *Learn from Home* (or current distance learning) plan, following the same schedule as quarter 1. Our goal is to ensure a smooth phase-in, so more students can continue to return in January.

We appreciate your support as we navigate through these uncertain times. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your respective school office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rochelle Mahoe".

Rochelle Mahoe, Ph.D.  
Complex Area Superintendent  
Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani Complex Area



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
HONOLULU DISTRICT OFFICE  
4967 KILAUEA AVENUE  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816**

September 28, 2020

Dear Kalani Complex principals, teachers, staff, students, and families,

I want to thank you for your continued patience, hard work and cooperation through the first quarter. As we began the school year *Learning from Home*, our commitment to serve our students by providing them the safest possible educational experience remains our highest priority.

Recently, Hawaii State Department of Education Superintendent (HIDOE), Dr. Christina Kishimoto, announced that schools will use newly released guidance from the Hawaii State Department of Health (HDOH) to develop appropriate learning models moving into the second quarter and beyond. Our complex area will also consider the Governor's Reopening Status, the Mayor's Four-Tier Framework, and input from our school communities as part of our decision-making process. We continue to closely monitor COVID-19 activity to ensure a safe and successful transition.

All schools will begin second quarter on October 12 continuing with their current *Learn from Home* (or distance learning) plan. However, we will slowly and gradually phase in the number of students returning to campus. It is our intention to start with kindergarten at the elementary level, grade 6 at the middle school, and grade 12 at the high school. Each school team will continue to meet with their faculty and staff to plan for this transition, being mindful of current case counts, positivity rates, health and safety guidelines, facilities, and workforce capacity. Each principal will communicate their school's hybrid/blended learning model on October 19 with a start date no earlier than Monday, November 16. Please note that models may differ school-to-school, and all school health and safety protocols will align to HDOH, HIDOE, and the Board of Education's expectations.

These hybrid/blended learning models will allow for upwards of 25-35% of our students to return to campus. All other grade levels will remain on our *Learn from Home* plan, for the second quarter following the same schedule as the first quarter. Our goal is to ensure a smooth phase-in, so more students can continue to return in January.

We appreciate your support as we navigate through these uncertain times. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your respective school office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rochelle Mahoe".

Rochelle Mahoe, Ph.D.  
Complex Area Superintendent  
Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani Complex Area



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
HONOLULU DISTRICT OFFICE  
4967 KILAUEA AVENUE  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816

September 28, 2020

Dear Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB) teachers, staff, students and families,

I want to thank you for your continued patience, hard work and cooperation through the first quarter. As HSDB began the school year with *in-person instruction*, our commitment to serve our students by providing them the safest possible educational experience remains our highest priority. Thus, we also provided *Learning from Home* opportunities to meet the needs of our students and families.

Recently, Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE) Superintendent, Dr. Christina Kishimoto, announced that schools will use newly released guidance from the Hawaii State Department of Health (HDOH) to develop appropriate learning models moving into the second quarter and beyond. Our complex area will also consider the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Indicators for Dynamic School Decision-Making, Governor's Reopening Status, the Mayor's Four-Tier Framework, and input from our school communities as part of our decision-making process. While we continue to closely monitor COVID-19 activity to ensure a safe and successful transition into the second quarter, we would like to continue to invite all of our HSDB students back to campus.

Our HSDB school team continues to meet with the faculty and staff to plan for our students, while being mindful of current COVID-19 case counts, positivity rates, health and safety guidelines, mitigation strategies, facilities, and workforce capacity. All school health and safety protocols will align to CDC, HDOH, HIDOE, and the Board of Education's expectations.

We appreciate your support as we navigate through these uncertain times. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact HSDB at #808-733-4999.

Sincerely,

Rochelle Mahoe, Ph.D.  
Complex Area Superintendent  
Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani Complex Area

Kinau Gardner  
Principal  
Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
HONOLULU DISTRICT OFFICE  
4887 KILAUEA AVENUE  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816

September 28, 2020

Dear Kaimuki, McKinley and Roosevelt Complex School Communities,

I want to thank you for your continued patience, hard work and cooperation through the first quarter. As we began the school year *Learning from Home*, our commitment to serve our students by providing them the safest possible educational experience remains our highest priority.

On September 17, 2020, the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) Superintendent Dr. Christina Kishimoto announced that schools will be using a newly released metric and guidance from the Hawaii State Department of Health (HDOH) to assist with the development of appropriate learning models moving into the second quarter and beyond. In addition to the metric, the Kaimuki-McKinley-Roosevelt (KMR) complex area will also consider the Governor's Reopening Status, *Act with Care*, the Mayor's Four-Tier Framework, and input from our school communities as a part of our decision-making process. While we continue to closely monitor COVID-19 activity on Oahu to ensure a safe and successful transition, it is our goal to **slowly and gradually** phase in the number of students returning to campus during the second quarter.

As we continue to increase the number of vulnerable students on campus, principals are strategically planning for a safe transition of additional students to campus. Principals will meet with their school teams to plan for this gradual increase, being especially mindful of current case counts, positivity rates, health and safety guidelines, facilities and workforce capacity. Please be assured that every school in the KMR complex area is stocked with appropriate personal protective equipment to handle the gradual influx of students and adults. Should you hear otherwise, please contact your school principal directly. School transition plans will be unique to each school and will align to all health and safety protocols recommended by the HDOH, HIDOE and the Board of Education. Plans may be adjusted should circumstances change. Principals will be sharing their school plans with you shortly.

This tentative KMR plan will allow for upwards of 25% of our students to return to campus while other students continue with distance learning or participate in blended rotations. Our goal is to ensure a smooth phase-in, so more students can continue to return in January.

We appreciate your support as we navigate through these uncertain times. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your respective school office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Linell Dilwith".

Linell Dilwith  
Complex Area Superintendent  
Kaimuki-McKinley-Roosevelt Complex Area



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Jacob Cassens** <mistercassens@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 11:42 AM

Hello, my name is Jacob Cassens, teacher at Mililani Middle School.

Our school is not prepared for in-class learning, nor is it ready for the return of students to campus. Finally, students are doing amazing work, and they are learning and gaining knowledge just like they would be in person, some, as always, doing better than others.

We currently have a model that would require staff members to cross floors of buildings to attend to the restroom facilities for staff, and all of whom must share 2 bathrooms per building, which, in our building, are accessible only in a narrow room. Our school also has AC units that operate, and they are very old with many maintenance and other issues that occur regularly. The AC was down for a week or so just recently, for example.

Further, the EAs are still required to be present in each of 4 different groups of students, one track on each of 4 different days of the week. Those EAs are expected to stay in a room with 30 children for the entire day, including in the mornings and to eat their lunch.

Students are supposed to, also, eat their lunch in the rooms. The desks are almost 6 feet apart, but they are tables, and as such the chairs can move up to 3 feet in any given direction. Trying to keep students to sit still is still an issue.

Further, since the children will be eating in the classroom, the time without their masks is approximately 15 minutes to 20 minutes for them to eat. Then they are to go to a recess. It is unclear what that means as far as mask requirements etc. However, the eating time in the classroom means that those kids will be talking, eating, and thus spreading particulates all through the room.

Contact tracers have found that restaurants are one of the top places for the spread of covid . Each of our classrooms become one tiny restaurant, but instead of adults chewing with their mouths closed and eating silently, you have 30 teenage kids, many of whom don't use proper table manners at all times, sharing a space.

<https://www.wcnc.com/article/news/health/coronavirus/contact-tracers-link-gatherings-and-restaurants-to-covid-cases-in-mecklenburg-county/275-5ada56db-1aca-43d9-84e4-60b0bcc6898a>

We have also been instructed to allow them to remove their masks to take a mask break as needed with unclear instruction about what that means, how long it should be, how often, etc. This means that there is potential for abuse and unclear guidance of such a thing.

The CDC has defined "**prolonged exposure**" as **ANY** exposure during an aerosol-generating procedure (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html> ).

This means that while all the kids are eating in the same room with the EA and any other assistants, and potentially while at recess, they are all at risk of **prolonged exposure** and thus more at risk of being infected by the virus.

Further, since this school year has started online, I have heard from multiple students that their families are not social distancing as they should, meeting with friends and non household family members, as well as attending large events, such as the Trump rally in Mililani a couple of weeks ago.

Those students would then be coming to school with their peers, where they would expand the spread of anything they contracted on a large scale. This has multiple Penrose points if failure. For example, if one EA gets sick, they contact 120 different students in the same room for a whole day at a time. This is not limited exposure like when you visit the store, this is **extended exposure**, which the CDC states is 15 minutes or longer.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html>

Then we teachers come into those rooms, where we come in contact with 120 to 150 students per day, thus breaking any semblance of a bubble that might have existed in the first place.

I understand the impatience. I miss the outdoors. I miss beaches, I miss hiking, I miss the mountains, I miss the ocean.

I stay away from them, though, because I, like so many of our ohana, live in a multi-generational household. My in-laws are upwards of 60, they have blood pressure and diabetes, and my wife's nana who lives with us is 91, on dialysis.

I myself suffer from anxiety that has become more severe as I watch our complex area continuously push for reopening schools while fighting our right to telework while many other areas are teleworking full time. We were able to telework for 3 days a week, but were required to report to campus for 2 days for meetings that were conducted virtually anyway, exposing us to more people for no reason.

I have lost a close friend to Coronavirus, and I have relatives and friends who are still suffering the after-effects months later even though they survived the virus so far. This is not something that you either "die" or "get better" from. My friend in Las Vegas, his wife, and their two kids have breathing trouble and weakness and other symptoms still two months later. And they were careful. They did everything right, and they still got it.

The reality is that while some of the district areas are taking proactive steps to ensure the safety of the people in their area, my complex area seems willing to sacrifice the lives of the citizens there despite the data, not because of it. It seems like nothing more than an attempt to lead the charge to reopen schools. We have seen how that has not gone well elsewhere in the country, why would it be different here?

I don't want to lose anyone else I love to this, especially when it is preventable. Especially not one of my kids or one of my peers. We've already seen staff members of our schools die and get sick from the virus, and that is without kids in school.

Oahu has proven it is incapable of containing this virus, and the people gathering and protesting masks and who are openly defiant of the science behind the virus are still out there. Their kids will be coming to our schools too, even if they don't social distance or wear masks appropriately. Opening schools for student attendance with a population that is doing these things is a gamble with the lives of the students, the teachers, and all the families in this area.

Dr. Fauci and others seem confident a vaccine will be ready next spring. Why rush this with so many unknowns when we can keep everyone safe? We have the infrastructure in place for distance learning. It's been difficult, but it's gotten much better, and it's working.

What about distance learning? Doesn't it affect the kids? Yes. Yes it does.

But you can still build strong relationships with students in the current environment if you open up to them and treat them with kindness and respect.

I have been emailing and using Google Classroom extensively for years, and this year it is more important than ever.

My students are learning not only the skills in my class, but technological knowledge and skills that will be helpful as they navigate the real world and the changes that Covid brings with it.

My students still know that I love and care for all of them. I have had students email me to tell me their problems, come to me for advice, tell me that my classroom is the first time they've felt safe being themselves, and have told me that they appreciate that I am there for them if they need me.

I have had meetings and phone calls with students and parents to help them and share my stories with them and assure them I have their child's back.

I have had students tell me that I have pushed them in my class to see that they can do better than they have ever done before because they know I believe in them.

I have had more students make corrections and seek out my help than ever before. I have helped more students this quarter find their writing voice by working with them one on one than I have in entire school years before.

The online school environment is no different from any other classroom. It is a space that teachers create for their kids. It is going to be as safe and as engaging and as happy or sad or whatever as it would be in person.

The kids know it's tough, they understand, they know we're human. And when you show them kindness and compassion and that you believe in them, they will move mountains for you.

I have seen more mountains moved this year with online learning than I have ever seen moved before. It's not that I haven't seen them move before at all; it's that the kids know that we're all in this together, and I've made a promise to

them that I will stand by them and believe in them and support them. And I do. And as soon as they see that I hold up my side of the bargain, they know they're in \*my\* classroom when they are in my class. No matter where their desk is or where I'm teaching from.

We aren't ready to go back to students in the buildings. We aren't willing to risk a single life so some politician can ruffle his petticoat.

But this is not the time to double down on innocent people's lives. The kids are learning. They're doing amazing things. They will make it through the educational changes, **but....** they might not survive their parents dying. It's possible they might die from Covid too.

If that happens on their time, there's not much we can do. But don't we have a responsibility to prevent it from happening on our time? I don't want to let someone put the blood of my students and their families and my own family on my hands.

Please consider keeping learning remote until we have safe guidelines to return to school for everyone. We can't trust people to be safe, and that puts everyone in the school at risk. That includes letting us teach from our homes where we can be safe and protect our ohana too.

Thank you.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Testimony general Board of Education**

1 message

**Caroline Champoux** <carolinebatule@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 11:44 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

The DOE's inability to make decisions, refusal to enforce guidelines and overall abdication of responsibility has created an environment in which parents and teachers are kept in the dark about the progression of the school year and school administrations are burdened with decisions that should be made at a district level. Hawaii DOE's stance has been that each and every school is different and thus they cannot apply the same guidelines with regards to reopening schools. In washing their hands clean of any and all responsibility, they have missed the opportunity to develop a core set of metrics that would offer a clear set of steps that districts and complex areas could follow but have instead created a system in which educational equity and equality is even harder to achieve than in previous years. The elementary school my children attend adopted their own blend of the suggested models and now we have some classes with ten children and others with twenty two. While class size may not affect how children learn in a virtual setting, it seems as if little thought was put into the scenario of what the class sizes would look like once school went back full time- or is that likelihood something that the DOE has considered a long shot all along but parents and teachers have not been privy to? What of the teachers who have twenty two students to watch after, assess and educate while their peers have ten or have one hundred but are facilitating an online learning program rather than virtually teaching? How is the division of labor at all equitable? The DOE has had ample time since March to gather input and develop a plan that ensures safety to their staff and students and establishes a clear path for the progression of education, but they have shirked that responsibility. Hawaii's unified school district has become anything but.

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony to Support Our Most Vulnerable Educators

1 message

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**Celeste Endo** <celeste.endo@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 11:54 AM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha BOE and Chair Payne,

There are many vibrant and compassionate teachers who will greatly benefit from a telework option because they are helping aging family members and little ones at home. Many need to take care of themselves as they have their own medical conditions that would escalate with COVID-19. They are quietly taking leave because that is the only option they have at this time. Still they worry greatly about their students and are voluntarily coming in on their own to support their substitutes and set their classes up for success. Please support our most kind-hearted teachers by making telework a viable option. It would be a blessing for those circumstances where telework is the only way for our most vulnerable to stay part of our teaching 'ohana.

Mahalo,  
Celeste Endo



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Our Children

1 message

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**cshumow@aol.com** <cshumow@aol.com>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 11:59 AM

To: Testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov

To the Hawaii BOE, DOE and HSTA,

I am writing to make my voice heard as a parent that has 3 children in the school district. We are making the best of a bad situation and are trying to educate our children but feel all that is really happening is that they are dotting their i's and crossing their t's. I fear that that this has gone on too long, the damage to their education, increased negative feelings and self worth about and in regard to school may become irrevocable. We are scheduled to have tourism return to Hawaii in just 2 weeks, yet I received an email from my son's elementary school that he will not be going back to blended learning until NOVEMBER 23rd and have heard from the high school that they will not be returning until January. Just what is our government's priorities here? This does not make sense. Additionally I'd like to add that our family are essential workers that work with at risk youth in residential, outpatient and educational settings. We show up in person and have gradually figured out (while altered with PPE and social distancing) how to keep kids and staff safe. We provide them with services that meet their needs. I know this is happening all over the country but I do ask that you do whatever you can to provide an in person educational option as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Chris Shumow

Sent from my iPhone



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

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Salena Lee** <salenalee808@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
Cc: Salena Lee <salenalee808@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:02 PM

Please see attached testimony.

Salena Lee



Virus-free. [www.avg.com](http://www.avg.com)



**10.1.2020 Testimony.pdf**  
30K

October 1, 2020

## PARENT TESTIMONY

Dear Board of Education, Chairpersons, and Superintendent Dr. Kishimoto,

My name is Salena Lee, I am a parent of three daughters. A 5th grader at Major Sheldon Wheeler Elementary, an 8th grader at Major Sheldon Wheeler Middle, and a 9th grader at Mililani High. Two of them also receive special education services through an Individual Education Plan (IEP). I have a grandson in 8th grade at Highlands Intermediate, a grandson in 5th grade at Maili Elementary, and a grandson in Kindergarten at Ewa Beach Elementary. I have also worked as an Adult Supervisor and a Paraprofessional Educator at Major Sheldon Wheeler Elementary for the past four years.

### Action Items

C. [Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 \(revised as of September 16, 2020\), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning](#)

I am opposed to the reopening plans put out by the DOH for the DOE for reopening of schools. Their metrics do not match what the CDC guidelines are. Please halt the use of the DOH metrics and opening of schools till a safe plan aligning with the CDC can be agreed upon by everyone.

Hawai'i should not be guinea pigs in reopening of schools. There are still covid positive cases island wide on DOE campuses and schools are not open yet. This is too many and too dangerous for families especially those with multi-generational families and kupuna.

Mahalo for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,

Salena Lee  
Mother, Grandmother,  
Paraprofessional Educator



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

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## Testimony: NO PERSONAL INFORMATION

1 message

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

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:03 PM

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 **BOE.pdf**  
79K

Aloha Board of Education members,

I am a teacher and strongly in favor of suspending in person learning for quarter two and beyond until we have COVID under control and can safely welcome back ALL of our students face to face. We should also have a dedicated transition process in place to ensure safety as well as little disruption when switching between learning platforms. I also believe the process to apply for teleworking needs more consistency and should be allowed for employees who can justify that they are able to do their jobs productively at home.

For one thing, we found out last week that two employees of our school tested positive for COVID. We've also had a few close contact emails get sent out to us as well. Given the fact that a small percentage of students are on campus and we have an awesome principal who has been graciously allowing those who want to telework the opportunity to do so, two employees still testing positive is alarming. If adults are struggling to keep their distance and stay safe, imagine what will happen if we reopen for students? They look to the adults in their lives to set a good example and in a community as ohana-centered and multi-generational as the one my school is in, I can say people have not been very good about avoiding large gatherings and the enforcement of the mandates has been too relaxed around here by the authorities. Our kids are going to come to school with the same mindset and put an entire community at risk.

Secondly, there have not been enough positive reviews about distance learning and I'd like to share with you what I've observed this quarter as a high school teacher, aside from health and safety benefits that I feel are going to support our students later on in life-

- Students have become more self-directed and improved on their problem-solving abilities. Learned helplessness is not really an issue in a virtual classroom without teachers or educational assistants by their side to guide them through every single challenge they come into contact with. Students have reported to me that they feel proud of themselves for figuring out how to find the answers to things on their own when their teachers or peers cannot get back to them right away.
- Students and parents seem to have more appreciation and willingness to communicate with teachers about how to improve their educational experience. It feels more like we are working as a team rather than being two against one with the teacher being solely responsible for every mishap or issue a student faces. Parents are doing their jobs as parents, teachers as teachers and students as students.
- Distance learning is a wonderful method for college preparation as the skill sets needed to be successful in college (self-control, self-direction and discipline) are needed to also be successful right now with this as our present learning platform.
- Teachers who have the flexibility to provide both synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities have more time to meet with struggling students and differentiate curriculum as well as work with students to try and close gaps.
- Students who are normally distracted in classrooms or struggle with attention no longer have an excuse to deflect themselves away from learning material since there's no audience for them other than the teacher and that's sometimes just what they need.
- Classroom management no longer takes away precious time from students who want to learn because they aren't forced to be in the same space as students with challenges.

- Students are building up their resiliency and learning how to be strong on their own as well as getting to know who they are without social pressures in the way to fit in. Even with personal challenges going on in their lives, the ones who are trying their best are also developing the independence that is needed as they transition from high school to adulthood.
- Students are actually being provided with the tools to be successful in the 21st century. Most of our schools lack the technology supports and still operate as if we are in the plantation days. Now that we've merged into distance learning, they are familiarizing themselves with how to use a computer and produce work on it.
- Peer pressure and bullying have taken a backseat and allowed students to focus more on learning and less on these types of issues that occur while being face to face.
- Students have more flexibility to complete assignments and get help from their teachers throughout the day rather than sticking to a monotonous bell schedule that they'd be forced to comply with if we were in school.
- Students can see their teacher's faces and hear our voices when we teach. They also will continue receiving instruction 5 days week verses half of that or less should we end up doing a hybrid model. No child will be left behind in that sense.

I could go on and on with the positives but I'll leave it at that for now. I'm proud of my 9<sup>th</sup> graders for the progress they've made and I believe distance learning has played a part in their success. The ones who are still being faced with challenges are discovering ways to navigate through the growing pains and I know they will make it through because that's what life is all about. Mahalo for providing us with the opportunity to submit testimony. I especially want to thank Chair Payne for her support with trying to make the return to school safe, sound and reasonable.

Respectfully,  
A local high school English teacher



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

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## Testimony for Oct 1 for actions items B and C

1 message

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**David Huitt** <dlhuitt615@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
Cc: David Huitt <dlhuitt615@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:24 PM

Please see attached letter.

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David Huitt  
Kealakehe High School  
Social Studies Department Chair

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 **BOE testimony 9-30-20.docx**  
15K

TO: BOE Chair Catherine Payne and the Hawaii State Board of Education

FROM: David Huitt, History teacher for 25+ years in Hawaii. Kealakehe High School.

Re: Testimony on action items B and C for Thursday, October 1, 2020

Thank you for taking up the issues of telework for teachers (B) and the reopening thresholds for schools (C). I plan to discuss the re-opening issue first because it is of the utmost importance.

First of all, we are in the midst of a pandemic with a virus that is very new. As a result, we don't know exactly how covid19 will impact our students, teachers and others in our schools and community. Will there be long-term damage to lungs, heart, etc. for those who are asymptomatic? How easily does covid19 spread amongst teenage students? Do you become immune after you've been sick or can you get sick numerous times? What happens if you get covid19 AND the common flu at the same time? These are just a few questions that we are still trying to answer. This points out that we are trying to make plans for our schools while we still lack basic information about this disease and its effects.

Secondly, in addition to questions about the virus itself, we also have many questions about how to re-open our schools in a manner that is both safe and educationally viable. Obviously, the most important issue is the safety of our students, teachers, school staff and family members throughout our communities. We must work to keep everyone safe since this disease is so contagious and deadly. At this time, we still do not have a clear plan for how to keep this disease from spreading on busses, in hallways, in classrooms, while students are at wiki and lunch or what to do when students engage in "unsafe activities" like fighting, goofing around, being affectionate, etc. My school, and many other schools, are trying to make re-opening plans but none of them address all of these concerns or can deal with all of the variables that will appear when students come back to campus. In addition, it is unclear how well we can teach our students while dealing with these issues. Do we really think that teaching in class, while masked, with small groups of rotating students will be an improvement over distance learning? I'm not sure about this. Is Distance Learning the ideal? NO! But many of us are working out the kinks in the system and are

providing our students with meaningful curriculum and engagement without having to worry about potential life and death issues. We keep acting like “being in-class” will be so great because we all love teaching our students face to face. But this new model of “in-class teaching” will not be anything like what we’ve done in the past. I think it is reasonable to ask if the benefits of teaching in-class with all of its present limitations are worth the potential life and death consequences.

Thirdly, all of us need more clarity from both the DOE and the DOH. The DOH thresholds that we received last week were inadequate, contained errors and were quickly put aside as we discussed potentially reopening our schools for quarter 2. Why is there such a rush to “get back to school, no matter what”? Is it worth it to risk the lives of students, teachers and others?

Finally, I hope that the BOE is open to the option of telework for all teachers that would like to telework. It makes no sense for teachers to drive into school to teach their students from empty classrooms if they have the resources and set up to teach from a safer, off-campus site like their home. Some teachers are driving hours back and forth to school which is a waste of time since the students are not here on campus. We, as teachers, can make better use of our time to support our students and work towards more engagement if we can telework. It is also safer since there are still covid19 cases occurring in our schools every week.

Thank you for trying to keep us safe and secure and for taking the time to read this testimony.

David Huitt  
Kealakehe High School

To the BOE,

My name is Elizabeth Baclayon and I have taught Social Studies in Hawaii for 28 years, the last 21 years at Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School.

I am writing in regards to agenda item "B" telework.

Despite being medically documented with a permanent respiratory condition and immunocompromised from surviving cancer, I was denied telework while other teachers with identical jobs in other schools, some of whom have no underlying medical concerns, were allowed telework.

How can the State allow a greater level of protection for some teachers while denying the same protection to others?

This inequity is discriminatory and is adding extreme stress to my already compromised immune system.

I applied for ADA accommodations last June, and after several months of waiting for it to be processed I was sent a letter stating that despite my Pulmonologist documenting my condition as permanent and Covid a deadly threat, and advising that measures such as telework must be taken to reduce my exposure, my request for telework was deemed by the DOE as "not a reasonable accommodation" in my situation.

The rationale given for denial was that in ordinary times I'm a "face to face" teacher, even though we are not currently teaching at my school face to face and won't be through 2nd quarter. This letter came from the ADA Equity Specialist, who ironically, was working from home having been granted telework by the State.

This denial of my legitimate request for telework is arbitrary, unjust, and irrational for the following reasons:

First, my middle school is currently Distance Learning through the second quarter so I am not a face to face teacher at this time. I teach virtually and can successfully teach from home. Teaching from home would be even more productive, beneficial to the State, and helpful to my students because I would not be spending two hours commuting to campus to teach via computer to an empty classroom and could use that time to create engaging online lessons. Most importantly, I would not have the stress of fearing exposure to a deadly virus that, given my medical high risk status and age (62) could kill me or my older spouse, or my son who lives at home and has compromised lungs, and therefore I would be better able to focus on my work.

Second, another rationale for denying my telework request was that the DOE and my school Administration insist the environment on my campus is "safe" because of "100% Distance Learning," 6 feet social distancing, and mask wearing. I have evidence to the contrary.

It is not safe! My school has consistently exploited the concept of "vulnerable learners" to bring back on campus increasing numbers of students. Originally intended for the most vulnerable Sped students, my school has now included all Sped AND 504 students, ELL students, and most recently identified 200 regular Ed students earning "F"s --- now the Admin is talking about including students earning "D"s -- these students are currently on campus at least 2 days a week, many of them all week. I've witnessed students at morning recess not socially distancing, some with masks not on, others with masks beneath their noses, and the staff supposedly monitoring them not socially distancing either, one not wearing a mask! I have photographs.

Third, in denying my request for telework the Equity Specialist wrote that my ADA plan is sufficient protection because of my school socially distancing and wearing masks - I've already mentioned this is inconsistent and even will be even more breached with the influx of over a hundred students on campus in all grade level houses, the library, and the cafeteria.

In this denial, I am assured by the State I am perfectly safe because the school staff have been informed of my accommodation to not be exposed to any student or staff without a mask, and to be allowed to teach and attend meetings only virtually through Google Meets.

However in this past week alone this legal accomodation was violated twice! Both times my door was closed and the parties involved had been informed that because of documented high risk status, I cannot teach or help students face to face, thus Google Meetings must be arranged in lieu of face to face instruction.

In the first incident, without knocking on my closed door, a staff member entered with a student and demanded that I help this student face to face. The student came right up to me, not socially distancing, and was not wearing a mask! Since I had been alone in my room I didn't have a mask on and was instantly exposed to potential infection --- despite my ADA plan specifically stating this would not be allowed to happen!

Once again I communicated the legal inappropriateness of this ADA violation and was assured it wouldn't happen again, but it did!

The second occurrence was two days ago when a student was sent to my room by another teacher and again, without knocking, entered my room. Of course being by myself in my room I did not have a mask on that time either and was exposed before I could put one on as the student came right up to me without social distancing.

Clearly, despite having ADA accommodations which the Equity Specialist assured me was sufficient protection and therefore telework in my situation was "not reasonable", I am not being protected: I am not even safe in my own classroom! I should be allowed to work from home - other teachers in my position have been granted telework at other schools, so why was I denied?

Telework is a safe and viable alternative to reporting to campus daily, especially for high risk teachers like myself who are not even safe in our own classrooms despite having legal ADA accommodations! At home, I could perform my current job much more effectively without fear of being exposed to students face to face, especially now that my school has expanded the number of vulnerable learners to over a hundred, spread all over campus, with many not socially distancing, or wearing masks beneath their noses, or not at all, twirling masks in their hands, swarming in large groups so that teachers like me run into them when we exit our classroom to use the bathroom.

To be denied telework under these circumstances, when catching this virus can kill me in my immunocompromised status (as confirmed by my Pulmonologist) while the State allows other teachers with identical jobs to telework, is unfair, unjust and discriminatory.

Teachers who have valid reasons for teleworking should be allowed to do so; it is unsafe on our campuses!

I greatly appreciate your consideration of my request.

Mahalo for your time,  
Elizabeth Baclayon  
8th Grade Social Studies Teacher  
Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**TESTIMONY - NO PERSONAL INFORMATION**

1 message

[REDACTED]  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:30 PM

Aloha Board,

Please redact my identifying information, including my email address.

I am submitting my testimony for the October 1 2020 General Board Meeting as an attachment to this email.

Please let me know if you should have any questions.

Mahalo.

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 **BOE Testimony for October 1, 2020.pdf**  
48K

Aloha Board,

Please redact my identifying information, including my email address.

I am submitting testimony related to Agenda Items B and C. I am an educational officer who is not in a school, i.e. complex area/state office.

I would humbly ask that you consider including non-school work sites and employees in your discussion about telework and return to office. My request is that we continue to consider that we are in the middle of a pandemic and our lives are interconnected. I ask that you propose criteria that are equitable, but that might not always result in the same outcome for all HIDOE employees.

The general criteria for teacher telework outlined below are reasonable and easily adaptable for other staff. For the past 6+ months, we have been working effectively from home with solid systems for communication with supervisors and colleagues and extensive telework forms and documentation.

- a. The teacher has a location at home where the teacher can work or conduct instruction online with minimal disruptions during school hours.
- b. The teacher has reliable internet connectivity that is adequate for the instruction being provided and to engage with their administrator and others.
- c. The teacher provides a written commitment that their administrator will be able to:  
(1) monitor the teacher's instruction and/or instructional material provided to students and (2) will be able to easily make contact with, communicate with, and get timely responses from the teacher.

However, in terms of return to building, I suggest that a multiple metric approach is used and that it be applied in the context of overall public health. When we consider that non-classroom staff have "personal bubbles" that include teachers, first-responders, essential workers, children, and kūpuna, a public health perspective would suggest that return to building should take into account staff roles and responsibilities. The CDC repeatedly [suggests telework](#) as an option to minimize risk across a variety of scenarios.

In addition to parallels to the multiple metrics suggested by the Board Chair for teacher return to school (e.g. DOH thresholds, safety protocols, sufficient time to transition, etc.) **I would ask that the Board consider guidance for non-school staff that takes into account roles and responsibilities of staff who do not supervise students or employees that must be on campus**, as teachers return to buildings. Please also consider that many of us are in small shared office spaces, and on calls and virtual meetings all day, which has the potential to negatively impact our health and has already proven to negatively impact our work when we can't fully engage in our work because of so many competing conversations.

In education, many of us are familiar with the concept of equity vs. equality. We've seen the image of children standing on boxes to watch a ball game. In the current crisis, I can empathize with thinking that may cause us to forget those understandings and shift more toward "it's not fair" or "what's good for one is good for all." However, in this case, collective kuleana and a public health mindset would suggest a slow, phased approach that minimizes risk to the whole community, rather than increasing risk for a sense of solidarity.

Please know that I say this from the perspective of someone whose spouse has been on a public school campus academically and physically supporting the most vulnerable children since the summer. I understand that increases my own family's risk, but it is what is required of my spouse and what is needed for the students being served. However, I do not understand the mindset that would suggest that I, as someone at increased risk of exposure because of my spouse's job, should in turn expose my coworkers, many of whom are caretakers for their own families and have family with jobs that require them to interact face-to-face with community members, when it is not a necessary part of my job.

Please do not allow the safety of myself, my colleagues, our families, and our community at large to be compromised by decision-making that is driven by existing practices of backroom politicking, pettiness, gut feelings, or a misplaced sense of "fairness." Please especially consider that the people making these decisions for us often are able to do their work in their own office spaces.

Mahalo,

HIDOE Educational Officer



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

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## Testimony: NO PERSONAL INFORMATION POSTED

1 message

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[Redacted]  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:32 PM

Submitted as an attachment

Position/Title - Teacher on DDL w/pay from Kalama Intermediate School  
BOE Special Meeting, October 1, 2020, 1:30pm

### Agenda items

- B. Board Action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions
- C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning

[Redacted]

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Testimony to the BOE  
October 1 Special Meeting

Aloha Chair Payne and members of the Board,

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for attempting to take action on the following items and support the Chair Payne's recommendations on Agenda Items B and C. An inordinate amount of time and thought went into preparing for this action, and it is time for the Board to act.

***On Agenda Item B: Board action on directives regarding telework availability for teachers: Board intent, telework approval criteria, and telework termination restrictions***

Based on the testimony from the previous Board meeting on September 17, 2020, it is clear that the Department does not have a comprehensive or thoughtful system of support for teachers, even beyond distance or hybrid learning modes.

The current telework agreement is completely one-sided; it clearly protects the employer, and in fact is not even intended to be a comprehensive and thoughtful system of support for teachers. I agree that the Board needs to direct the DOE to develop and follow the recommendations of the Chair.

Currently, I have a location to work, reliable internet connectivity, and a commitment to communicate. My telework agreement with the principal effective Sep 3 was that if there are vulnerable children in my class, I will call in sick and hire a sub because I am on Oahu due to Covid restrictions.. Thus, while the substitute was present in my Kalama classroom, I was the teacher who prepared curriculum, taught, interacted with the students and parents, and handled all assessments of the students. The role of the sub was to take care of the in-person students.

I have been in school since the opening day for teachers, working from my home office. I have conducted synchronous classes, every day, every period, for the entire period. I have come to know my students, what they look like, what their situations are, what their passions are, where they are as learners. They are the reason I continue, even though I am using my sick leave in order to teach. They race me to the Google Meets, they all thank me at the end of class, and they are all engaged in their choice projects - a design thinking contest sponsored by the Maui County Council to submit ideas to solve problems caused by Covid. The County has \$58 M to spend by December 31, or it goes back to the feds. They are becoming collaborative online learners, learning to use the technology they need. Every student in my class can start a meet and work with a small group; present to the rest of the class; use Jamboard and shared google docs to learn.

I have attended EVERY meeting (School leadership, WASC Cat E chair, Dept chair, team and grade level) and carried out my kuleana in all of these groups. On Tuesday, September 22, I was directed NOT to attend the team meeting for that day because I was out sick. (Although it was ok for me to voluntarily teach all day.) While concerns raised became a complaint and by Friday I was placed on Dept Directed Leave with Pay, with NO discussion with my supervisor.

I believe this occurred as a result of my repeatedly asking whether the students could be accommodated in the SPED resource room which is shared by the Core Support teacher and has 1-2 full time experienced teachers present every period of the day. I have also asked whether the students could be supported by an EA, as we had EAs who are being used to xerox, laminate, etc. I persisted in asking for clarification of whether IDEA had been suspended due to COVID. The closest reply was that we were to comply to the fullest extent possible, and I questioned whether we were doing so, as no IEPs had been updated at that point, and no IEP meetings were scheduled by my team during time provided for this purpose.

I share this completely humiliating and I believe what will be shown to be retaliatory experience to demonstrate that

- this chaotic implementation hurts only ONE group - the students. My students are involved in using emerging technologies to address authentic projects of their choice (student voice). They will now miss the deadline to enter. Their parents have been calling me to ask what happened because their children are concerned.
- You may not even realize how bad the situation is getting for teachers, without whom there could be no school. That we have truly gone above and beyond for our students and the DOE - does not care. There was another teacher on Maui who was also removed from her classroom. This is the ultimate humiliation for a teacher, even though we have not been proved of committing wrongdoing.

Please help us.  
Mahalo nui loa.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Written Testimony - BOE Special Meeting Oct 1**

1 message

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**sarah guay** <selguay@gmail.com>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:32 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm writing to express my strong concerns about the current state of distance learning and urge you to allow local schools the opportunity to return students to in-person education.

The metrics put forth by the DOH regarding COVID numbers would indicate many schools would qualify for returning students; casting a state-wide closure impacts more students than necessary. Our goal should be to return where we can - and there are many communities where it's see based on DOH metrics.

Please allow schools who have put forth the planning work to return students' safety to do so immediately. My two school-aged children continue to suffer academically and socially during this time and continued delay in returning them is no longer acceptable. While their academic losses may be regained over time, the impact on their social development, motivation, and perceptions of their learning capabilities may not.

Time is of the essence. The time for planning has passed, allow those who used that time well to implement their well-researched, and designed plans to implement and move forward for the sake of their children.

Sarah Guay  
Parent of 1st grader, 4th grader at Kainalu Elementary  
[REDACTED]



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Mikaela Lueskow** <mikaela.lueskow@campbell.k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:44 PM

Hello,

My name is Mikaela Lueskow and I am a student at James Campbell High School. I am emailing regarding Action Item C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning. I am taking action in saying that **we should not return** back to school for a face to face learning due to the simple fact that **my health matters, your health matters, and that we are all at a risk.**

**We are playing Russian Roulette with the health and safety of the students by sending us back to face to face learning.** According to the CDC, data from China suggests that pediatric Covid-19 cases may seem less severe than cases in adults, but the actual danger of that is knowing that those who are over 18 experience different symptoms than those younger. Pediatric Covid-19 patients might not even have a fever or a cough and may even prove to be asymptomatic. Let's suggests that asymptotically infected individuals are much less likely to transfer the virus then those who actually develop the symptoms, however, the counter part to this is that detecting the asymptomatic spread is very difficult, but just because scientists haven't seen something occur doesn't mean that it's not happening. Social distancing and everyday protective behaviors remain very important for all age groups because people with less serious illnesses and those without symptoms still play an important role in disease transmission.

**My teachers and other adults matter, their health and safety should also be a top priority** as a large concern with students returning back to school is that they can spread the disease to teachers, parents and grandparents who are all at high risk. It isn't fair to reopen schools to risk their health. Some adults can't even agree on the recommendations surrounding Covid-19, so how can teachers and those on the board protect children when brought together in the classroom! Some students will want to wear masks, others won't. Some students will take the virus seriously, other won't! Who is accountable if a student or teacher catches the coronavirus as there is no existing protections for teachers and schools as teachers are being asked to risk their lives in the classroom. We are all at risk. Some teachers may be resigning or retiring early. Some may even be writing their wills as experienced older teacher may not want to get sick There might not be enough teachers for smaller sized classrooms as some are already packed with 20 plus students, nor will anyone want to sub for a teacher who in fact does get sick.

Everyday we learn more about this disease and everyday there are increased numbers of those who have gotten inflected and or have died. **It is not worth the risk.** Maybe the situation will improve by January, or next summer. Although, as of right now we are still currently facing a global pandemic and safety of our students and faculty should be our number one concern. Teachers and those among the board must remain calm and focus on the safety of their students along with themselves and relatives. Even if James Campbell High School does reopen, someone will get sick, which leaves the students to not only be in an inconsistent learning environment but having the school close down yet again. **Ultimately, what may happen in these upcoming weeks is unpredicted, but know that this disease is way too bizarre and there are still too many unknowns for a school with a high population such as James Campbell High School, to risk their students and faculty by placing us back in school.**

In closing, thank you for your time and I hope that you will take in consideration of what I said. Say healthy and safe!

Sincerely,

**Mikaela Lueskow**



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony on DOH Guidance

1 message

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**Robin Yogi** <robin.yogi@k12.hi.us>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov  
Cc: Robert Davis <Bob.Davis@k12.hi.us>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:44 PM

Attached is Complex Area Superintendent Robert Davis's testimony for the DOE's use of DOH's Guidance for Schools COVID-19.

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Thank you, Robin

Robin Yogi, Private Secretary  
DOE - Leilehua, Mililani, Waialua CA  
Central Oahu District - Administration  
[1122 Mapunapuna Street, Suite 200](#)

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"A smile is a light in the window of your face  
to show that your heart is at home."

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 **Testimony DOH guidance 10\_1\_20 CAS Davis 9.30.2020.pdf**  
126K

Testimony by: Robert Davis, Complex Area Superintendent for Leilehua, Mililani and Waialua Complex, DOE

### General Meeting

Agenda Item C: Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning.

### Agree with comments and changes

Good afternoon, Chairperson Payne and Members of the Board of Education.

I appreciate this opportunity to share my perspective as a former Personnel Regional Officer, former principal, current Complex Area Superintendent, community member, and parent of a public school student.

I am confident with the safety of our schools and classrooms. My testimony today asks for the Board's support to consider the changes suggested for the revised guidance for schools as of September 16, 2020 to ensure our schools are able to begin opening up to students in a safe, reasonable and student centered manner.

I agree that our schools will:

- Adhere to the health and safety directives to ensure the health and safety of our students, employees and families
- Give priority to students that have challenges with online learning or need additional support to be successful academically
- Be flexible as school's address facilities and workforce capacity and health and safety guidelines to provide supervision and optimal learning conditions for their most vulnerable students

Executive Summary:

- Page 1, bullet 3 – Reasonable notification should be 2 weeks
- Page 10 – Agreement that mitigating strategies should be requirements and not guidance.
- Page 12, Ventilation – The CDC provides guidance on creating air flow for indoor spaces; however, it should be noted that this strategy should be one that says

when appropriate. This is because we have most front offices with air conditioning that limit the cross ventilation as well as whole schools with central air. If we are to follow this guidance as written “Groups should not occupy indoor spaces that school cannot effectively ventilated for any extended time”, then we are saying many schools will not be able to operate or bring students onto campus at all. This is a tremendous disservice and schools should not be held to this standard.

- Page 12, Board required mitigating strategies 1<sup>st</sup> bullet – As it is written, schools should not be held to “Successfully implement and consistently enforce at least six feet of physical distancing between all individuals on campus at all times.” There will be instances when teacher will need to be closer than six feet from a student, there will be instance when in the hallways when students will be passing closer than six feet of distance and there are more instances when keeping to six feet will be enforced and monitored; however, making a blanket statement that all individuals will do so at all times is not realistic. If this is a directive, we will not be able to bring onto campus most of our special needs students who are not capable of following these strict directives. We will not be able to use student transportation; including special needs bussing.
- Page 13, bullet 3 – Principals will transition from one model to another with input and collaboration with the respective CAS; however, I do not agree that it should be “without approval.” The responsibility of possibly moving from a hybrid model to all distance learning should not be the responsibility of the principal. The principal will provide meaningful input; however, the decision to change models should rest with the CAS.

These suggestions highlighted in the Discussion section should be applied in the recommendations beginning on page 14. Much of the directives follow along with the HIDEOE Core Assumptions; however, I strongly believe the items identified above need to be addressed or our hands will be tied and we will not be able to start the transition of slowly phasing students back onto campus. Our school leaders have been working tirelessly on their health and safety plans. They have very clear and thorough processes for following all DOH guidelines and safety procedures, they have appropriate PPE and equipment and they have set procedures to begin to have more students on campus. I have seen our most neediest students already thriving with in person instruction and we need to begin to expand this opportunity to more students. We are designed to be face to face and conduct most instruction on campus. Many students are struggling and we have a moral obligation to bring them back to give them the opportunity to access their education.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Board today.

Robert Davis  
9/30/2020



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Marina Keizer** <mkissawookiee@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 12:51 PM

This is my testimony for action items B and C

My name is Marina Keizer. I am a teacher at Holualoa Elementary School and I have been a public school teacher in Kona for 15 years. My children attend Holualoa Elementary School and Kealakehe Intermediate School.

I am a teacher on the Big Island with preexisting medical conditions that would increase my risk of complications of Covid-19-- my doctor has said that my condition combined with a Covid infection could be fatal. Every one of the four members of my family in my household is at high risk for coronavirus complications. I also provide care for my 92 year old grandfather. I am urging you to grant telework for teachers and keep school online for the foreseeable future. I can serve my students and my school EVERY DAY if school continues through distance learning. If school goes back to face-to-face learning, I may be forced to take leave to protect myself and my family, leaving my school and my students without a teacher--a substitute would be a less than ideal situation for my students.

I urge you to consider the following actions:

- Ensure 100-percent distance learning for all students across the state, including those in special education, until at least the end of the second 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. Any metrics created for Hawaii should take into account our population density in more rural areas and our limited health care systems and resources in rural areas and on neighbor islands .
- 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. ALL risk for teachers could be eliminated and our jobs performed effectively if teachers were allowed to telework. This would also improve the safety of the working conditions of those who must continue to work on campus because there would be fewer people gathering on campus.
- Demand that individual schools with Covid-19 positive cases connected to it (either a staff member, student, or immediate household member) be made public immediately or within 24 hours

The high number of Covid-19 cases in the state and Island of Hawaii has demonstrated that the virus is highly contagious and difficult to control. **This risk is not limited to Oahu-- The Island of Hawaii has VERY LIMITED medical resources that would be strained by even a small increase in COVID-19 cases requiring hospitalizations.**

Please make these decisions for the health and safety of our keiki, our families (especially our multi-generational families), and our community!

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Marina Keizer  
5th Grade Teacher  
Holualoa Elementary School



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**BOE testimony**

1 message

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:02 PM

  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Chair Payne, Vice Chair Uemura, and Members of the Board

**Please redact any and all identifying information related to this testimony, including my email address and any other personally identifiable information.**

I am submitting testimony related to Agenda Items B and C. I am an educational officer who is not in a school, i.e. complex area/state office.

I please ask that you consider including non-school work sites and non-school employees in your discussion about telework and return to office. I ask that you propose criteria that are equitable, but that might not always result in the same outcome for all HIDOE employees even within the same bargaining unit, as job situations vary greatly (e.g., school-level principles v. non-school-level education officers. )

The general criteria for teacher telework are reasonable and easily adaptable for people in many state and complex area offices.

I ask that the Board please consider guidance for non-school staff that takes into account roles and responsibilities of staff who do not supervise students or are not housed in any building with or near students.

Please know that state and complex offices are almost always shared with several others. The work we do (e.g., online meetings, planning, research, professional development, etc.) can be done just as effectively at home v. in a small office space. In fact, I would argue that we have been even more productive during telework as home space is often quieter and freer from disruption than many offices. It is inherently safer to do our jobs at home than to interact with multiple people on a daily basis. We are still seeing triple-digit cases of Covid-19, and tourism has not yet truly "opened up." There is a prediction that the fall could see increased cases.

Please consider that "one size may not fit all" when it comes to returning to office buildings. We are inherently different from schools and, as such, should have metrics that make sense in a non-school setting.

Thank you for your consideration of these educators and staff.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**Testimony**

1 message

**Hawaii Afterschool Alliance** <hawaiiafterschool@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:11 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

**Name with position/title and organization:**

Paula Adams  
Executive Director  
Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance

**Meeting:**

Special Meeting  
Thursday, October 1, 2020 1:30 pm

**Agenda Item:**

III. C. . Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning.

**Position:**

Comment.

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Paula Adams  
Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance  
1776 University Avenue, WA1-102  
Honolulu, HI 96822  
[www.hawaiiafterschoolalliance.org](http://www.hawaiiafterschoolalliance.org)

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 **10.01.20-BOE Testimony\_ Hawaii Afterschool Alliance.pdf**

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October 1, 2020



Aloha Chair Payne and Members of the Board of Education,

This is testimony for the BOE Meeting discussion Item III. C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning.

As schools are planning on transitioning to hybrid and in-person learning, we are asking the Board of Education to encourage the Department of Education to communicate effectively with students, parents and community organizations about those transitioning plans, so students, parents and the community partners can plan accordingly.

Community organizations like 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 and youth. In order to do that, they need to know as soon as it is available the dates when students will be going back to school or continue distance learning. As we mentioned before, we ask to:

- 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.

Mahalo,

Paula Adams, Executive Director  
Hawaii Afterschool Alliance  
[www.hawaiiafterschoolalliance.org](http://www.hawaiiafterschoolalliance.org)



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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**10/1 Agenda: Action Items B and C**

1 message

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**Carrie Shoda-Sutherland** <carrie.shoda@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:17 PM

Aloha Board of Education members:

I am a parent of three public school students, a graduate, and the spouse of a current public school teacher.

I am writing in support of the BOE Chairperson's recommendations as it relates to Item B: telework availability.

I am also writing in support of the BOE Chairperson's recommendations as it relates to Item C: The Department of Education's use of Department of Health's Guidance for Schools COVID-19 (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning.

I feel like these actions are much needed in the absence of such decisive action by the DOE. Mahalo for deeply listening to the testimony of earlier meetings. I know there are complexity in our current environment and every voice is valuable to these decisions. The recommendations are informed, thoughtful, and balanced.

Mahalo nui  
Carrie Shoda-Sutherland



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony to BOE on school reopening metrics - Burnett

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Burke Burnett <burkeburnett@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:26 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: Burke Burnett <burkeburnett@gmail.com>, Burke Burnett <burnett@bishopmuseum.org>

Dear Hawaii Board of Education,

I am testifying on the BOE's discussion about the DOE's adoption of COVID metrics to guide the opening and closing of schools.

My name is Burke Burnett, and I am the parent of an 8th grader at Kaimuki Middle School. I'm one of the founders of the group Hawai'i for a Safe Return to School, and I'm also a scientist based at Bishop Museum – although I again write to you in a personal capacity.

I am writing to request you urgently review the DOE's recently released school reopening metrics, which I believe are not merely insufficient, but reckless and if implemented would contribute to the ongoing public health disaster.

However, to begin on a positive note, I was happy to learn that the DOH metrics use better criteria than simply the test positivity rate. In August, I wrote to you that the California model is a sensible one:

“For example, one metric used in California requires schools to stay closed if there are more than 100 new cases per 100,000 residents over the previous 14 days. That is an example of a good metric to use.”

I am pleased that someone may have been listening, at least in terms of using the right figures.

However, the specific numbers (or “triggers”) that DOH proposes to use are flawed and must be re-worked. **We should remain in full distance learning mode until new cases per 10,000 are below 10 for at least 14 days (calculated on a rolling basis).**

This is the policy used in California, and it is much more sensible than the one proposed by HIDEOE. Decisions should also factor in the trends in availability of hospital beds and ICU facilities, because what is considered an level of risk must take those into account as well.

If the DOH's proposed metrics were used from the start of our school year, we would NEVER have met the criteria to fully close in-person learning, even during the WORST of our COVID-case counts when the Governor/Oahu Mayor issued stay-at-home orders. Under the proposed DOH guidelines, students would have still been doing at least partial in-school learning despite the overall lockdowns.

That is absolutely crazy and unacceptable.

The proposed DOH reopening metrics are actually LOOSER than what the CDC's metrics call for. It is a virtual certainty that had this system been implemented sooner, it would have contributed to community spread at the very time that the state was shutting down large parts of the economy to flatten the curve. In short, it was at cross-purposes to the overarching state policy. It would have been completely unreasonable and hypocritical to have the entire island shutdown, yet still have schools open for any level of in-person classes.

The inescapable conclusion that the proposed **DOH/DOE reopening triggers are far too lax and must be made significantly stricter.**

Also, the fact that "stages of reopening" are only to be re-evaluated and updated every 14 days does not make sense either, especially since DOH releases case counts daily. The “fixed 14 day window” is both artificial and unnecessarily clumsy as a decision-making tool. It makes much more sense to use a rolling 14 day window that would allow more precision and speed in adjusting to changes in disease outbreak.

We have already seen numerous instances of school systems across the country opening up, seeing a major school-driven outbreak, and then being forced to shut down schools and businesses again. **We must escape from this destructive cycle. The way to do that is to have sensible triggers/metrics from the beginning and to stick to them.**

The only sensible way forward is to keep schools 100% distance learning until it is fully safe to do so, based on a set of external metrics that have been fully vetted and approved by experts both within and outside DOH.

**Reopening schools in the midst of an ongoing outbreak – which we are still in - is reckless. I call on BOE to give instructions to DOE to tighten its reopening triggers to safer levels, consistent with the California model. It is also imperative to begin addressing the ventilation concerns that I have already written about as well.**

As things stand now, there is no possibility that we will send our daughter back to face to face classes until more sound policies are in place and it is truly safe to return to in-person classroom instruction.

Mahalo,

Burke Burnett



**Burke Burnett Testimony to BOE - 30Sep20.docx**

17K

## Testimony from Burke Burnett to the Hawaii Board of Education

30 September 2020

I am testifying on the BOE's discussion about the DOE's adoption of COVID metrics to guide the opening and closing of schools.

My name is Burke Burnett, and I am the parent of an 8th grader at Kaimuki Middle School. I'm one of the founders of the group Hawai'i for a Safe Return to School, and I'm also a scientist based at Bishop Museum – although I again write to you in a personal capacity.

I am writing to request you urgently review the DOE's recently released school reopening metrics, which I believe are not merely insufficient, but reckless and if implemented would contribute to the ongoing public health disaster.

However, to begin on a positive note, I was happy to learn that the DOH metrics use better criteria than simply the test positivity rate. In August, I wrote to you that the California model is a sensible one:

“For example, one metric used in California requires schools to stay closed if there are more than 100 new cases per 100,000 residents over the previous 14 days. That is an example of a good metric to use.”

I am pleased that someone may have been listening, at least in terms of using the right figures.

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**below 10 for at least 14 days (calculated on a rolling basis).** This is the policy used in California, and it is much more sensible than the one proposed by HIDEO. Decisions should also factor in the trends in availability of hospital beds and ICU facilities, because what is considered an level of risk must take those into account as well.

If the DOH's proposed metrics were used from the start of our school year, we would NEVER have met the criteria to fully close in-person learning, even during the WORST of our COVID-case counts when the Governor/Oahu Mayor issued stay-at-home orders. Under the proposed DOH guidelines, students would have still been doing at least partial in-school learning despite the overall lockdowns.

That is absolutely crazy and unacceptable.

The proposed DOH reopening metrics are actually LOOSER than what the CDC's metrics call for. It is a virtual certainty that had this system been implemented sooner, it would have contributed to community spread at the very time that the state was shutting down large parts of the economy to flatten the curve. In short, it was at cross-purposes to the overarching state policy. It would have been completely unreasonable and hypocritical to have the entire island shutdown, yet still have schools open for any level of in-person classes.

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**Reopening schools in the midst of an ongoing outbreak – which we are still in - is reckless. I call on BOE to give instructions to DOE to tighten its reopening triggers to safer levels, consistent with the California model. It is also imperative to begin addressing the ventilation concerns that I have already written about as well.**

As things stand now, there is no possibility that we will send our daughter back to face to face classes until more sound policies are in place and it is truly safe to return to in-person classroom instruction.

Mahalo.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Going back to school

1 message

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**Jayden\_Xavier Natividad** <jayden\_xavier.natividad@campbell.k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 at 1:30 PM

Hello, my name is Jayden Natividad. I am a student at James Campbell High School. I am emailing regarding Action Item C. Board Action on directives regarding Department of Education's use of Department of Health's *Guidance for Schools COVID-19* (revised as of September 16, 2020), including applicability of Reopening Thresholds and Learning Model Parameters, criteria for transitioning between instructional delivery modes, decisions and notice of transitions, and suspension of transitions to hybrid and in-person learning. We should return back to school face to face learning because it is way easier learning in person, it will help with social skills, and it will also catch people's attention more in extracurricular activities in school.

First of all, it would be easier for students to learn. This is one of the main reasons why students should learn better in the face because at home people doze off and get distracted easier at home. Another reason why it is important is because it will not look good on a college resume. The reason for that is because colleges look back on middle school grades too, not just highschool. That is one of three reasons why we should go back to school face to face.

Secondly, it helps students with social skills. Students need to learn social skills for the future. We need to learn social skills for the future because we would need that for when we go to work. Another reason why we need to learn social skills is because we would need it in public. The reason why would need social skills in public because we would not embarrass ourselves. That is the second reason why we should go face to face in school.

The last reason why we should go back to school face to face is because it will help us with extracurricular activities. The reason why we should be more into extracurricular activities is because we might develop a talent for something. Another reason why we should be more into extracurricular activities is because colleges look a lot into our extracurricular activities. That is the last reason why we should go back face to face in school.

Those are the reasons why we should go back face to face in school. The reasons why we should go back is because it would be easier to learn, to learn social skills, and be more into extracurricular activities. I always get distracted at home because I have a PC right next to my computer and I am failing classes. So I'd rather be in class than virtually.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Kylee Sullivan** <kylee.sullivan@k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 11:03 AM

To Whom it May Concern,

This testimony is testifying the action of item C. My name is Kylee N. Sullivan and I am a secondary education teacher at Pahoa High and Intermediate School. I am submitting a testimony for item C due to the fact our admin appears to be intending on students to return face to face per pressure from Superintendent Kishimoto. The staff was given a survey asking what they believed the best plan to re-open would be and we were given the following plan suggestions:

Option 1: Students come back to campus face to face following the blended A, B, C, D model schedule we had planned for. They rotate to all of their classes like they did the first week of school.

Option 2: Students come back to campus face to face following the blended A, B, C, D model we had planned for. Students come once a week and remain in their first block class all day. Students log into their classes from this one location following their schedule.

Option 3: Students come in following the blended A, B, C, D model. They come once a week and remain in their first block class all day. They participate in classes using the OFFICE hours schedule.

Option 4: ONLY students who have failed two or more classes come to campus face to face attending twice a week rotating all classes.

As you can see, there is no option to remain full virtual as other schools on the Big Island are intending to do. I strongly feel that it is not safe for students to return face to face at **at all** this quarter as the Big Island of Hawai'i as of Sunday, 9/27/2020, has 101 active cases ON ISLAND per the DOH. This includes the positive case that was reported at Pahoa Preschool earlier last week. While Pahoa Preschool is a Kamehameha School and does not technically fall into the KKP Complex that Pahoa High and Intermediate School falls into, it is still located a five minute walk away from our campus.

I strongly urge the BOE to consider keeping the all virtual distance learning model and not force students, failing or otherwise, to attend school. I have talked to my students personally about concerns they have and the number one concern they all overwhelmingly have is catching COVID and either dying or spreading it to their family. This fear is shared by many faculty and staff as well. Please take all of this into consideration and at the very least do the right thing to protect our keiki. They don't deserve to have to live in fear.

Sincerely yours  
Kylee N. Sullivan

This is a staff email account managed by Hawaii Department Of Education School District. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Testimony to send our kids back to Face to Face instruction

1 message

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**Melissa LDT** <melissaldt@gmail.com>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 9:32 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: lanelle.hibbs@k12.hi.us, doeinfo@k12.hi.us

## Dear BOE, DOE, Christina Kishimoto & Lanelle Hibbs,

Thank you for all that you do supporting our children here on the Windward side. I truly am disappointed with the decision to not go back to face-to-face or blended learning this next quarter. I understand you may not have voted this way. What I don't understand is why everyone else has to go back to work (Grocery workers, postal, medical, restaurants, airlines etc) yet teachers and staff get to vote on not having to return to blended or face to face learning. It's absurd. You are losing student enrollment which loses money for schools. We have left the DOE and started homeschooling yet it still saddens me that the children are not being allowed in school. As soon as face to face returns we plan on re enrolling. Are you all not concerned about your employment? Funds will run out. Now is the time for teachers to stand up and show up. Then next year they can all consider a strike if we don't pay them more and what they deserve. After what parents are going through right now I'd guarantee we'd vote in favors of a pay raise. Teachers are essential. This is not about safety. Our Kailua schools have such low enrollment and large classrooms that are totally capable to facilitate safe face-to-face learning. This community would be willing to do whatever it took to make that happen. We have campaigned for tables and chairs and pop-up tents to make more room for classroom space. Maunawili elementary is my home school. Kids and parents are stuck at home. I've seen these kids, my niece, my nephew & boy up the street. They are not retaining information. They are not engaged. They are sad and depressed.

A 1st grader kid asked me if he could come to my school because he hates being online. Unless a parent can hand hold their child's hands (which most cannot because they are also working) through distance learning these children are not getting the education, care and respect they deserve.

Thank you for listening.

Melissa Veenstra  
Maunawili Kailua  
808-227-9821

Melissa Veenstra  
(808) 227 9821  
[MelissaLDT@gmail.com](mailto:MelissaLDT@gmail.com)  
Let's Do This!!!



Testimony BOE &lt;testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov&gt;

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## Please end Mrs Nakahashi leave for immediate return to her classroom

1 message

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**Paula Daian** <info@pauladaian.com>

Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 8:50 PM

To: Kathleen.dimino@k12.hi.us, Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Cc: kimberly.nakahashi@gmail.com

Date: 09/28/2020

To: D.O.E, Complex Area Superintendent and State of Hawaii Board of education

From: Paula Daian, Haiku school parent and PTA member since 2015

To whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter in regards to the events that occurred at Haiku Elementary school last week with my daughters kindergarten teachers, Mrs Monica Nakahashi.

Mrs Nakahashi has been teaching at Haiku Elementary school for many generations. Our community is proud to have such a loving person and amazin teacher in our school, specially with our small kindergarten children's transitioning an important millstone in their young lives. A smooth transition to school lays the groundwork for later success and can make a significant impact on a child's later success. Mrs Nakahashi touched the life of so many of us and over generations she was aware that transition to school is such an important time in children's and families lives .

I first met Mrs Nakahashi in 2015 when she was the kindergarten teacher of my oldest daughter (Ayla Daian) and upon my special request I was lucky to have the opportunity to have her as my second daughter teacher (Mayli Hack) in 2017.

Mrs Nakahashi is one of the **best teacher** I ever met in my life. Her commitment to our community, her passion towards teaching and the unconditional love she give our Keikis every day, is something really amazing. Since the moment I met her I knew she was incredible women and we instantly became good friends. I witness many years of her passion towards teaching and how much love and support she gave our children. I witnessed her tears, every time one of her students left or moved away. I witnessed her unconditional support and prayers, for each kid and each family that needed support in difficult times. I witnessed her laugh and sense of humor, that brought so many smiles in her classroom. I always saw how much joy and how fortunate our kids were to have Mrs Nakahashi in their lives. She understood children more than anybody I ever met. I remember one day she told me how kids have a special way to express their feelings, how you need to learn to read "between lines" when they want to express their true feelings. That is how I can better describe her, as someone that can read children hearts!

Every time my daughters had a problem at school or for some reason they felt sad, they knew that Mrs Nakahashi was there for them. They knew that they could stop by her class at recess and they could unconditionally count on her. When they felt lonely at school Mrs Nakahashi gave them a big warm hug, when they felt sad Mrs Nakahashi always made them laugh . She was always there for my daughters, the some way she was always there for so many other kids during her over 30 years career. As parents we were blessed to have such a teacher at Haiku school.

On 2017 my family went through some personal difficult times while my second daughter was her student. Mrs Nakahashi opened her heart to my whole family. I could feel our pain in her heart and I saw our tears in her eyes. She welcomed us to her home and introduced us to her amazing big family and since then we celebrate thanksgiving together every year. I experienced first handed the real "Aloha Spirit" of a traditional Hawaiian family. Today, my family is feeling her pain in our heart and we have her tears in our eyes. We feel so much pain from the way she was treated. Our community is in shocked at such disrespect and "luck of aloha" from the new principal.

Mrs Nakahashi is a formidable woman and she deserves to end her amazing career with respect and dignity (when the right times for her retirement comes). She still has a lot of love and a lot of knowledge to share with our children and our entire community adores her. Miss Nakahashi is consider a legend at Haiku School and all the parents, kids, teacher and community members want Miss Nakahashi back at her classroom. We want to see her dancing hula every end of the year, we want to see her at the school events with her big family and we want to see her teaching and loving her children.

Couple of weeks ago she told me how blessed she felt to be around her kids again, after so many months of virtual learning (COVID-19)

I also want to express my disappointment in this letter. As a member of this community I noticed a big general discontent towards the new Principal, Karen Walker. Our school community is too precious and beautiful to allow an "outsider" that doesn't understand or connect with our core values. Since Principal Karen Walker arrived to our school in August she didn't really manage to connect with the parents, students and teachers and she couldn't understand the main values guiding our community. Many parents felt the new principal lack of support and communication. I was surprised to learn that teachers are feeling scare of the new principal and they don't feel safe at school. It is clear that if teachers and staff feel unsafe, the school environment becomes emotionally unhealthy for our young children. While we are all going through difficult times during this pandemic and our lives are disrupted by Covid-19, it is very important that the children are in a environment were they feel love, support and have strong values so they can feel safe during this hard time.

Couple of weeks ago I decided to remove my daughters from school because I didn't like the new principal and as weeks pass by I understood many other parents did the some as well. I want my daughters to be in a loving environment where everyone feels safe and supported. I don't know what is Principal Walker history or curriculum but I am certain that she is not good fit for our community. Our community is strongly standing up to support Miss Nakahashi and the rest of the teachers. The community is also standing up to keep our school environment healthy and safe.

As a parent and as a member of Haiku community I am requesting a replacement of Principal Karen Walker and Vice Principal Linda Marrs as it is affecting the social health and well being of our school. Please authorize the immediate return of Mrs Nakahashi to her class, Haiku School need her back in campus.

I will be available to offer more information, testimony and further assistance in regards to this matter .

Sincerely

Paula Daian

  
[info@pauladaian.com](mailto:info@pauladaian.com)

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 **Paula Daian testimony - Mrs Nakahashi.pdf**  
564K