



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

Budget

1 message

carol esquibel <carolesquibel@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Jan 16, 2021 at 3:15 PM

As a teacher, I'm sorely disappointed with the idea of teachers being let go in favor of hiring unqualified individuals to tutor students whom need to be in class. This kind of move will further destroy the trust of parents in those that educate their children. Parents want and need their children to be in school with their teacher.

Students that have active IEPs need Special Education services and not tutors. They need to be in class and allowed to be taught by qualified Special Education teachers so they are allowed to give those students their hours and accommodations that are written in a legal document called their IEP. Anything less is criminal and will open a multiplicity of legal court cases against the State of Hawaii.

When this educator read online an article that a million dollars of Covid Care Care Relief was given to the Police Department and they used that money to purchase a robot dog that would take temps of homeless people, I was upset.

Here I am going in everyday to teach face to face students that struggle since August using a mask and a Gold Fish Bowl to teach with, someone buys an expensive Robot Dog to take temps with, are you kidding me!

On top of that is the extreme pressure of being furloughed or having your benefits taken, losing a much PPT or EA to help you! I teach your students to succeed in their educational career and this is the thanks that you give not just myself but all of my colleagues that have risked their lives teaching your children. I do it because I CARE!

An Educator

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)



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

Budget cuts, layoffs, private tutors and other lamentable and sure to be regrettable decisions

1 message

Odin Hill <odinhill@gmail.com>

Sat, Jan 16, 2021 at 3:20 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Hi my name is Odin Hill I've been teaching for the DOE Windward District for 20 years and only now am I at the pay rate I was when I left California.

Budget cuts and layoffs will make a teetering listing ship bound to sink

You are proposing the staffing cuts equivalent of 10 high schools give or take.

If you see how many long-term subs are providing band-aid education then you would look elsewhere to cut.

While I'm not opposed to reducing top heavy administration, cutting qualified teachers and some semi-qualified EA's it's likely to take a decade or more to recover from, and it's not like Hawaii is holding the mantle in educational performance as it is.

We've been misallocating way too much money to bureaucratically heavy programs like special education, I see teachers with three students in the classroom, while the teacher is busy pushing papers, setting up inefficient meetings and getting paid more than people like myself with a Physics degree and a master's degree. Imagine what would happen to educational performance if we had as many adults in a similar setting planning the educational future for some of our highest performing students as well. These programs are a financial sink and only serve to avoid liability while doing little or nothing to improve the post-high school likelihood of success for these students.

Private tutoring sounds like a Betsy DeVos initiative. Let's drain the school systems even more while enriching themercenary-like private education tutoring services that pay their employees poorly and cook the books to market questionable performance results.

These back channel bedroom deals made with testing services over bento boxes in the halls of the BOE/DOE and City should be audited independently, I can't imagine there wasn't some sort of fraudulent quid pro quo that went into the selections of these financial drains.

Treat us like rats and when the sink starts to ship we'll be the first to flee. Seems like you're arranging the wrong deck chairs on the Titanic, might need to go below deck and patch some holes.



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

Testimony IV.A.

1 message

Tai Baird <bair6939@gmail.com>

Sat, Jan 16, 2021 at 4:39 PM

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

Aloha, I am comfortable and interested in testifying publicly for the Finance and Infrastructure committee recommendation for action item IV A: committee action on department of education's plan for use of federal funds in the new covid-19 relief package and annual spending bill.

Thank you, Tai Baird, SPED 2/3 teacher, Kahului Elementary island of Maui



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

Federal Funds versus Budget and Position Cuts

1 message

John Van Ornum <johnster57@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Jan 16, 2021 at 4:52 PM

What stands out in the DOE Superintendent's spending plan of federal dollars is the allocation for 53 million for after school tutors. Does she know what students are experiencing during this pandemic and alternative school schedules? As a 27 year veteran "highly qualified teacher with an earned EdD I do. At this time Molokai High School is on a Hybrid schedule where students will attend school 4 days face-to-face, and four days virtual school.

Our borderline and less motivated students are not attending school on their virtual days. Many student GPA's have suffered tremendously and several fail. Teachers are going beyond their contracted school day to offer credit recovery extra work, assigning Incomplete grades (with two additional weeks to make up missed work) from the previous quarter, sending emails and calling parents to enlist home support with student absences, and sending counselors to the homes with work packets for those families without an internet connection.

We are doing all this and are still having a hard time moving students through the system. A plan allocating 53 million for after school tutors with students that are not attending school is sure to fail. Tutors will be present but students will not.

I think you need to consult teachers because the person(s) who suggested this plan is/are obviously not a classroom teacher (during this pandemic), and has no current experience with students. When was the last time you taught school during a pandemic?

Finally, where are you going to get certified, qualified tutors? Last time I checked College and University Education programs were contracting and not many were going into Education. I suppose you glossed over the fact that we are already short 1,000 teachers???

John Van Ornum EdD
Molokai High School Health Occupations, Health/PE Teacher, HOSA club advisor
john_vanorum@molokai.k12.hi.us



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

Testimony

1 message

Zellie Kamahele <zelliek@icloud.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Jan 16, 2021 at 5:03 PM

I am testifying in on behalf of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I am a teacher, born and raised in the State of Hawaii. I became a special education teacher 2 years ago in the Kailua-Kalaheo complex area. We first heard about cuts about a month ago. This news of course made many nervous, anxious, and scared for our students, families, and the community. To cut 1000 qualified teachers from their jobs but hire outside tutors would make no logical sense. Not for the teachers, not for the students, not for the schools, and most definitely not for budgeting. What experience would they have in teaching students, would it be taught to the students with differentiation in mind, accommodations, and a clear understanding of students individual needs? Have you thought about that or just assumed that it will "have to work" and forgot about the teachers who have been giving more time and effort to their teaching than to their own families. These budget cuts will affect us beyond just the few years, many families including my own are only living off of one income with two children. We have no idea where this budget cut will put teachers or families or students. Many Hawaii raised children and families have to live in multigenerational houses or move to the mainland because of the cost of living here in Hawaii. Budgets should not make up what our children in Hawaii or anywhere deserve as an education. With all the money that is being put towards "private tutoring" you could be keeping amazing teachers in their positions instead of forcing them out of a job. A world with out teachers would be chaos, a state without enough teachers would be detrimental to the future of our state. Students are our future, we will need to rely on them in the future to make the right decisions for our state, but let's first start by giving our students, families, our own children the education they do rightfully deserve and need during this horrific pandemic amongst other world issues occurring. If I were to be cut, my family and I would most likely have to make a move. If I was to stay and have larger class sizes and teach multiple grades, I would do it because I care for the students and my job as an educator. But the students in need of more assistance would fall even further behind without the support staff in place at schools. As moms we often do many jobs and tell ourselves "we are just one person" but we do it all. As teachers it's not much different we did many jobs before the pandemic and now we have added on quite a few more jobs and additional time spent trying to make sure we are being as equitable and supportive as possible for each other, for the students, for our families, and for our communities. Maybe core subjects are the focus, that is understandable, but for our students who struggle with core subjects that have a creative outlet in their electives, that will be torn away from them. If this budget cut goes through this pandemic will have won, it will have beat the state, and we will not recover for many many years to come.

Zellie Kamahele



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

take care of the kids

1 message

RAB <robertallenbeckvall@gmail.com>

Sat, Jan 16, 2021 at 5:07 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

as a sped teacher that has been in from Aug. to now, and the apparent screw up and not getting teacher's vaccinated, it is apparent that the hawaii gov't places a low emphasis on the health and welfare of both kids and teachers.

don't fire much needed teachers, don't private tutor kids as they need their teachers, and don't do anything that is against this current group of school age children. Haven't we all been through enough?

--

Thank you, Robert Beckvall



Love sees what is invisible. Simone Weil



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

Testimony

1 message

Richard Stange <richardstng83@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Jan 16, 2021 at 5:45 PM

Name: Richard Stange**School:** Mililani Middle School

To Superintendent Kishimoto and the Hawaii Board of Education,

Budget cuts that would lead to the loss of over 1,000 teachers would absolutely devastate public education in Hawaii. The reality of the situation is that even if you cut teachers, you cannot cut students.

So, who will teach them?

What implications does this have for class sizes, which directly affect the amount of individual time a teacher can spend per student in a 45 minute class period (such as in my case)?

A related concern is the use of state acquired federal funding. I am deeply concerned that the proposal to use said funds to hire unlicensed, unqualified tutors at the expense of highly qualified, trained, professional, and experienced teachers would be doing Hawaii's keiki a disservice of epic criminal proportions. **Please do not allow that to happen to our kids.**

In the end, it is our students who will wind up being short changed by the irresponsible allocation of federal funds toward summer school tutors, as opposed to highly qualified, quality teachers. We already have about 1,000 classrooms without highly qualified licensed teachers as it is. If we cut over 1,000 highly qualified teachers from the DOE workforce, it is my great concern that we may never recover from that. We will go from the 1,000 classrooms without qualified teachers that we already have to close to 2,000 classrooms without highly qualified licensed professionals.

I must express this sentiment perfectly clearly: Education is an area in which you **cannot** cut or short change. There is simply too much on the line.

Thank you for considering my point of view.

--

Sincerely,
Richard Stange



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

budget cuts and position cuts

1 message

Lane Yanagisawa <lyanagisawa61@gmail.com>

Sat, Jan 16, 2021 at 6:21 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Why cut teaching positions when you have twice as many people behind the scenes that don't directly work with students.

Resource teachers should fill vacancies (retirement, sabbaticals, leaves) and no subs should be being used. Good time for them to learn what classroom folks have been going through with very little guidance from up top. Wait of course! How can you help if you've never experienced it? Especially if you were NEVER in a classroom but iss now a resource?

Cut the Fat up top that has no direct student contacts or influences. Perfect time to consolidate positions up top just like how teachers are able to multi task with virtual planning and instruction and so much more.

Hold parents accountable! Don't give them their stimulus unless there kids are online.

Teachers are martyrs used by the doe to get monies while they sit on their fat [REDACTED]es collecting their checks sending memos.

--

Lane Yanagisawa



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

(no subject)

1 message

Catherine Sophian <socat64@gmail.com>

Sat, Jan 16, 2021 at 7:08 PM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

I am a retired university professor who now occasionally offers private math tutoring. I am deeply concerned about the budget and position cuts proposed for Hawaii schools. I realize that the state budget has been badly impacted by the economic setbacks caused by COVID19, but this is no way to respond to that problem. Our teachers have already been working themselves to exhaustion trying to cope with instructional demands that shift unpredictably between distance, hybrid, blended, and face to face formats. And, for the part that is face-to-face, they have to manage not only the normal teaching responsibilities but also the supervision of student distancing, masking, etc., and of course the maintenance of sanitation in the classroom. Plus, the considerable emotional strain the students and their families are under is bound to impact student-teacher interactions, and teachers must find supportive ways to deal with that too. I don't know how they manage it all! And they've been doing it for most of 2020 and into 2021 at some risk to their own personal health. In appreciation, the state proposes to cut budgets and positions? It is unconscionable, and also extremely unwise. How can we expect teachers to continue handling their diverse responsibilities effectively while staffing is reduced? Unless substantial chunks of their original responsibilities (not the overwork version they have struggled with through the pandemic) are somehow set aside--and there has been no talk of that to my knowledge--position cuts inevitably mean the remaining teachers and staff must take over the responsibilities that used to be handled by people in the now-unfilled positions. Teachers are heroes, but they are still only human. The consequence of the proposed cuts cannot fail to be a poorer educational experience for our children, and Hawaii's schools cannot afford that.

As a tutor myself, I certainly understand the potential value of one-on-one assistance. But I do not see how it can be a cost-effective alternative to maintaining our teaching staff. Furthermore, taking on the number of tutors needed to even begin to "catch up" large numbers of students will introduce a myriad of new management problems--selecting the tutors, monitoring their effectiveness, resolving inevitable complaints about which tutor a student is assigned or how the tutoring is conducted... I cannot fathom why the school system would choose to take on all of that when it already has far too much on its plate.

Please rethink this proposal. Use the money that would have gone for tutoring to retain positions and to provide as much support as possible for our heroic and beleaguered teachers.

Thank you,

Catherine Sophian
Kailua



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

Teachers qualified-

1 message

Loralee Mauri <loraleemauri@gmail.com>

Sat, Jan 16, 2021 at 7:13 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

How can you fathom that a tutor will be more qualified than a teacher who hold a masters in teaching! That is absurd!

We would be able to reach far more students than a tutor and we are significantly more qualified!

There is absolutely no comparison to not only what a teacher can achieve but how many students her or she is able to teach simultaneously!

Loralee Mauri

Sent from my iPhone



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

The hard truth about Budget Cuts

1 message

Iila PARONG <lilapsalm100@hotmail.com>

Sat, Jan 16, 2021 at 7:50 PM

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

Aloha.

I am a retired teacher of Hawaii public schools after 39 years of teaching. I have been substituting from day one last year for a wonderful teacher. Although she was set to return this month, she has found joy in retiring.

She is an excellent teacher and being in this position since day one, I have experienced how difficult virtual instruction is.

#1 - The worse part is that many students are under the such difficult and distracting conditions just barely getting by and parents are very frustrated.

#2- Parents are facing hardships because of the lack of work and struggles that this puts upon the family for provision.

#3- In part the conditions are bad because of the stress that already is upon the home. The students are finding their classrooms the only stable and positive part of their day.

#4- With the added stress of students losing their teachers, underlying conditions will cause an increase in crimes and suicides.

#5- The DOE must keep the STUDENTS AND EDUCATION AT BAY TO SAVE LIVES AND TO GIVE STUDENTS SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO VS. Something to cry over. That would push some families off the deep end and sadly it's the choices of our leaders that will either nurture the only positive part of a students life or end it for a family.

I am working really hard as a "SUBSTITUTE" teacher and never before has teaching turned so challenging and stressful. However, the smiles of the students, the learning growth that continues to happen makes teaching worthwhile.

Leaders- you need to be responsible and make wise decisions for our students. The value of our keiki would or should maintain and sustain the value of each qualified teacher. Don't force teacher's to instill GLO values in students if YOU will not do likewise! You need to take responsibility for our students learning.

Although EA's are precious and helpful, to lose a qualified teacher to hire one and use him/her ineffectively is wrong.

EA's are tossed here and there and the learning and support is sketchy with the added confusion and inconsistencies.

MAKE WISE CHOICES- KEEP EDUCATION A PRIORITY!



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

Testimony

1 message

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

Sun, Jan 17, 2021 at 6:32 AM

Dear DOE,

After having taught in public schools for 36 years I can tell you, without reservation, that the best use of money is to hire more classroom teachers.

Period.

Thank you,

David Brown

Lahaina

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony

1 message

Autumn Cranwell <autumntucker@hotmail.com>

Sun, Jan 17, 2021 at 7:21 AM

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

Aloha, I am sending this for testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I have been teaching in Hawaii for 15 years now. I have gone through furloughs and budget cuts and several other actions that directly and indirectly affect me, but not just myself, my students, and my own children. It's so sad. Why are we always in this position? Why are we always looking at cuts, whether it's salaries, supplies, and now jobs?! It's one thing after another. It's wearing on myself and colleagues. We just want what's best. We have to live too, we have to feed our own families, we have to be mentally and emotionally capable. It's difficult when we are ALWAYS FIGHTING, fighting for what's right. Do you have children? Grandchildren? This affects them, it affects my own children, too. I'm a mentor here as well for new teachers and what is my message to them now that they are losing their jobs. How sad? What is it going to take to stop this, to make education important in Hawaii? To get people in who are going to make GOOD DECISIONS for us? I'm extremely disappointed in Kishimoto and Ige, how embarrassing to have them making these terrible decisions for our education. We are said to be a joke and we will continue to be in America's education. I'm tired, I'm ready to leave this profession, which is so sad because I love what I do. I love it. I love our keiki and I want to continue for them. I am a good teacher. They deserve me and my colleagues. They deserve us at our best, not constantly worrying and fighting. At this point, I have to feed my family and not worry about it every night. Please make the right choice here. We know what's right, it's time to do it.

Sent from my iPad



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

Testimony

1 message

Christian Cahill <ccahill@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sun, Jan 17, 2021 at 8:08 AM

Aloha,

I am a secondary science teacher and I believe money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors. Teachers are valuable and have trained to be a lot more than the expert of our subject in the room. Don't kick us while we are down with pay and job cuts. We have worked so hard to roll with the punches during covid and are here because we truly care about our students education as well as their social and emotional well beings. These decisions make long term impacts and changes to who and why people become teachers. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,
Michael Cahill

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony

1 message

Cindy Reves <msreves@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sun, Jan 17, 2021 at 8:32 AM

I am testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I would specifically like to discourage the use of these funds for private tutors. My experience as a high school English teacher is that the reason students are not succeeding this year is they are not accessing the work or the virtual sessions or attending school in person despite that being an option. Private tutoring will not solve most of these problems. For those it does solve, it will be because the tutor had only a small number of students to focus on. This highlights the real need in our schools, smaller class sizes and more staff dedicated to assisting our vulnerable populations.

With respect,
Cindy Reves
McKinley High School



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

cutting positions/budget shortfalls

1 message

Robert Hu <hu4242001@yahoo.com>

Sun, Jan 17, 2021 at 9:44 AM

To: "testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>, Angela West <angela.west@k12.hi.us>

BOE,

I am a special education teacher who has been in the system for over 25 years. I have worked every summer since 1996 with a lousy rate of pay which can't keep up with our cost of living, I work in a small school with a minimal budget which makes working with special needs populations almost impossible. Now, with cuts, I may lose one of the best assistants I have had because of this. I work with K - 6 populations and with the varying disabilities and the way school is done currently, my job brings on a crap load of major stress. Do you think any of you could teach 7 different grade levels with 1 assistant because that is what I have been faced with. You folks make me want to leave the job that I have dedicated many years of my life to along with state idiots who doesn't know what it is like being in a classroom on a daily basis with or without covid. How are we supposed to create future leaders of America and Hawaii by taking away things every year for our school kids. Every time we have a problem, education takes a slam especially the sped kids. I believe things are going to get worse when all of these parents find lawyers and advocates and put up major lawsuits against the state for services not rendered. Then, we will be back at square one where the state will lose more money and then they promise to hire staff and the stpd cycle continues. I am so bothered by this that I lose sleep and my health isn't the best. I think you put all of these so called PROFESSIONALS and PHDs in the classroom to help out the shortfall and get the rate of pay that we get. Jus' sayin.....

Robert Hu



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

Testimony

1 message

Dawn Shiota <dfaith808@yahoo.com>

Sun, Jan 17, 2021 at 2:30 PM

Reply-To: "dfaith808@yahoo.com" <dfaith808@yahoo.com>

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

My name is Dawn Shiota and I am a Counselor at King Kekaulike High School and have been employed with the Hawaii Department of Education for over 23 years. I am writing this letter to express my concerns with the proposed budget cuts for our Hawaii Public Schools. Our schools are already at the bare bones of funding to support our keiki. The proposed cuts will harm our students and deprive them of the education that they deserve. It will also harm the lives of our young teachers and educators who have just entered the public education system and will force them to look for careers in another state. Please do what you can in your power to stop the budget cuts. Our Keiki and Educators are counting on your support.

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android



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

Testimony

1 message

Cindy <cindy.l.fong@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sun, Jan 17, 2021 at 3:42 PM

Finance and Infrastructure Committee

Meeting action: IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education plans for use of Federal funds in new Covid-19 relief package

Aloha Finance and Infrastructure Committee:

Per our HSTA union who tracks information for us, I am concerned regarding some of the proposals by the HIDOE coming up in your meeting this week.

I am NOT in support of:**1. Using stimulus money to hire private tutors in lieu of keeping or hiring teachers.**

Instead, hire more teachers, make the classroom size smaller. Students will then get the personal help and guidance over a longer time frame that they need to make up for loss of learning due to this global pandemic. The HIDOE has already invested a lot of funds and time with the teachers, EAs and PTTs on staff. Why waste this effort and knowledge by hiring private tutors rather than keeping teachers/EAs/PTTs on staff?

Teachers with EA and PTT support go through a lot of training, constant professional development, working with others to improve their craft in teaching ALL students along with getting to know the students and families in each of their schools and the micro-culture of each community.

I've been fortunate with my current principal, that she has focused on helping us get smaller class sizes. I currently teach wood workshop and STEM classes as an elective teacher. With the smaller class size, I've been able to focus on student needs more individually which has resulted in my class being very popular, such that more students often sign up each year than spaces available.

More importantly, will I be able to continue to teach these classes? I know our local community does not want it to go away again. When I was first hired as a science teacher, the shop had been closed and was to be that way for only 2 years due to NCLB. It was closed for 10 years.

It did not re-open until our current principal with community pressure, found a way to fund it. They asked me to take it on since I was already dual-licensed. It is very hard to

find CTE teachers because they can make a lot more money in the private sector without having all the extra credentials to teach. Due to my seniority (HQT in 6-12 Science), if they drop my elective class, I would end up bumping one of our science teachers, all of whom are excellent. I still work closely with our Science department and all of us collaborate and mentor each other for the betterment of student learning.

Further, if my class size increases, I will have to change how I teach the class and reduce the number of hands-on opportunities simply due to safety reasons. I may also have to start charging a lab fee for consumables due to reduced funding, which will reduce participation by our most socio-economic vulnerable students. Something I'm not particularly fond of. The hands-on and using consumables is what makes my class and gets my students to learn applied math, English, Science, history along with critical thinking skills at a minimum.

I am a fervent public school teacher and strongly believe, that every student that wants to learn, have that opportunity. I don't want finances to make that an obstacle. I have IDEA students in my class but I must have EA and PTT assistance for safety reasons as well as to make sure they have the same learning opportunities as others in the class.

Will these private tutors the HDOE hire need to go through the extensive training and reflection regularly like teachers? Collaborate on how to improve? Will they spend the same amount of time teachers do in the classroom with students? Will they have the same commitment to the students they are tutoring like us teachers have for students in our classes? What will be done to assure that these tutors are up to par? How will they be evaluated and the public assured they are getting their money's worth?

2. I'm concerned that teachers will be losing their positions, forcing out our newer teachers or causing some to retire or change careers. The baby boomers (I'm on the tailend) are/will be retiring. Will we have sufficient trained and experienced teachers available who have been mentored and improved their teaching craft? We need teachers at all stages of their career in the schools. When a school has a robust collection of educators, they provide a stronger and more supportive learning environment and opportunities for ALL students. I do not see tutors as a long-term solution; only temporary. Hiring tutors instead of teachers, EAs, PTTs is not sustainable for improving schools or educational instruction long-term.

I'm opposed to hiring tutors versus keeping and hiring on more teachers, EAs and PTTs who are invested in our schools. I'm fine to hire tutors if teachers, EAs, and PTTs are kept. Tutors are a nice add-on but not a replacement for a strong public education effort inside the classroom.

Thanks!

Cynthia Fong
Hilo Intermediate School
Teacher



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

Testimony: 01/20/2021

1 message

Margarita Alo-Chu <alochu@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Sun, Jan 17, 2021 at 6:22 PM

Aloha kakou

Ke 'olu'olu, (please) accept the attached letter in preparation for your review of the future of Education in our beloved nation of Hawai'i.

Ke aloha nui

M. Alo-Chu

 **Letter (2).pdf**
74K

Margarita L. Alo-Chu

87-1420 Farrington Highway
Waiʻanae, HI 96792
(808) 630 4905
lanialochu@gmail.com

17th January 2021

State of Hawaiʻi

Board of Education
Department of Education
Honolulu, Hawaiʻi

Welina kakou,

Mahalo for this opportunity once again to bring word to your office in hopes of offering a set of ʻike kupuna to you all in aloha. I'm a daughter of the most high, mother of two young children, a public servant (educator) and native to our ʻaina. I ask that as you read this letter, you open your eyes and ears and most importantly your heart.

*ʻIke Kupuna #1 **Ua mau ke ea i ka aina i ka pono.** The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness as noted on our hearts as people of Hawaiʻi.*

Life, that is spiritual, physical and mentally connected and key to our survival in the place that we were given kuleana to preserve for generations to come. It is within the native language that all things are understood in a deep and complex manner in relationship to the land that we all live on.

*ʻIke Kupuna #2 **Na wai hoʻi ka ʻole o ke akamai, he alanui i maʻa i ka hele ʻia e oʻu mau mākua?** Why shouldn't I know, when it is a road often traveled by my parents?*

The challenges of life on the people of Hawaiʻi continues till this day but our kupuna always found a way. History tells me that our Aliʻi (leaders) loved our people and when illnesses swept our shores, our Aliʻi (leaders) offered the first in the world Public Health System in 1836 and a Vital Statistics Law placed by Kamehameha III in 1839 for the love of native people that have been ravaged with illnesses since 1778 when foreigners entered Hawaiʻi.

*ʻIke Kupuna #3 **Lawe i ka maʻalea a kūʻonoʻono.** Take wisdom and make it deep.*

Our ancestors made a call to all kupuna (educators) to use all knowledge learned for the betterment of lives for the *people of Hawai‘i*. There is no “age, race, sex, etc.” mentioned but for those that hold the studies of the past of the world and bring forth the lessons for present day and foresight of the future.

‘Ike Kupuna #4 **Maka hana ka ‘ike.** *Through work comes knowledge, through knowledge comes power.*

Knowledge, or *Ike*, was passed down from generation to generation from elder (**educator**) to child to prepare the child for what was to come through knowledge of the past. With this learning, the child was equipped to move forward with greater clarity, more insight and empowered decision making.

‘Ike Kupuna #5 **I ka wa ma mua, ka wa ma hope.** *When you look to the past, you will certainly find a way for the future.*

As leaders and people of our beloved Hawai‘i, I hope that you will take heed of the voices of its ancestral ali‘i who always focused firmly on the place and people of Hawai‘i nei. They ruled with all of their knowledge and aloha. Never allowing a “foreign mind-set” for foreign money and power to be the answers.

The answer will always be within the *people of Hawai‘i* that care about its ‘aina the most! If we revere our kupuna (native educators) then we treat them with the utmost respect because they will have Hawai‘i’s native values and best interest at heart in accordance with its common people. A simple education should be built on the wisdom of each classroom teacher, social worker, technology specialist, connected to students and a common body of human resource specialists and honorable Ali‘i (BOE) is all that is necessary.

Keep our ‘ike kupuna deep in the pu‘uwai (hearts) of **our educators** in Hawai‘i and keep it perpetuated in righteousness!

Me ka ha‘aha‘a (humbly),

Margarita Leilani Alo-Chu

Nanakuli, O‘ahu

Your Name



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

School Budget Cuts

1 message

STEPHENIE BLAKEMORE <stephenieblakemore@sbcglobal.net>
Reply-To: STEPHENIE BLAKEMORE <kndlve22@gmail.com>
To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Mon, Jan 18, 2021 at 8:24 AM

Aloha

I don't need to tell you that the proposed HIDOE budget is a detriment the keiki and their families in Hawaii, or do I? To take limited funds and spend them on things like private tutors is not only a bad idea it's an insulting one. You are working for a public school system...you have a responsibility to the community to prevent such irresponsible ideas from going forward. You have a responsibility to advocate for a fully funded HIDOE. and then mandate that the beauracrats do a better job.

Studies have proven that small classroom sizes benefit student learning and progress in student learning. You do not make classroom smaller by cutting teaching jobs. That is simple math you should know. We are already behind in what would be grade level standards due to the Covid Pandemic and now the HIDOE is proposing to make classrooms even larger, and deny diverse and quality coursework to the upper grades.

This is no way to address a learning gap that will impact our state socially culturally and economically for many years to come. Particularly at the elementary level, where closing the learning gap must be a priority. When we return to school on a full 5 day schedule our keiki will need to be in classes that are smaller not larger. You do not do this with private tutors. That is an irresponsible waste of PUBLIC funds.

The administrative bureaucracy jobs that exist in HIDOE, those responsible for the debacle that was the start of the 2020-2021 school year, those who propose these kinds of budgets are the ones who should lose their jobs, first and foremost. and I mean first and foremost. The cuts at the top must be severe. The cuts in our community based schools must be minimized if we are to be a public education system that educates the whole child.

The most detrimental policies, such as the ridiculous paperwork created in Honolulu for SpEd teachers, must be stopped. No teacher well versed in SpEd law would have thought of such a ridiculous way to address being accountable for learning loss. Completing that paperwork took time and focus away from the most important task at hand as our keiki returned to classrom...providing quality remedial learning in core subjects. Most teachers worked above and beyond to satisfy this ridiculous semand and ensure the students got quality education. Both take time and the HIDOE is incapable of recognizing what was the need to start the school year and that actual teaching was the priority. The punitive mandatory videos that resulted from the unnecessary delay to the start of our school year did nothing to help teachers prep for the challenges of teaching on line. They added to the burden, which most teachers met. And the thanks to teachers statewide is to cut jobs and make it even harder for those who remain to address the real challenge: close the learning gap.

The HIDOE had amost 4 months to schedule and address a new way to the start if the school year and they FAILED to do so. CUT THEIR JOBS FIRST..ALL THE WAY TO THE TOP.

STOP wasting state and federal funds by approving poorly planned spending in the HIDOE. Keep it simple...make sure every classroom has a teacher. Keep the elementary student to teacher ratios small, and shrink the bureaucracy in the HIDOE..the administrative buildings in Honolulu should be empty. The job of the HIDOE is to to teach children..so keep the ones doing the actual teaching in the classroom.

If you cannot get this simple thing right and advocate for the keiki and teachers who serve them than let's save money and eliminate your jobs too.

Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail on Android



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

Testimony Budget cuts devastate

1 message

Michael Press <press.michaeld@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Jan 18, 2021 at 10:39 AM

Good Afternoon BOE,

I am testifying on the Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I am currently a teacher and Department Head for Social Studies at Ilima in Leeward Oahu. The budget cuts that the Gov. Ige and the HiDoE has put thought is going to devastate my school and most of the schools in Hawaii. We are losing 13 teachers at Ilima alone, myself being one of the cuts. The effects of these cuts will be devastating. Skyrocketing class sizes, lack of supplies and student supports just to name a few. In this time of trauma on our keiki how is it just to have principals decide between a highly qualified teacher or a school counselor? My school will have to go from 3 school counselors to 2 for about 750 students.

Do not let the CARES act money go to private tutors when there are many highly qualified teachers whose jobs are being cut. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors.

Look at the results that the cuts will have. Many schools with 1 or zero teachers to teacher electives. No music, no art, no computer literacy, no coding, no PE, no Hawaiian language classes. This would not be "school" that our stakeholders would recognize. SPED teachers that NOW have caseloads in the 20's will jump to who knows how high. This will not only invite lawsuits but increase the burnout rate of these much needed teachers. It is dereliction of duty on the part of the Gov. and HiDoE. We are the protectors for all of the Hawaii keiki and now is not a time to remain quiet. Stop this foolish spending of the stimulus money and invest in Hawaii's future!

Thank you for your time,
Michael Press
7th/8th Grade Social Studies Teacher
Social Studies Department Head
Ilima Intermediate
Voter



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

Testimony

1 message

collparl2000@yahoo.com <collparl2000@yahoo.com>

Mon, Jan 18, 2021 at 10:40 AM

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

To Whom it May Concern,

The HDOE is proposing using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors.

It is important to use these funds to retain our qualified teachers, instead of using these funds for private tutoring. These budget cuts and loss of positions will affect our inclusion classes from receiving the instructional support needed. If SPED teacher and educational assistant positions are cut this will affect my school's ability to meet IEP goals for our students.

I am concerned that teacher cuts will lead to larger class sizes. As a kindergarten teacher, large class sizes can impact students' academic performance, effective classroom management, small group and individual support. Also the loss of teachers that cover subjects such as, library, physical education, STEM, AVID would affect the well rounded education that contributes to increased achievement in academic subjects and overall health and well-being of young children.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Sincerely,

Colleen Parlee
Wheeler Elementary.



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

Testimony: Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

1 message

Alicia Jacobson <asjmaui@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Jan 18, 2021 at 1:23 PM

RE: IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

January 17, 2021

Dear Board of Education,

I write to you as an educator of over 20 years in the Hawaii DOE. My job is my life and I have struggled throughout the years to continue to live in Hawaii, but the current situation may be the last straw in regards to surviving financially. My husband is out of work and may not get his job back, so we are both living off my salary and health insurance. The future is uncertain. As a homeowner, I will most likely stay if possible, but so many talented young teachers will not be able to sustain these cuts and we will lose what we have worked so hard to build over the past few decades. All in a year.

At present, I find it very concerning that with all the turmoil in our public education system due to COVID, now is not the time to slash our budget. It has been estimated that every time we must retrain a new teacher, it costs approximately \$20,000. Our current practices of spending money on outside resources (while we have in-house talent) and creating temporary positions that come and go every few years must stop. If the DOE intends to spend funds on private tutors, we need to rethink this strategy and make our teachers our first resource. We must change our current practices of spending on outside consultants, who have not produced favorable results. We must honor our educators and staff by paying a living wage, which includes more opportunities for extra income such as tutoring. Our priority should be seeking to keep stable positions in our schools, then we can save much more than haphazard budget cuts that do not take the big picture into consideration.

Currently, our schools are in dire need of physical repair. There are limited or no PE teachers (although there is a resource PE teacher who is paid a full salary to create on-line resources.) Art is nonexistent unless supplemental school monies such as PTA fund random out of DOE programs. With few creative outlets and larger class sizes, the learning environments are certain to suffer and overall public school morale will plummet. DOE teachers can create and implement the arts, but must be given the time to plan and money to buy supplies.

Think about it, our state is privileged to have many exceedingly wealthy citizens and visitors. There are ways to harness money from the wealthy to keep our infrastructure from crumbling. For example, increasing the general excise tax. Restructuring property taxes for transient property owners would also be a source of income for our state.

Observation of the excessive high stakes testing, makes me wonder if restructuring testing could be a way to save money. I do not know the requirements of the federal government, but testing is very expensive and time consuming. SBA testing takes weeks with kids hunkered down for over an hour a day on their computers. How do we use this data? Is this the best use of our time and money? Is high stakes testing an accurate picture of our school "success?" Currently, I see some students that are being asked to come to campus to take a WIDA Access test for our English Language Learners. This test takes over 4 hours, and I hear that even fluent English speaking students do not pass. Is this necessary? Perhaps the federal monies are worth all this testing, but it serves no other purpose, in my opinion.

Is this necessary? I think that is the question we must ask ourselves. With the current budget cuts, many fear huge class sizes and limited resources. Is this what we want for our keiki? There are ways to solve this problem other than severing funds from an already depleted department. I beg you to look outside the box and find solutions that will allow keiki to return to a healthy and engaging school environment. The current proposed plan needs to be adjusted.

In closing, I would like to express my concern with the lack of leadership during this pandemic. With no overall guidance regarding attendance, grading and curriculum, our communities are confused and angry, resulting in lack of participation and engagement. This is not in the best interest of our students. We need clear leadership and decision making. It can be done.

With care and aloha,

Alicia S. Jacobson

P.s. Please keep my name confidential.

--

**With warm aloha,
Alicia S. Jacobson**





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

Testimony

1 message

Yvette Rapozo <yrapozo0@twc.com>

Mon, Jan 18, 2021 at 3:05 PM

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

Dear BOE,

My name is Yvette Rapozo and I am a teacher at Kapa'a Elementary School on the island of Kauai. I am submitting testimony on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill. I am unsure how to start off another letter to the BOE this school year because I cannot even begin to understand and wrap my head around having hundreds of teacher positions eliminated next school year. We were already experiencing a teacher shortage in our state and now the DOE want to get rid of hundreds of certified and licensed school teachers. Teachers are struggling to get kids caught up this year after losing out on the 4th quarter from last school year and are working extremely hard with getting kids and families motivated to do work at home on the days another group of student are in class. And we are all experiencing burn out from the constant switching from in person to distance learning to in person again (Kauai). From learning on our own how to navigate and learn so many new platforms and teach them to our young students to help them continue their learning no matter where they are (at home or in school). My school is looking at eliminating 8 regular education teacher positions and 3 sped teacher positions in addition to eliminating 4 RTI (response to intervention) teacher positions and having them move back into a general education classroom and take other teacher positions due to seniority. My grade level is looking at possible losing 2- 3 teachers who have a wealth of experience and knowledge. That is a lot of teachers one school is losing in a single year! That will definitely have a direct affect on our students because it will lead to larger class sizes which may cause our school to go to an A/B/C blended learning scenario from a blended learning A/B grouping (half the class comes to school on certain days of the week while the others learn at home) thus causing students to go from attending school 50% of the time to 30% of the time. There is absolutely no way learning can happen this way and losing our 4 RTI positions will take a direct hit to some of the most academically vulnerable and needy students we have.

This will also cause many teachers to leave the profession and possibly the state because they need to be employed in order to just get by and survive. I know of a few teachers who are supporting their families right now since their spouses/partners are not employed at the time. I also know a few teachers who will be leaving the state when they lose their jobs at the end of this school year. This will compound our teacher shortage problems and will deter possible future teacher candidates from entering the College of Education which will compound our teacher shortage problem in the future. It's like a vicious cycle that has no end. And this is definitely not putting education first or our children's futures in the forefront. We cannot continue to say education is important and a priority yet keep putting teachers last. It just doesn't work.

And on top of that, the DOE wants to use some of the stimulus money our state has received not to save experienced and knowledgeable teacher positions, but to use \$53 million dollars on private

tutors to help our students get caught up. Is there a secret I do not know that private tutors can do something thousand of public school teachers cannot do with months and months of working with students? Do they hold a secret weapon in getting kids to suddenly be on grade level? It takes more than content knowledge to teach kids especially during a pandemic when many students and families are experiencing hardships on many levels. I have so many questions about these "private tutors" who can supposedly do the job that thousands of college educated, advanced degree teachers cannot do such as where will we get these "tutors" from and how do we get our students to meet up with their tutors on a regular basis when they don't even show up for school now. Are these tutors even qualified to teach? We are looking at a huge problem with student/family engagement and the DOE wants to put a band aid on it. It ain't gonna work. The DOE should use that money to keep some of the teaching positions that will be eliminated so that experienced and knowledgeable teachers can keep working with their students and build relationships with their student and families to help them succeed.

The DOE also wants to spend \$10 million of the stimulus money on summer school. How are we going to get burned out and tired kids to attend summer school as well as find teachers who are not burned out and tired after this school year to work during the summer? Are we going to use the teachers we just fired to come back just for the summer? I don't think so. And we cannot get kids "caught up" in just one summer. This process will take years to overcome. We do not have a quick fix for the lost learning that has occurred and throwing money around like this will not solve the problem.

In closing, I am asking the BOE to think rationally and realize that eliminating so many teacher positions will compound an already complex problem and will set up our most academically vulnerable student (if not all) for failure. Please work together with legislatures and others to save as many teacher positions which will in turn help our students.

Sincerely(a very concerned teacher),

Yvette Rapozo

2nd grade Teacher

Kapa'a Elementary School

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10



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

DOE budget cuts

1 message

Sharon Inouye <sharonminouye@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Jan 18, 2021 at 3:18 PM

Dear BOE Members,

Thank you for continuing to serve the people of Hawaii during this extremely difficult time.

Please don't use the federal funds for private tutors when qualified teachers will lose their positions by the hundreds. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors.

How will the tutors help to raise overall student achievement when their schools can not even keep up with their staffing needs? Will those teachers that are cut ever come back to help meet student needs when there are more funds available? We already have a shortage of teachers and now we are going to let it get worse by trying to fix problems with a bandaid by using private tutors instead? We would be effectively informing everyone, including potential new teachers and students considering the education field as a teacher for the next decade, that Hawaii does not value teachers. The proof would be that during a huge teacher shortage with hundreds more jobs on the line, there were actual funds available that could have been used to help the shortage but the funds were directed elsewhere for tutors instead.

Please don't let this happen.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sharon M. Inouye



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

Testimony

1 message

thesandpebbles HURST <thesandpebbles@hotmail.com>
To: "testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Mon, Jan 18, 2021 at 3:37 PM

Honorable Board Members,

I am testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

Recently a teacher in her second year of teaching likened her experience as an educator in the State of Hawaii as being on the television program "Survivor".. If you are not familiar with the series, "The television show places a group of strangers in an isolated location, where they must provide... for themselves. The contestants compete in challenges for rewards and immunity from elimination. The contestants are progressively eliminated... ("Survivor" - An American Television Series, n.d.).

As I near the end of my career, her metaphor haunts me. What future for the children of Hawaii is there if their teachers, once respected professionals, have such a bleak outlook and are literally in survival mode? Our experience is without humanity, care, or dignity.

When I first came to Hawaii as a recruited Special Education teacher, the required Hawaii Agricultural Declaration Form listed "Doctor, Lawyer, Teachers". That has since been revised removing teachers. Teachers in Hawaii have become the expendable members of the Star Trek landing party whose names no one remembers.

After 25yrs working for the State of Hawaii DOE, my personal experience is testament to the reality that the COVID-19 global pandemic has not exacerbated a zeitgeist of complete disregard for humanity, but provides yet another excuse.

The gestalt that the Hawaii Department of Education has become is not sustainable. It leaves in its wake nothing but victims and fails completely in its mission to its constituents.

The plan to use 29% of funding for private tutors epitomizes this paradigm. It reeks of a similar plan where "Columbus" teachers were hired without accountability. Students at the school I work at referred to their "Columbus" teacher as "The Plow" as a result of her rolling around the classroom in her chair out of laziness rather than walking to assist students. It makes me cringe to remember her bigoted references about "These children". The staffing carousel that Hawaii DOE has become not as a consequence of geographical, and economic hardship as perennial specious excuse attests has to stop. It is destroying lives. Hawaii's children deserve so much more.

This second-year teacher as I, has demonstrated an emphatic desire to be relevant in the lives of her students. Tragically in my 25yr tenure, I have met few that have the tenacity or willingness to preserve as I have. She,

as well as other young professionals and children in their charge, deserve a future.

In an effort to retain such shining stars, I respectfully ask that the Board of Education consider a program of allowing teachers with 5yrs or less to retire without pension penalty in lieu of current plans. Reality dictates that despite my 25yrs of enduring, unwavering, documented service to my students, in a public school system paralyzed by unfettered cronyism and nepotism ensuring mediocrity; my career will end before the budgetary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With this request it is my selfless goal to ensure the children of Hawaii are taught by likeminded student success driven professionals that will with hope be given an opportunity to persevere for their students and have a future as educators in the State of Hawaii's public schools.

Altruistically,

Howard Hurst, M.S.Ed
Waimea Canyon Middle School
Kauai, Hawaii



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

education

1 message

kymberlee harris <kymberleeharris@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Jan 18, 2021 at 7:14 PM

Hurting education and children with ridiculous budget cuts when others are choke funds and this very wealthy country cannot seem to get priorities right. Stop losing funds and create a real structure that isn't always being compromised. It show our leaders actually cares very little about ordinary people.

Kymberlee Harris

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony

1 message

Jennifer Jo <jennifermelindajo@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Jan 18, 2021 at 8:08 PM

Dear Honorable Board of Education Members:

I am testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I am writing you with deep concerns regarding how the DOE plans to allocate the COVID-19 federal funds that our state received in the annual federal spending bill.

I cannot wrap my head around the DOE cutting over 1000 school positions to help pay \$53 Million on private tutors, which I can guarantee are non-licensed educators. How do they think this is a good idea when we have staffing shortages at almost all DOE schools?

How do you think us educators feel knowing that the DOE is allocating money to bring in outside tutors instead of working to support us teachers that have worked harder than ever during these difficult times? Talk about a huge blow of our morale.

Also, I see in the proposed budget that there is no funding allocated to continue with the Shortage Differentials. This \$53 million would cover the shortage differentials with money left over to support staffing at our schools during the school day. It has been proven that the Shortage Differential program has worked, helping to patch the major shortage of licensed Special Education teachers in Hawaii. Having less Special Education teachers will open the DOE up to major lawsuits for dereliction of duty to provide quality educational services to students with disabilities.

I feel that the allocations for this aid that Congress worked endless hours to pass in no way represents what Congress had intended it to be used for.

Please right the wrongs that the DOE is planning on using this stimulus money for, and have it go to our schools and frontline workers who need it most.

Don't let our Keiki suffer even more learning from non-licensed tutors instead of highly qualified educators that have and will continue to work tirelessly towards their success.

Thank you,
Jennifer Jo



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

Testimony: Finance and Infrastructure Committee/item IV.A1 message

Shannon Rudolph <shannonkona@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Jan 18, 2021 at 10:21 PM

Aloha!

Re: Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I'm very concerned about the impacts of budget reductions and proposed position cuts will have on our teachers and students and don't think that federal funds should be used to hire private tutors while the state may fire more than 1,000 qualified teachers and other public school staff.

Mahalo,

Shannon Rudolph - Kona - 40 year Hawai'i resident

--

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world. ~ Anne Frank



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

Testimony

1 message

denise darval-chang <darvalchang@hotmail.com>
To: "testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 8:37 AM

Aloha,

Recent budget cuts in our Hawaii public schools have led administrators to eliminate PE positions for lack of value, to how schools are "graded." Physical Education is NOT measured in the Strive HI Performance System of Accountability, but we know it impacts what really matters, one's health. When it's all said and done, one's health is the report of accountability that contributes to the better good of society. How counterproductive is eliminating PE positions when:

Currently there is a focus on the unprecedented importance of one's health. Health & Physical Education classes are the only content directly responsible for educating our youth with knowledge and application of skills that impact the body systems. These systems have a direct impact on developing a strong immune system. Imagine if all of our students had K-12 45 minutes of physical education every day, COVID 19 would not have had fatalities that we have witnessed. Stay Healthy and Safe, yet the subjects being cut are those that allow one to "Stay Healthy & Safe." What message are the students getting?

There is no "app" or fee-based service that can move the body to improve one's health. One has to develop the skills to exercise the body systems for one to reap the benefits exercise has on one's health. When we speak of EQUITY, school is the level playing field where PE can take place. Physical Education is not for the "haves" who can get in their physical activity with high priced club sports, 24 hours, Crossfit...our Physical Educators teach ALL!

Our students need to be physically fit and healthy. Being fit helps students build a strong immune system, which is more important than ever during this COVID 19 outbreak. Science shows that healthy children do better academically and are better prepared to fight disease.

Our current DOE Wellness Guidelines already include minutes for HPE at all levels, to eliminate these positions would put us in a position of NOT adhering to the Wellness Policy 103-1.

Physical education guidelines call for:

- At least 45 minutes per week of physical education for elementary grades and 200 minutes per week for secondary grades with at least 50 percent of physical education class time spent on moderate to vigorous physical activity;
- At least 20 minutes a day of recess that includes opportunities to engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity;
- Physical activity breaks at least every 60 minutes;
- No withholding of physical activity (for example recess or PE) as punishment.
-

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise Darval-Chang



Denise Darval-Chang
Honolulu District Health and Physical Education Resource Teacher
Honolulu District Office
[4967 Kilauea Ave.](#)

1/19/2021

Dell Marketing LP Mail - Testimony

Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

Office: 808-784-6659/ Cell 808-741-6379

fax: 808-733-4974



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

budget cuts

1 message

Denise Webb <denisehwebb@gmail.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 8:52 AM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

I am concerned that the proposed budget cuts for DOE schools are neglecting the largest source of extraneous spending.

Right now, our school is contemplating not only cutting teacher positions, support for inclusion of special needs students (which is a state priority), and basic needs (custodial supplies, in this time of pandemic), but also cutting on-line programs and consumable materials provided directly for students. I repeat, FOR STUDENTS. Our school has a plan to address the various needs of our students, and many of those supports will disappear under current cutting plans.

I don't see the cuts at the district and state levels. How much auditing of those offices there has been done? It's scuttlebutt, but there is pervasive talk about people at those upper level offices who do very little day to day. I've heard it from people who work in those offices!

It would be beneficial to our students to continue to provide supports and services needed. As a special educator, and one who works hard to include students who have disabilities in the general education classes, I know there needs to be personnel to support that, and it *works!* Those kids achieve at a higher and deeper rate than students pulled aside, and more students should have that opportunity. These cuts will not only curtail opportunities for those students, but for others as well, such as our EL students, and the kids who are struggling but who do not require special education. And, with a lack of those basic supports, due process cases will skyrocket. Parents know when their child is being denied a free, appropriate education, and they will file. That is expensive.

To sum up, please stop cutting at the school level, where the students are, who are the *entire reason* for school. Start at the top, and cut the chaff there first. I am certain you can find plenty to cut there before you make those extremely disastrous cuts to individual schools.

Denise Webb



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

Testimony

1 message

Brenda Palumbo <brenda.palumbo@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 9:30 AM

Dear BOE:

I am writing in protest of the HDOE's proposed use of 29% of the stimulus package on the hiring of private tutors instead of using it to retain teaching staff.

I am not against hiring additional help but feel that \$53 million of the Federal stimulus is too great an amount.

Please work on seeing that the monies are used judiciously.

Mahalo,
Brenda Palumbo
LHES/ELL 6-12
brenda.palumbo@k12.hi.us
Ph 808 565-7900 x247



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

Testimony

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

(no subject)

1 message

David Negaard <draagen@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 10:40 AM

I am testifying in regards to: **V.B: Board Action on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendations concerning Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill**

Aloha Hawai'i Board of Education and Chair Payne,

I am David Negaard, an English teacher at Henry Perrine Baldwin High School on Maui. I am **appalled** by the state's intention to cut **to the bone** public education funding, and by the Department of Education's proposed use of what could be a lifeline—\$58 million (of \$183.6 million) in federal funding—to hire private English and private tutors rather than save most of the approximately 1,000 teachers whose positions are on the chopping block under the proposed budget. Once again, the governor and DoE demonstrate that their claim to value classroom teachers and other educators is mere lip service and we are expendable, replaceable, imminently abusable cogs.

Perhaps it isn't as obvious as it should be that what affects classroom teachers also profoundly affects students. Our working conditions are students' learning conditions. Furthermore, what impacts our ability to function—from economic stress to fear of COVID-19—impacts what we can offer to our students. Despite our best intentions and desires to do well by our students, the circumstances of our professional and personal lives impact our efficacy as teachers. When we are insecure in our jobs or struggling to make ends meet, we have a reduced capacity to connect with our students and passionately, enthusiastically initiate them into our academic content.

We are not expendable. We are not a luxury. The idea that the DoE would spend federal funds to hire unlicensed private tutors while cutting licensed, qualified professional teachers would be ludicrous if it weren't altogether unsurprising; apparently decades of drastic underpayment hasn't reduced the teaching workforce enough to suit the DoE, so they are proposing the next step. And the mere possibility of this eventuality is already having an impact on the hard-working, underpaid teachers already employed by the Department. Rather than risking being subject to that kind of uncertainty, tenured teachers are already leaving or making plans to leave the DoE.

Staffing cuts amount to program cuts, and they fall hardest (though not exclusively) upon arts and vocational electives—the very things that for many students make school worthwhile. And once a music or drama or shop program is cut, it may never return. Are the only things that matter in school English and Math? Given the Department's plan to hire private tutors for those two subjects alone, one might think so. Are we still so invested in testing outcomes that we are ready to throw away the courses that enrich student lives and contribute to their development as well-rounded human beings? Are we really willing to sacrifice the humanities on the altar of high stakes standardized testing?

If there was any question about how little respect the employer has for those whose work and passion is the growth of students, look to the 'unintended' consequences of publishing the proposed cuts by school site. This publication amounted to an informal, de facto notification to many teachers that their position would likely be cut, and set them to scrambling for alternatives. A friend of mine learned that their position as Student Activities Coordinator would be eliminated under these cuts and I read elsewhere in the report that libraries—school libraries!—were considered 'surplus to requirements' at some schools. I expect that came as a shock to the librarians.

I'm one of the 'lucky' ones. I'm a tenured English teacher and my position is quite likely safe. These draconian cuts won't cost me my job (but it's likely it will cost someone in my department theirs). It will nevertheless add to my burden; cutting teacher positions will increase class sizes and workloads of those left standing. Additionally, our students who once had that one elective to look forward to may often be demoralized because that elective was cut. That discouragement will likely manifest as misbehavior and disruption, which will affect all our students.

The impact of these cuts on educators must not be minimized, but the impact on our students—the ones our schools serve—cannot be understated. These cuts will devastate perhaps an entire generation (possibly more) by demoralizing teachers, limiting student educational opportunities, overcrowding classrooms, and reducing or eliminating courses that enrich their lives and engage their imaginations. Public education has the potential to be a great equalizer in our society, but hamstrung like these budget cuts will hamstring public schools, that potential is much reduced.

The values of an organization are most honestly articulated in its budget. The state cannot say it values public education without funding it. The DoE cannot say it values teachers without **paying** them. Where your treasure is, there is your heart also, because we pay for what we care about. Look at what the state and DoE is willing to pay for and you will see what they care about. Clearly, it is not public education or students in public education.

Public teachers and other educators deserve better, but more to the point, our students and communities deserve better. These proposals are a travesty that serve no one but the privatizers who would love to corporatize education and profit from it without regard for the wellbeing of our students, our communities, our society. It may not be within the Board's power to direct the Department's actions, but it must raise its

voice against the evisceration of public education in Hawai'i. It must strongly condemn measures that would fall so heavily on the future of our children and our future.

Mahalo,

--

David Negaard

"Man is most nearly himself when he achieves the seriousness of a child at play." -Heraclitus



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

Testimony

1 message

Ryan <ryoshiza@hotmail.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 10:59 AM

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

Aloha Hawaii State Board of Education Members,

I am testifying on the Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

The Hawaii Department of Education's proposal to use federal stimulus money to hire private tutors instead of saving qualified teacher positions is extremely short-sighted and will only serve to exacerbate Hawaii's teacher shortage for years to come. The DOE superintendent again fails to realize that experienced, qualified teachers are the DOE's greatest assets. Even if Hawaii is able to continue attracting candidates to the teaching profession following the pandemic, how many years of experience will it take before a new teacher can make-up for the loss of an experienced teacher? How many training dollars will it take before a new teacher becomes effective? Why Hawaii's DOE is willing to sacrifice its most valuable assets to pursue a limited, short-term benefit is mindboggling.

How many individual students will private tutors serve? And how will we decide which students will receive this service? In the long run, qualified classroom teachers serve a greater number of students and provides the HIDOE with a larger return on its investment because they are willing to provide their students with as much support as possible, even beyond the paid work day. Teachers choose this profession because they want their students to succeed and are willing to give their time, energy, and even their own money to support the learning of their students. Will private tutors offer that kind of service to their student clients? Teachers not only teach classes, they sit on committees, advise clubs and student organizations, and coach sports. They chaperone student events and volunteer of themselves in numerous other ways. To choose paying private tutors over saving qualified classroom teachers demonstrates a complete lack of understanding of how teaching works and an undervaluing of teachers as professionals.

I am a school librarian. But I am also co-advisor for my school's National Honor Society, and a member of the school's leadership team, and a teacher representative for my school's community council. I was informed that my position will be one of my school's casualties due to budget cuts. In a pandemic, when the library is closed and students are relying on online resources for research and class projects, who will be there to provide them with the instruction they need to complete those assignments. Who will train teachers to use those resources? I've been at my school for seventeen years and will probably consider leaving the profession as a result. I worry about the students I've developed relationships with, the programs I've been a part of, and the ability of my school's teachers to be effective without the library support they've been receiving over the years.

I realize that schools will never be the same as a result of the pandemic. But Hawaii's DOE needs to realize that quality education begins with qualified teachers in classrooms. Tutors are supplemental to "real" learning and are a short-term, "band-aid" fix at a time when we need leadership to fight to retain as many qualified teachers as possible to stem the tide of learning loss. I hope the DOE opens their eyes before they end up making another bad decision that brings further criticism on our DOE leaders for their poor decisions and lack of foresight with crisis management.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ryan Yoshizawa, Librarian
Waipahu High School
[94-1211 Farrington Hwy.](#)
Waipahu, Hawaii 96797
(808) 307-9543



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

Testimony

1 message

Jennifer Luke Payne <jennifer.luke_payne@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 12:12 PM

Aloha Kakou,

My name is Jennifer Luke-Payne, Principal of Ka`a`awa Elementary School on the North Shore of Oahu. Before I start my reason for writing, I wanted to say thank you for being brave and working with the DOE to guide all of us through these very difficult circumstances. From March of 2020 the DOE has been in a marathon of epic proportions. This constant change and instability has been exhausting.

This very exhaustion is kind of what I wanted to write on. All too often when people experience extreme stress they tend to choose what is an easy choice instead of what might be harder but in the long run is the best choice. In looking at the agenda I see cuts in school and district funding/positions, and that looks like a disaster in the making. But what I don't see is an evaluation over the whole DOE system to see what can be done away with before asking districts and schools to cut our budget. I see some additional programs and resources that are being created and haven't been vetted through the very people who would be utilizing it. Why are tutors being purchased to help those behind while we cut the school level so the initial instruction might be severely hampered for every student in the school? Have every avenue been checked before we rush to cut.

There is a saying measure twice cut once. I don't know if what is being proposed is the best of the evils or if there is a better way. I do not know what decisions were made prior to having schools cut 10% of our budgets. I do not know what is being done to stop this budget crunch from impacting the children and families of Hawaii. But I do know with my 23 years of being an educator in HIDOE if these cuts go through as is, equatable inadequacy and failure more than likely will be the new normal.

If you are able to, take a step back, ask for the process, work with the DOE to make sure everything that is not crucial is cut before we even look at the district (district fund supplants school budget shortfalls) and school level funds, you could be saving Hawaii's future. I know of no principal who would object waiting a little longer if it meant they could keep what they currently have at their school. If at all possible, please take the time to make sure the best decisions are being made and not what is the obvious and or easiest choice.

Mahalo for you time and consideration,

Jennifer Luke-Payne
Principal Ka`a`awa Elementary School

Personal Mission Statement

Living a life of a unicorn and growing leaders to do the same.

By, being a miracle and teaching others to be the same.

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

Written Testimony

1 message

Danielle Bryant <bryantdaniellee@yahoo.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 12:16 PM

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

If the following attachment is not able to be opened, please let me know and I will send you a Word Document.

Sincerely,

Danielle Bryant

**Letter to BOE, January 19th.pdf**

206K

Dear Board of Education,

It is now the middle of January, and despite all the letters you received in December asking for you to stand in the gap and not cut the budget, we are once again pleading for our livelihoods. What letter is this? Number six, number seven? I have lost count.

As I am too busy trying to serve the Keiki of Hawai'i, I will not spend an inordinate amount of time writing a whole new letter. As such, the rest of my letter is copied and pasted from my December letter. Perhaps this time, it will make more of an impact.

What words do I have left to say? What more do you need to hear from your teachers? Everything has already been said, and if you haven't heard it by now, if you can't see the value in your teachers and the tremendous work they are doing, then there are no words I can say to convince you otherwise.

I guess there are just times that educators hope that those in charge will mean what they say when they say things like, "Kids are the future. Education is essential."

So, this is my letter. In closing, I am reminded recently of the words from a character in the book and later movie adaptation, "The Green Mile." The character, John Coffey, states:

I'm tired, boss. Tired of being on the road, lonely as a sparrow in the rain.
I'm tired of never having me a buddy to be with to tell me where we's going to, coming from, or why. Mostly, I'm tired of people being ugly to each other.

Like, John, I am also tired.

Danielle Bryant
Kapa'a Elementary School



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

BOE Meeting 1/21/21: Teacher Testimony (Budget Proposals)

1 message

Kileigh Sanchez <kileighsanchez@gmail.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 12:18 PM

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

Aloha Board Members,

As I spent time reading through the DOE's full report of how federal aid will be spent, I honestly want to urge you as the people who have the biggest impact in advising how these funds are spent to question why licensed teachers are being fired and private tutors are being hired in their places. I have already heard countless stories of many great teachers retiring early or simply finding a new job as they jump ship before the DOE truly sinks itself, but I believe that eliminating its teachers who are its very foundation in the name of saving a few bucks will truly be the nail that seals the coffin. We are already facing a major teacher shortage crisis and over 1000 positions are being cut, with most of those being teachers. From what I've seen in the report, every single school has been forced to cut multiple teaching positions. Are we then also cutting students? They are indirectly saying that it will have to be okay (for a short period of time aka years, or possibly even longer) that the students who are in school now may have to go without a real teacher in the classroom. How is that okay? Why was our superintendent so concerned about cutting 9 days off of the school year in the beginning of the year and now so flippantly chooses to cut the throats of our schools but eliminating essential staff? Our schools CANNOT handle losing more teachers. Why doesn't anybody ask the ones who are actually in the classroom what we need? This is obviously one of the worst things that could be done, yet our superintendent is oblivious in her air-conditioned office. Most schools have insanely large class sizes as it is and our classes will only get bigger as a result of this irresponsible plan of action. This is not about me or any other teacher losing their jobs. Yes, that is horrible but the real issue here is that this is about screwing the kids over and NOT investing our time and resources into our keiki. This means less time and care for each student. It won't be possible to spread ourselves even more thinly than we already have been doing for years, and students will suffer greatly if this budget "proposal" doesn't get stopped in its tracks. I think it's deplorable, irrational, and will be truly catastrophic to our schools in general as well as our community and our state as a whole.

Kileigh Sanchez



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

Testimony

1 message

Robin Wong <robinwongkauai@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 12:30 PM

Aloha. I am testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

This is the third time I've had to write a letter trying to protect students from the unnecessary and unconscionable budget cuts proposed by the Hawaii legislature. Student engagement is at an all time low. Universal screening test scores are at an all time low. Students' acquired skills and knowledge is at an all time low. Now is the time to support education, and more importantly educators to mediate this crisis.

The psychic damage and blow to morale every time we have to defend yet another economic threat to our profession is more than some teachers are willing to suffer. Qualified educators are retiring and quitting in droves as a result of the uncertainty for Hawaii teachers. I have had three co-teachers so far this year and the third has just given notice. This high turnover and recruitment challenge hurts our schools and students.

Stop trying to balance the budget by sacrificing our most vulnerable - our keiki. You don't hurt teachers as much as you hurt the children we care for, the children we educate, and the children we support.

Robin Wong
Kauai High School
Freshman English



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

Testimony for 1/21 BOE mtg.

1 message

HM <hnmoselle@gmail.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 1:23 PM

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

Heather Moselle, Public School Parent

Testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee Meeting Action Item IV A

Testifying AGAINST spending stimulus funding on private tutoring; please fold stimulus funding into retaining teacher positions to avoid mass teacher layoffs. A teacher friend, who has been an educator for more than 20 years is fearful of losing their position, in addition to being under the stressors we are all face amid the pandemic. This educator as well as others paint a picture of demoralization among teachers, fear due to the lack of job security and declining mental health. If we want our educators to bring their best selves to the classroom, we must ensure they feel secure in their positions. If we want them to create homegrown, distance learning curriculum to help our students effectively learn amid this pandemic, we must support their schools with funding.

Also, Testifying for GBM Agenda Item IV B., Acellus Update; Comment

Dear Board Members and Chairperson(s),

While I am happy to see that the October 2020 letter from the Superintendent has been translated into 14 languages to ensure that parents and constituents have access to the information, I am disappointed that the letter has been the extent of the Superintendent's communication with families on the Acellus issue since then. Here is a quote directly from that letter:

"Based on its analysis, the review team recommended the program should be discontinued as a primary curriculum resource due to **its inconsistency in quality and rigor**. The HDOE recognizes the curriculum does contain content that reviewers found acceptable and aligned to standards, and will be working with schools that use Acellus to identify and leverage such content, as appropriate."

Where in this letter are the rights' violations identified by the DOE reviewers in the full Acellus equity review disclosed to parents? No discussion of what reviewers called "nothing short of alarming" and that they **"identified discriminatory content that rises to the level of being severe, pervasive and persistent"**. Please translate that into 14 languages, so that parents have equal access to this information. Again I say, these are our children! Parents have a right to this information!

The DOE leadership should release a letter that informs parents their students' rights may have been (or may continue to be) violated while using the Acellus program. And, at the very least, summarize the nature of those violations identified in the 140-page review (i.e., on the basis of religion, gender, race and ethnicity). The tone in this letter and the information it contains in no way matches the severity of the violations of students' rights identified in the full Acellus equity review. The review was quietly released on the DOE website in November, after much pressure from parents and teachers, with no direct communication sent to parents that it was made available to them that I am aware of.

Maybe it wouldn't be worth fighting to have these violations disclosed to parents, if say...Acellus was already removed completely from our students' public education. But this is not the case! Please understand that this issue is ongoing. Right now as you are reading this students all across the Hawaiian islands are using this program. With more than 80% of the DOE's own reviewers saying they would not recommend...with at least 75% of classes having a zero or one score in rigor! Pandemic or no pandemic, this is just unacceptable quality for Hawaii students. Pandemic aside- of course with minimal or non-existent rigor and inconsistent quality students using this program would be facing learning loss.

Just this week I am getting messages from both parents and teachers who say their schools have no intention of transitioning off of the program until next year, despite their best efforts to engage with school leadership. Even got an email stating that Acellus is being used in the classroom setting now, for some schools who have transitioned to full, in-person learning. Many schools seem to have taken the BOE directive as a license, even an endorsement, to continue

with the program. These schools are making no effort to shift to a more quality option or teacher-led instruction, and with ZERO communication to parents on what was discovered during this review.

My own kids' school, along with many others, thankfully took parent and teacher concerns seriously, dropping Acellus within days despite lack of support or monies from the DOE. Now, our local Hawaii teachers teach them, using a number of digital tools as a PART of their curriculum like Wonders, iReady, GoMath, etc. No single plug-and-play option outsourced from the mainland will meet Hawaii education standards for our students. This sentiment is echoed in page 2 of the Superintendent's Acellus update, and on that we can agree.

A number of schools, with no additional funding or support, are building their own homegrown, locally-developed distance learning curriculum. I have asked this question for at least 3 months and have not received an answer. **Where is the money the DOE was working with their loss department to recoup from the vendor?** This was reported in the Star Advertiser on 10/19/20. **All these reviews, and committees, and meetings and we still don't have an answer to that simple question.** Please ask the DOE to answer this question. If a program violates students' rights, would a refund not be warranted? Has any member of the DOE or the individual schools filed a Consumer Complaint with the Missouri Attorney General for student rights' violations, lack of overall quality and rigor? There are 140-pages worth of evidence to substantiate such a complaint, and \$2.8 million dollars to potentially redistribute to local schools if it were recouped.

Some school-specific feedback from anonymous parents and educators:

- Kalama Inter., educator reports Acellus still being used, despite advocacy to have it removed by teachers
- In November, Kea'au El. teachers replaced Acellus with their own homegrown, asynchronous curriculum. Unfortunately, kindergarten students are being placed BACK on Acellus on 1/19/21 for their core classes, according to the school's website.
- Kealakehe Elementary is reportedly continuing to use Acellus, despite advocacy from educators for higher-quality for their students
- Lokelani Intermediate; educator reports they continue to use this program
- Parent report Kalaheo high is still using Acellus
- Mililani Ike El., parent reports continued use of Acellus through third quarter with no other option available
- Mililani HS, parent not provided an alternative to Acellus
- Pololo El, reportedly still using Acellus
- Ma'e Ma'e El, parent reports not being allowed another option
- Maunawili El, parents reports they must go hybrid to opt out (no full-distance option for them)
- Waihe'e School, Acellus reported as the only option

*I do my best to ensure these reports from parents and teachers are up-to-date and accurate. If I have incorrect information, or you would like to add to this list, please inform me at phaseoutfairly@gmail.com

Quote from an educator on Maui who has dealt with numerous parent complaints about Acellus:

"...is only offering Acellus to full distance learners. The students get no supplemental instruction or access to teachers. I have had parents ask about the rigor of Acellus and have directed them to our admin. It's really unfortunate that some of our most disadvantage students are also those that have opted for distance learning because they have medically fragile family members. The parents do not understand that they have a choice to not accept the program. The administration just tells everyone their choice is to work online without any teachers or to send their kids to school. I tried to provide parents with information and send them to our administrators. The parents are not willing to go against the administration for fear of their child having to return to campus. The distance-learning contract states that if a child is not making progress in online program they will be forced to come back to school or drop out and homeschool. I do not believe parents understand their rights and not accepting this program. They are scared to send their kids to school and honestly on our campus they should be."

What is working about distance learning??

"My school is doing a hybrid. Online classes are the same as if it were in person with the exception that they log in virtually.

The school and teachers are remarkably keeping their classes motivational and rigorous with getting academic needs met."

"As a parent, I think Pearl Ridge El teachers have done a commendable job with distance learning"

"I have 2 teachers from one school with vastly different attitudes to the process. One tries to create normalcy by staying positive and innovative in her approach. She has 15 kindergarteners amazingly engaged and ready for anything. The other teacher is constantly reminding the kids about how things "should" be and reminding the kids that what they are doing now is not how it "should" be. Thus I have one child excited and ready to do class and accomplish things and one who feels it is all torture. Attitude matters. Same goes for us as parents, it means that no matter how hard I want to complain about things when my daughter is around I try to encourage her to respect and stay engaged no matter what."

Thank you for considering this testimony. I am deeply grateful to the parents and teacher who contributed their experiences here, as well as the Board and Chair(s) for their attention to this matter. It is evident that earnest attention is paid to testimony, as we hear our sentiments and questions brought up by Board members and Chair(s) who we rely on to hold our leaders accountable and ensure our students get the best education possible.

Respectfully,
Heather Moselle



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

Testimony

1 message

Benjamin Hostetler <benjamin.hostetler@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 2:19 PM

Aloha,

My name is Ben Hostetler. I am a 7th Grade Science Teacher at Kalama Intermediate School on Maui. I am writing to testify in regards to the Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I believe that the proposed cuts and loss of positions statewide will negatively impact our students and our entire public education system for years or decades to come. In the midst of this economic crisis, these cuts will only serve to widen the gap between the rich and poor families in our state, and will ultimately severely impact the opportunities available to lower income families for generations.

The idea that the DOE is planning to use upwards of 50 million dollars in federal funding to hire "private tutors" instead of using this money to retain qualified teachers and avoid furloughs is both incredibly irresponsible, and frankly, a slap in the face to every teacher who potentially faces losing their position. In my opinion, it also shows how out of touch ranking members of the DOE are with what is occurring in our classrooms and what is best for the students.

Our students need dedicated teachers who live and work in their communities, who understand their lives and their needs. Our communities need a public education system that is well funded, and that they can rely on to deliver high quality educational opportunities for any member of the community, not just those who can afford to send their kids to private school. Our teachers need a work place where they are secure in their jobs and receive adequate pay for the hard work that they do.

The 14th Amendment to the US Constitution provides that a state may not "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws". Being that public education is a branch of the state, and taking into account the concept of Free and Appropriate Public Education outlined in IDEA, it stands to reason that every single student in the state of Hawai'i should have equal access to free, quality public education. These proposed cuts are no less than a blatant violation of these basic principles.

I believe that these proposed cuts, and the planned allocation of federal funds are unacceptable and must be avoided. Our teachers, our communities, and most importantly our students, all deserve better.

Mahalo,
Ben Hostetler

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

Testimony

1 message

Keone & Steph <kunis@hawaiiantel.net>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 2:24 PM

Aloha,

My name is Stephanie Kuniyoshi, and I am the school librarian at Wahiawa Elementary School. I am testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I am completely against any and all budget cuts at the school level. At schools like mine, where the children come from very low socioeconomic backgrounds, they NEED every support and adult that they can get at school. They need me, their school librarian, to support and encourage their literacy development - - reading, writing, speaking and listening. They need me, their school librarian, to build their confidence in these areas that they lack. They need me, their school librarian, to support their classroom teacher, so their teacher can provide a full and enriched curriculum. They need their counselors to support and develop their social and emotional well being. They need every adult (from cafeteria supervisors, to traffic monitors to their technology teacher) on campus to help and support their learning and social development. They need us ALL now more than ever! They need MORE of us, not less!

A budget cut at the school level, is a cut to a child; a hurt to the child. We need to heal and overcome and move forward; not cut and go backwards.

Thank you for your consideration,

Stephanie Kuniyoshi
Librarian
Wahiawa Elementary School



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

Testimony

1 message

tammy holt <tammy8707@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 2:32 PM

I am testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

- I do not support the **HIDOE is proposed** use of stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors.
- Highly qualified teachers should be retained as they have the classroom experience and knowledge of the needs of their students. Further, they possess knowledge of their school culture. These experienced, professional teachers are effective at their job and can hit the ground running.
- We simply cannot afford a pay cut or loss of position. Any cuts directly affect our cost of living. Pay cuts would affect my car payment, mortgage payment, and household utility budget.
- As a classroom teacher, I greatly appreciate any help that Sped services can bring. I see a direct effect on a child's life. Kindergarten is a crucial grade where the acquisition of skills and the use of those skills are imperative for a child to learn. Speech services, O.T. P.T services and behavioral services are LIFE CHANGING for a young child. We must invest in our keiki young. We must help our students get back what they have lost in the last eight months.
- Classroom services are not the place to cut.

Mahalo for providing the opportunity to submit my testimony

Sincerely,
Tammy M. Holt M.ED



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

Testimony

1 message

Rosenlee, Corey <CRosenlee@hsta.org>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 2:52 PM

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

I am including two attachments to be included for testimony for the finance and infrastructure committee. BOE testimony first, HSTA ltr second. Thank you

Agenda item IV. A.

Corey Rosenlee

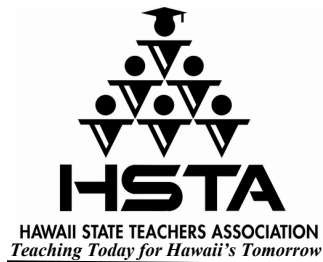
HSTA President

2 attachments**BOE TESTIMONY MOE 1 21 (2).docx**

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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, JANUARY 21, 2021

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

AGENDA ITEM: IV. Recommendation for Action A. Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill

To Chair Uemura and Finance and Infrastructure Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association strongly urges the Hawaii State Board of Education to delay approving the Hawaii State Department of Education's [stimulus funds plan](#). If passed, the HIDOE plan will violate recently passed federal law, [Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021](#) (H.R. 133), hurt relations with the state Legislature, and cause long-term, lasting damage to Hawaii's keiki and their teachers.

The HIDOE's budget, under the governor's proposed budget to the Legislature, is \$264 million less from the FY20 base. The HIDOE's stimulus funding proposal only uses \$54 million out of the \$183.5 million stimulus funding to mitigate the devastating impact these cuts will have on our schools. The academic and financial plans submitted by principals for next school year will lead to 1,300 school employees losing their jobs, including nearly 800 teachers. The submitted academic and financial plans only show a partial picture of the HIDOE's plan, because not restoring cuts to the base budget will require an additional \$50 million in cuts to continue next year, which could lead to more than 1,700 positions being lost, including more than 1,000 teachers.

Furthermore, the governor's proposed HIDOE budget and the HIDOE's proposed use of the stimulus funds violate H.R. 133, the most recent federal stimulus law.

H.R. 133 states:

[MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT](#)

SEC. 317. (a) At the time of award of funds to carry out sections 312 or 313 of this title, a State shall provide assurances that such State will maintain support for elementary



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and secondary education, and for higher education (which shall include State funding to institutions of higher education and state needs-based financial aid, and shall not include support for capital projects or for research and development or tuition and fees paid by students) in fiscal year 2022 at least at the proportional levels of such State's support for elementary and secondary education and for higher education relative to such State's overall spending, averaged over fiscal years 2017, 2018, and 2019.

Among all departments in the state, the governor's proposed cuts are the highest for the HIDOE. The FY22 budget is more than a 2% decrease from the average of FY17, FY18, and FY19 budgets. This 2% decrease next fiscal year is, by HSTA's preliminary estimate, a reduction of nearly \$170 million from its base budget. The governor's current proposal violates the stimulus bill by supplanting the funding designated for education to balance the state's budget, which Congress designed Section 317 to avoid.

Furthermore, H.R. 133 also states:

CONTINUED PAYMENT TO EMPLOYEES

SEC. 315. A local educational agency, State, institution of higher education, or other entity that receives funds provided under the heading "Education Stabilization Fund", shall, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to coronavirus.

The HIDOE's proposed budget for stimulus funds calls for \$63 million to fund private tutors and summer school while asking principals to fire even more employees. This violates Section 315 of H.R. 133. A clear reading of the bill shows that the HIDOE is not meeting the standard of trying "to the greatest extent practicable" to pay its employees and contractors during this period of disruption. To clarify whether the intent of the bill protects current school positions, we can look at an [executive order issued by Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont](#).

Stephen Sedor, an education and labor law attorney with the firm Pullman & Comley, explains in the online article, [Executive Order 7R: Its Impact and Obligations on Connecticut School Districts](#):

Just as the CARES Act requires school districts to continue to employ individuals to the "reasonable extent practicable," so does Executive Order 7R. In fact, the Order goes so far as to say that school districts should restore the employment of those who have already been laid off. The specific language states, in relevant part, that school districts:



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"[s]hall continue to employ or restore to employment if already laid off, and pay school staff who are directly employed by the local or regional board of education, including but not limited to teachers, paraprofessionals and other support staff, cafeteria staff, clerical staff and custodial workers, to the greatest extent practicable."

The intent behind the Order is clear; school districts should seek to maintain their employees as best they can.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction also has [given similar directions to its local educational agencies](#) (LEAs), stating the following when it comes to the maintenance of pay:

As part of the application process for CARES Act grants, the local educational agency's (LEA's) Authorizer, will need to attest to one of the following:

- The LEA has been paying, and will continue to pay, employees and contractors in the same manner as before any disruptions or closures related to the coronavirus.*
- The LEA has discontinued payments to any employee or contractor during disruptions or closures related to the coronavirus, but will resume these payments upon receipt of CARES Act funds.*
- The LEA will continue to pay employees and contractors to the greatest extent practicable. The LEA will be required to provide a reasonable explanation as to why the LEA is unable to pay its employees and contractors in the same manner as before any disruptions or closures related to the coronavirus, and how payments to employees and contractors will be made to the greatest extent practicable.*

These provisions suggest that the state of Hawaii can neither reduce education positions nor furlough employees. There is no doubt the federal legislation requires both the use of stimulus funds, additional funding from the governor, and potential revenue increases from the Legislature to avoid school cuts and furloughs.

The Legislature's burden of finding additional revenue was evident at a [joint Senate hearing](#) with the committees on Ways and Means and Education last week. Senators were visibly upset and repeatedly asked about the amount of funding needed to balance the HDOE budget to avoid job losses. State Sen. Michelle Kidani stated, "We're taking away from students and schools that need this funding now."

Suppose the BOE approves this request for additional spending to use 33% of the recent stimulus funds on private tutors and summer school before dealing with the \$264 million budget loss. Such a move will create an additional burden for state lawmakers to find more revenue.



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In HSTA's opinion, this action will only infuriate lawmakers, putting at risk the Legislature's approval of the HIDOE's funding requests and assuring layoffs and furloughs. If the HIDOE applies most of the stimulus funding to the deficit and then requests additional legislative funding, an important message will be sent from the HIDOE and BOE that they are working with the Legislature to mitigate loss.

In these stimulus budget requests, the superintendent and the HIDOE clarify that their highest priority is to deal with learning loss created by this pandemic and the need to go to distance learning. HSTA fully agrees that there has been learning loss because of the pandemic, but we don't understand how firing teachers and hiring private tutors will improve learning. The loss of teacher positions will lead to higher class sizes and the reduction of many programs. Special education losses will mean fewer services and potentially lead to federal free appropriate public education (FAPE) violations for students with special needs.

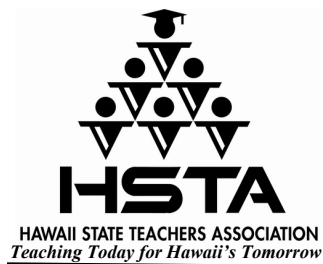
Even if tutors bring short-term help, the HIDOE's budget request for these services is not long term. Losing qualified teachers and hundreds of other HIDOE positions will harm our public schools in the long term. Hawaii has seen how hard it is to recruit and retain qualified teachers, a challenge made worse by furloughs and stagnant pay during the last recession over a decade ago. The firing of more than 1,000 teachers and other school employees will devastate Hawaii's education system and have consequences for years or decades to come.

Before the BOE approves the HIDOE's request, these important questions must be answered:

1. How will the federal stimulus bill's requirements reshape the governor's education budget?
2. How will the Council on Revenues projections for FY20–21 and FY21–22 of an additional \$471.65 million in revenues for the current and next fiscal year impact the governor's budget?
3. How has the \$10 million of [Governor's Emergency Education Relief](#) (GEER) funding given to the governor to spend on education been spent?
4. How will the governor spend the \$4.4 million in additional GEER funding?
5. How much money has the department saved this year due to distance learning? For example, savings from reduced busing, utilities, personnel, travel, etc.?

In the next few days, we will see what changes Gov. Ige has made to his budget. President-elect Biden has also proposed an additional [\\$130 billion for K-12 public schools](#) and [\\$350 billion for states and local governments](#). We should wait to see how many of these proposals Congress approves and wait to answer the questions listed above before the BOE decides how to use stimulus funding in Hawaii. HSTA sees no reason why the BOE has to approve this budget now before these critical questions can be answered.

If the BOE feels the urgency to do something now, then the money should be moved to alleviate deficits at the school level to preserve school positions and avoid devastating cuts. Those prudent moves would avoid violating H.R. 133 and protect our keiki for years and decades to follow.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
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Corey Rosenlee
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Colleen Hanabusa
Attorney at Law, Limited Liability Law Company
3660 Waokanaka Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

January 19, 2021

Attorney Client Communication/Confidential

VIA EMAIL: crosenlee@hsta.org

Mr. Corey Rosenlee, President
HSTA
1200 Ala Kapua Street
Honolulu, HI 96819

Re: Federal Funds in the New COVID-19 Relief Package and
Annual Federal Spending Bill

Dear Mr. Rosenlee:

This letter is in response to your request for an opinion as to the Board of Education Finance and Infrastructure Committee ("Finance Committee") agenda action, scheduled for Thursday, January 21, 2021, identified as, "Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill."

It is my recommendation that the HSTA respectfully request that the Finance Committee defer action until such time that it can carefully analyze whether the proposed action item would violate the Department's and Governor's representations made in their respective Certificate and Agreement for Funding under the Education Stabilization Fund of the CARES Act and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021.

It is my opinion that the proposed agenda action item along with the proposed biennium budget cuts violates the acts.

BACKGROUND

It is undisputed that we as a state and as a nation are experiencing an unprecedented crisis. No one in recent history can recount a pandemic such as the novel coronavirus which we are attempting to endure. Our country has responded with a series of relief bills from March 6, 18, 27th and April 24. The March 27th bill, HR 748 is what we refer to as CARES Act and for this memo we will refer to it as "CARES Act I." Last month the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 ("CARES Act II") became law on December 27, 2020. The CARES Act I was funded at 2.2 Trillion dollars and CARES Act II at 900 Billion dollars.

Since March our country and we have, understandably, focused our attention on the health related issues such as the vaccines, PPEs, grants to medical professionals and institutions. The secondary focus has been on economic issues such the stimulus checks, PPP (small businesses), unemployment insurance enhancements and the direct grants in the CARES Act I to the states and local governments.

Unfortunately, we have not studied as carefully as we should have, the direct grants as set forth in Division B of the CARES Act I. We must focus now on the US Department of Education (“DOE”) and the creation of the Education Stabilization Fund (“ESF”) in the CARES Act I. Note that the ESF is also found in CARES Act II with about 2 ½ times increased funding from CARES Act I for education.

Through the ESF, the DOE was given \$30.75 Billion in CARES Act I. The ESF is comprised of three separate funds: 1) GEER (Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund); 2) ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund); and 3) HEER (Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund). The allocation was as follows in CARES Act I: GEER \$3 Billion, ESSER \$13.2 Billion and HEER \$14 Billion.

CARES Act II (the subject of the Finance Committee’s action on Thursday) grants \$81.88 Billion which is divided as follows: GEER II-\$4 Billion; ESSER II -\$54 Billion and HEER \$22 Billion. Note that for ESSER (what HSTA is concerned with) it is more than a 4 times increase in funding.

The question is how does this translate to Hawai‘i? It is formula based. In other words what Hawai‘i (HIDOE) received in the CARES Act I should be in a similar proportion. For example, HIDOE received \$43 million in CARES Act I and will now receive \$183.595 Million. Similarly GEER was \$9.93 Million and the Governor should receive an increase, proportionate to a one third increase in funding (3 to 4 Billion).

HIDOE PROPOSAL

A 9 page memo dated January 21, 2021 addressed to Mr. Kenneth Uemura, Chair of the Finance Committee from Superintendent Kishimoto sets for what she as the State Education Authority (“SEA”) proposes to use the CARES Act II funds for, specifically the ESSER II. I should also be mentioned that the “Annual Federal Spending Bill” should also see an increase because it is formulas based as well. HIDOE does not have amount but under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, the annual allocation was increased by slightly over 1%. HIDOE should experience a similar increase. (Specifically the DOE has \$73.5 billion in discretionary spending, an increase of \$785 million.)

Notwithstanding, it is imperative that HSTA object to the use of the ESSER II funds and to the cuts in position as proposed for the reason that the State will be in violation of the CARES Act I and II.

OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE CARES ACT I AND II

It is unclear as to whether the Finance Committee is aware of the representations made by the Governor and the Superintendent to the DOE to receive the funds under CARES Act I and II. I have not seen a signed copy of a GEER but I assume to receive the funds, the Governor executed a Certificate of Agreement. Superintended Kishimoto has signed a Certificate of Agreement for CARES Act I but I have not seen a signed copy for CARES Act II.

I must emphasize the significance of the Certificate of Agreement. In order to understand this, you need to go back to provisions of CARES Act I relating to Education. As an aside, I believe it is a correct statement that Congress in passing and the President in signing the CARES Acts were making strong commitments to Education, the Teachers, Professors, employees and even contractors. The following provisions are found in the CARES Acts and I could not find similar wording for any other department, especially the commitment to continue to pay the employees, and the requirements as to the State level of funding:

From CARES Act II:

CONTINUED PAYMENT TO EMPLOYEES SEC. 315. A local educational agency, State, institution of higher education, or other entity that receives funds provided under the heading “Education Stabilization Fund”, **shall, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to coronavirus.**

(emphasis added).

The identical language is found in SEC. 18006 of CARES Act I.

...

MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT SEC. 317. (a) At the time of award of funds to carry out sections 312 or 313 of this title, a State shall provide assurances that such State will maintain support for elementary and secondary education, and for higher education (which shall include State funding to institutions of higher education and state need-based financial aid, and shall not include support for capital projects or for research and development or tuition and fees paid by students) in fiscal year 2022 at least at the proportional levels of such State’s support for elementary and secondary education and for higher education relative to such State’s overall spending, averaged over fiscal years 2017, 2018, and 2019.

(b) The Secretary may waive the requirement in subsection (a) for the purpose of relieving fiscal burdens on States that have experienced a **precipitous** decline in financial resources.

(emphasis added).

Under CARES ACT I, this provision which is Section 18008 reads slightly different, as follows:

SEC. 18008. (a) A State's application for funds to carry out sections 18002 or 18003 of this title shall include assurances that the State will maintain support for elementary and secondary education, and State support for higher education (which shall include State funding to institutions of higher education and state needbased financial aid, and shall not include support for capital projects or for research and development or tuition and fees paid by students) in fiscal years 2020 and 2021 at least at the levels of such support that is the average of such State's support for elementary and secondary education and for higher education provided in the 3 fiscal years preceding the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) [Identical for SEC 317 (b)]

Note that what is significant is the under CARES Act I the representation is that the State shall maintain support at the "levels of such support that is the average of the State's support for elementary and secondary education . . . provided in the 3 fiscal year preceding the date of the enactment of this Act." In CARES Act II the identical fiscal years are used and it is not permitting the averaging for the level of funding to include 2020 which should evidence a reduction in spending, attributed to the novel coronavirus.

REPRESENTATIONS BY SEA AND GOVERNOR TO DOE.

It is important to note that the SEA (Kishimoto) and the Governor made these affirmative representations to receive their respective funds:

The GEER contains the provisions:

- The State will comply with the maintenance of effort provision in Section 18008(a) of Division B of the CARES Act absent waiver by the Secretary pursuant to Section 18008(b) thereof.
- The State, and each LEA, IHE, and other education-related entity that receives GEER funds will, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to COVID-19 in compliance with Section 18006 of Division B of the CARES Act.

(Found at page 4 of the GEER Certificate of Agreement).

It is also critical to note that when the Governor signs the Certificate, a condition of receiving the funds, he signs below this statement:

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this certification and agreement are true and correct. I acknowledge and agree that the failure to comply with all Assurances and Certifications in this Agreement, all relevant provisions and requirements of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act or CARES Act, Pub. L. No. 116-136 (March 27, 2020), or any other applicable law or regulation may result in liability under the False Claims Act, 31 U.S.C. § 3729, *et seq.*; OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485; and 18 USC § 1001, as appropriate.

(I again note that I have not found a signed copy of the GEER; but in your discussions, you should secure a copy of what was executed and also learn what the funds were used for, if at all.)

On May 13, 2020, Superintendent Kishimoto signed the “Certification and Agreement for Funding under the Education Stabilization Fund Program Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER Fund)” for CARES Act I funds. She made the following representations:

6. The SEA will comply with the maintenance of effort provision in Section 18008(a) of Division B of the CARES Act absent waiver by the Secretary pursuant to Section 18008(b) thereof.

7. The SEA and each LEA and other entity that receives ESSER funds will, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to COVID-19 in compliance with Section 18006 of Division B of the CARES Act. In addition, each entity that accepts funds will continue to pay employees and contractors to the greatest extent practicable based on the unique financial circumstances of the entity. CARES Act funds generally will not be used for bonuses, merit pay, or similar expenditures, unless related to disruption s or closure result from COVID.

(Found at pages 2-3 of the Certificate executed.)

Similarly to the GEER Certificate, the SEA Kishimoto signed below the following:

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this certification and agreement are true and correct. I acknowledge and agree that the failure to comply with all Assurances and Certifications in this Agreement, all relevant provisions and requirements of the CARES Act, Pub. L. No. 116-136 (March 27, 2020), or any other applicable law or regulation may result in liability under the False Claims Act, 31 U.S.C. § 3729, *et seq.*; OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485; and 18 USC § 1001, as appropriate.

ANALYSIS

As stated above, the commitment to education resulted with the very strong provisions of CONTINUED PAYMENT TO EMPLOYEES and the MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT, in both CARES Acts. To do with the HIDOE is proposing is in violation of these provisions.

The fact that Congress included the Continued Payment to Employees and Maintenance of Effort shows that the monies for Education comes with the obligation that the State does its part. Its part is the promise that to the “**greatest extent practicable**” continue to pay the employees. It doesn’t mean to furlough and to layoff teachers. Let us also be clear that I do not believe it will be found that to follow an across the board furloughs or layoffs will satisfy the requirement that the HIDOE exercised the greatest extent practicable.

Moreover as to the level of funding, I find that the HIDOE and the Governor is not complying with the promises made. At first glance, it appears that the HIDOE is not complying with the proportionate requirement of the level of funding. Ironically, the BOE should be standing with the HSTA on this issue to ensure the level of funding is met.

This is assuming that there has been no waiver of this provision. I have not found and you should request it, if it exists, a waiver of the Maintenance of Effort. If the HIDOE is proposing or will be proposing a waiver to comply with the Governor’s across the board furloughs and layoffs, then he and the SEA must show there is a “**precipitous**” decline in financial resources. Given the admitted to projection by the Council of Revenues of an additional \$471.65 million for the current and next fiscal year with a cumulative increase over \$1.8 billion for FY 2020-2021 through FY 2026-2027, it will not qualify as a precipitous decline.

RECOMMENDATION

For the above stated reasons, it would be prudent to request a deferral of this action and to learn from the BOE as to where they stand on this issue. I would find it difficult to believe the BOE which has a fiduciary duty to education and the students will ignore the requirements of the law. It should be pointed out to the BOE that in their "Policy 400-4" that any recommended "restriction or reductions" that they meet one or more of the following criteria:

(1) that all students will continue to receive equal opportunities for all educational programs or services of all library uses will continue to receive equal services; (2) that the well-being of students or library users are protected; and (3) that all judicially-and legally-mandated programs and services are preserved.

Clearly, not one the criteria is met.

It is difficult to believe how the BOE could find that the legally mandated requirements of the CARES Act I and II are being met by these proposed cuts. At the very minimum they owe HSTA an explanation as to how they would arrive at such a decision.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Colleen Hanabusa



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

Testimony

1 message

Michael Kline <mikekline999@msn.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 3:37 PM

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

Dear Hawai'i Board of Education members:

I am testifying on the Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I am a National Board Certified Special Education Preschool Teacher at Kilauea School on the island of Kaua'i. I have been teaching with the HIDEO for 22 years now. At Kilauea School, 2 full time teachers, .5 Educational Assistant, 2 PTTs for PE/Music, our PCNC, and an adult supervisor will be cut in the proposed budget proposals before the HIBOE. This will severely impact our students and their learning at our school. This will create larger class sizes and less support for our students and parents. Why do subjects like music and pe always get cut first when they are proven to help with academic learning? We have a very challenging Special Education population at our school. By taking away one of our valued EA's, it will negatively impact the support we can give to our SPED population.

The proposed furloughs to teachers will impact teachers as well. Personally, because of the proposed furloughs I have chosen to work a couple of other jobs to make up for the lost wages due to the proposed furloughs. This only takes away from what I would rather do for my own students. How will all these cuts help our schools?

Please do not pass these budget cuts; they will harm our students and schools for years to come. A shortage of teachers will only be exacerbated further with these cuts. Please consider that under our new president, more funds may become available to avoid these proposed cuts. The HIDEO is proposing using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors.

Please do not make these budget cuts.

Sincerely

Michael J. Kline



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

**Testimony for Board of Education Finance and Infrastructure Committee Meeting
Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. item IV.A; General Business Meeting
Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. item V.B.**

1 message

Lynn Otaguro <lmotaguro@yahoo.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 4:01 PM

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

January 19, 2021

Board of Education
State of Hawaii

Re January 21, 2021

BOE Finance and Infrastructure Committee Meeting at 11:00 a.m., Item IV.A. Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending

BOE General Meeting at 1:30 p.m., Item V.B. Board Action on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendations concerning Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending

Honorable Chair Payne and members of the Board:

In determining the DOE budget, effective planning must still consider COVID-19 issues.

Given the likelihood of ongoing concerns, health and safety issues will still haunt our schools.

Some of these issues can be addressed with little or no additional funding.

Masks. One low cost action that can be taken is amending the DOE mask wearing guidelines to be consistent with the Governor's emergency proclamation and the CDC and DOH guidance. In addition, the DOE can work on clear messaging about the importance of wearing masks and consistent enforcement of mask wearing in all of our schools.

Community education and professional development on COVID-19 issues. Community education and professional development on COVID-19 and the importance of following health and safety protocols also would strengthen the COVID-19 response. The delegation of authority on COVID-19 plans to individual schools and complexes without more oversight of health and safety issues has led to uneven application of health and safety protections, depending on different administrators' understanding of the disease and its transmission. Recently, Waialua High School held assemblies in spite of DOE guidelines against large gatherings. Surely, if there were a greater awareness about COVID-19, an administrator would not have pursued such assemblies. In news articles, reference was made to ceiling fans as a mitigating safety measure, when recent research indicates that ceiling fans could be a problem, actually spreading the disease.

If the DOE would like assistance with COVID-19 education for staff and families, there are community groups who are more than willing to donate their time. Other resources, such as a free

John Hopkins course on COVID-19 offered on the Coursera website, are available. These things, that involve little additional financial resources, can be done to improve schools' health and safety response.

In the DOE budget, priority must be given to the staffing necessary for in person instruction.

As this Board has stated previously, in considering questions of funding and budget cuts in education, the core functions of teaching and learning must be protected. This means funding the teachers and staff in our schools. For in person instruction during this time of COVID-19, teachers and staff are critical for implementing health and safety protocols and to ensure lower numbers of students in classes and social distancing.

Core classroom instruction should be protected. In its proposal for the use of federal funding, the DOE asks for approval of \$53 million for private tutoring to address students falling behind during this pandemic. However, it does not make sense to pay for tutoring while cutting monies and personnel dedicated to core classroom instruction. Will it be helpful to have tutoring when the number of students in classrooms are higher and where the resources for classroom instruction are impaired?

Resources kept in the schools are better in the short and long term. In the alternative, if it is determined that tutoring is the preferred route, it should be done through the schools rather than private contractors. Schools already know their students and instructional programs, and can better plan strategies and coordinate services in line with known needs, curriculum, and practices. Much of the effectiveness of programs relies on the relationship between a teacher and student; school staff members already have relationships with their students.

Further, keeping resources in the schools better maintains their effectiveness and viability going forward. If they do the tutoring themselves, schools will have the information on planning and results of the tutoring program, and will be better able to use that information in their other classroom and instructional decisions. In addition, there is a benefit in keeping teachers and staff in place within the school to better retain them for future needs. If tutoring is the preferred path, schools should be funded to do the work, rather than private contractors.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Lynn Otaguro
Oahu, Hawaii



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

Testimony for Finance and Infrastructure Committees action item IV.A.

1 message

Karen Comcowich <kcomcowich@yahoo.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 4:04 PM

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

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

This testimony is in regards to the Finance and Infrastructure Committee's recommendation for action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I OPPOSE the recommended action of using funds to pay private tutors when our public schools need the funds to pay teachers and support staff.

Instead, the majority of the the Federal Aid should be distributed to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, so that schools can retain qualified teachers and support staff.

To be honest, I was excited when I read tutoring might be free next year. It has been very stressful being not only the parent but also the tutor for my daughters during these crazy times. HOWEVER, when I realized HDOE was planning to cut teachers and other staff and use the federal money for tutors, I was appalled.

Despite all the challenges, teachers (including Specials teachers, SPED teachers, and educational assistants) have been making this year work. After changing how, when and where they work, often with little notice, teachers are still motivating and inspiring kids. Like most kids, my girls are eager to go to in person classes, but because of how their teachers have risen to the challenge my girls also are excited for their zoom classes and want to do their best.

I have two very different children. My younger child enjoys being part of Kula Kaiapuni. Her teacher created a beautiful and interactive on-line classroom. It was so easy to navigate. Somehow she has managed to expand the kids vocabulary in Hawaiian even though they are not in-person.

My older child needs more help. She has an IEP and gets services through the school for OT, Speech and help with reading and math. She (and I) have been fortunate that her teacher and support teacher have been able to make time to work with her virtually. She is making consistent progress despite the challenges of distance learning. It concerns me that if the budget/staff is cut she would lose the support that has helped her grow.

For instance, my Daughter's Occupational Therapist left at Christmas. She was an excellent OT. However, she was far from home and the threat of furloughs and loss of income added an extra and unnecessary burden.

Well funded schools are going to do more good for more students than private tutors. Please use the stimulus money to retain our qualified teachers and staff and show them how much we as a community value the work they do each day.

Mahalo for your time,
Karen J. Comcowich
Lahaina, HI
(808) 868-7805

Sent from Yahoo Mail. [Get the app](#)



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

Testimony for Finance and Infrastructure Committees action item IV.A.

1 message

Karen Comcowich <kcomcowich@yahoo.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 4:04 PM

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

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

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To be honest, I was excited when I read tutoring might be free next year. It has been very stressful being not only the parent but also the tutor for my daughters during these crazy times. HOWEVER, when I realized HDOE was planning to cut teachers and other staff and use the federal money for tutors, I was appalled.

Despite all the challenges, teachers (including Specials teachers, SPED teachers, and educational assistants) have been making this year work. After changing how, when and where they work, often with little notice, teachers are still motivating and inspiring kids. Like most kids, my girls are eager to go to in person classes, but because of how their teachers have risen to the challenge my girls also are excited for their zoom classes and want to do their best.

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Mahalo for your time,
Karen J. Comcowich
Lahaina, HI
(808) 868-7805

Sent from Yahoo Mail. [Get the app](#)



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

Board meeting 1/21/21 Testimony on iiaa and IV A and B general meeting

1 message

Cheryl B <burgharc@gmail.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 4:17 PM

To: Testimony BOE <Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony for 1/21/21 BOE meeting.

*To question and challenge the status quo, proposals or purpose of plans does not mean one is against them, it means that one is helping and hoping that everyone will dig deep to find the best solutions. They are not always found by looking in a box. Sometimes there is no box and it's important to look for spaces and places with no confinements to what we can achieve. We find them by including even those public school supporters who give us our greatest thought challenges**

9:30 Human Resource committee testimony iii A:

1. BOE strongly considers the paths that put the least amount of impact on the folks who work directly with students. The hierarchy of cuts should start from those farthest away from actually being with students. Are DOE admin./ CAS and those at district offices important, many, yes... but we need all hands on deck in the classrooms. I am sure that many paths have been researched but they appear to be using the same old formulas and methods. There are teachers that need to fill gaps and be in classrooms NOT in coaching or CAS offices right now.

2. BOE strongly considers whether the cuts apply equitably to all geographic areas. While on paper, it may appear to be so, we all know that some schools have an economic base that helps them fill in the gaps in their schools from community support \$\$\$. The squeaky wheel often has greater access to additional paths. It also does not address the transfer and movement of educators from those schools who need solid, strong, consistent people (a recurring problem in the DOE) which will affect students. This brings up the pay differentials. Let's find ways to keep them since we know they are working.

3. Cuts are also not addressing other issues for our keiki. Lack of wifi and resources received, continued exposure to racist, biased resources and health/welfare services.

4. Waiting for the federal government monies has not worked in the past, it most likely won't work this time either. THAT being said, I would ask that the BOE pull back on the use of the CARES monies until a complete review is held, looking at HR 133 and Sec. 317. Please make sure that we have reviewed every possibility.

5. We need to find permanent positive solutions. What happened to an outside committee of community folks to work with the BOE? There are very qualified people willing to help. If the same people are always talking together, then they only bring forth what they already know. Change the lens.

General Meeting IV A *

1. Regarding the Superintendent. When Dr. Kishimoto began, I saw possible strengths in sharing, willingness to learn about Hawai'i and to support the educators. Her experiences, I thought would provide a positive path forward for our schools. Over the past year, though, my confidence in her ability to take our DOE where it needs to be has eroded. During the COVID year, I had hoped to see her use her connections, intelligence and experience to lead us through this challenge. I regret, it seems that we have a leader who has been retaliatory and concerned about the connections to the politics of it all. I understand this is my lens' view but feel it important to share. Since COVID and her horrible handling of the Acellus online curriculum fiasco, many of us have lost confidence that the supt. is able to carry us forward into the DOE Hawai'i place-based, unique piko of learning for which the community aspires. We can not continually depend on solutions from the continent and western thinking on these islands. Though we are in a budget crisis, where is the first place the DOE looks for help? It's not the community here for sure. We have folks who have created and are creating management systems and resources here on these islands. How many are being considered? Did anyone look at what places like Japan in Asia are doing to help with schools and finances? The Ministry of Education is looking at partnerships for keeping people working in schools and business. Lastly, the morale of educators and community is the lowest I have seen in a long time. Firing teachers, then suggesting the use of private tutors, that's the path to the destruction of public school, it is a business model, not a Hawai'i model. Teachers have taken a lot of the blame for a system that is letting them down, not the other way around. Yes, we are in harrowing times but you don't turn on and exclude the folks who are the lifeline to education, the keiki and the community. Leadership means more than just the budget and politics, we need a strong leader right now.

General Meeting IV B.

I have read through and reread the presentation sent by the Supt. to the BOE regarding Acellus.

Direct comments to the report.

#1 Communication was inconsistent to the schools, implementation and procedures following directive from BOE also inconsistent, Supt. communication unapologetic nor helpful. What is this *"the HIDOE will work closely with schools to move forward expeditiously to allow schools and families who want to discontinue using Acellus to transition to another program. The HIDOE is committed to minimizing disruption to students and families to the greatest extent possible."* for example. This appears to give permission to continue Acellus. It has been shared that some schools are receiving grants to do so. THE REASON it is policy to not use is that it is racist, biased materials, this doesn't change with who pays for it. As others have written to you in their testimonies, schools are using it and Acellus appears still on many school websites. We have also not heard about how the "vendors" will be helping to get monies back paid for Acellus. This should be a priority with the DOE and perhaps the Attorney General's office?

#2 While it's great that Acellus has begun to be addressed, what about the other online programs with similar or unacceptable content? This week, I had a parent point out to me inappropriate content from Teen Biz and Achieve 3000. Who is looking at the content on those sites as well as reviewing the other resources currently in use? Who vetted the new K-12 program that we were told is being piloted? We ask and ask but get no responses. Has there been discussion of the use of the 1776 Patriot curriculum? If not, there needs to be. There needs to be a policy decision on it immediately. What has happened to the strongly place-based Nā Hopena A'o and Hā? This is the direction we should be headed for our islands.

#3 Excited to see and learn more about the curriculum management system. How many school educators are actually involved in its inception? It would seem that the more who are working in it now, the less time and \$\$ will be needed for "professional development". Is it being piloted right now and how does it factor in the Hawaiian language use?

Unlike my usual testimony, this got a bit long so here is the summary:

1. Review and come up with a way to keep all educators in jobs with current pay and status. Work with the legislature on finding new and innovative ways to fund our schools. Review the Corona Cares policies and procedures before continuing further. Ensure that all schools are receiving equitable response during these challenging times.
2. Strongly consider whether Dr. Kishimoto's leadership style and direction is in the best interest of our schools and keiki.
3. Reaffirm to the community that Acellus and any other racist, biased, Eugenic-leaning resources will not be allowed in our public school classrooms. This includes the 1776 Commission. Set up policy, procedures and oversight to ensure that this occurs.
4. Remind the DOE administration, BOE and others that these are the Hawai'i Public Schools in the islands of Hawai'i and our focus should always be place-based for our keiki.

Thank you for reading this testimony submission.

C. Burghardt

Retired DOE Educator



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

Testimony

1 message

Renee Murphy <pricessnay@hotmail.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 5:02 PM

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

How can you plan to cut teachers & school staff when we have been working extra hard since after spring break in March? It is a SHAME!!! We did not receive any extra financial support during COVID shutdown of schools & it is shameful to be cutting positions. We have had added stress since March and I did not sign up for it. I am a special education preschool teacher working a blended schedule with children that would be making more progress with more consistent and every day attendance. If I lose my educational assistant or even my position, I will not be able to survive financially & also mentally.

The HIDOE is proposing using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors. Why is it important to use these funds to retain our qualified teachers, instead of using these funds for private tutoring?

I am ashamed to say I work for the HIDOE especially with position cuts. They don't care about me, I am ashamed.

Reconsider

Sent from my iPhone



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

TESTIMONY

1 message

Susan Pcola-Davis <Supcola@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony_boe <Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 5:21 PM

FINANCE COMMITTEE TESTIMONY JANUARY 21, 2021 9:30

Susan A. Pcola-Davis



2021 January 21 Human Resources.docx
22K



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

Testimony

1 message

Amanda Seymore <hstaseymore@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 8:11 PM

Finance & Infrastructure Committee: IV. A

Aloha Board of Education Members,

My name is Amanda Lacar and I am currently in my 10th year of teaching. Please understand that I do see and understand the ramifications that COVID has had on our State, especially our budget.

I am providing testimony on the proposed DOE budget of how to use the funds, especially the +\$50million on Private after school tutors.

- Why does the DOE feel that the Private Tutors, who will not know the students, are more important than the students' teachers?
- Will EVERY SINGLE STUDENT be served by the private tutors? There are students that are not available after school for numerous reasons such as: the student is babysitting their younger siblings, some students ride the city bus for over an hour to get home from school and many students may play sports or have a job?
- How many students are with a private tutor? Is it face to face or virtual? How much does the private tutor get paid and how much does the company keep? Who selects the company or the private tutors?
- Does the DOE feel that a private tutor is better qualified than a licensed, non-tenured teacher or an Educational Assistant that is in the classroom?

I posed these questions because I feel that the Superintendent is trying to show that the Department of Education is not able to provide Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and private tutors are the only ones that can support the students in English and Math. How does a private tutor support the Whole Child? How does a private tutor system know the strengths and needs of the student?

I feel that the funds that are being allocated for Private Tutors could ensure more licensed qualified teachers can remain in the classroom, which will help with class size. I feel that the funds being allocated for Private Tutors could ensure that Special Education classrooms and the school in general, can have an adequate staff for Educational Assistants that are there to support ALL the students of that school. Probationary Teachers, those that are not tenured but have completed a State Approved Education Program and are licensed to be in the school but yet they are worried many of them will not have a teaching job next year.

Please do not allow +\$50 million to be used for Private Tutors but to ensure that all the students of Hawai'i have an opportunity to have a licensed teacher in their classroom for the 2021-2022 School Year.

Sincerely,

A teacher worried for the future of our students.



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

Testimony

1 message

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

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 8:52 PM

Testimony on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

Aloha board members,

My name is Mike Landes, and I am proud to be a social studies teacher at Lahainaluna High School on Maui and a parent of two amazing public school students. I also serve as HSTA's Maui Chapter President, and my oral testimony is being offered in that capacity. I submit this written testimony to you as an individual, speaking only for myself as a teacher, a parent, and a concerned community member.

The proposed budget cuts are an apparent violation of federal law...but more than that, they are also a horrible idea. It is completely illogical to accept the federal money and use it to pay for private tutors while also cutting qualified classroom teachers. The best way to ensure a continuity of education for our keiki is to keep their teachers teaching them. If you cut my son or daughter's teacher, no amount of private tutoring will make up for it. Tutoring is and has always been supplemental; what our keiki need is the best (and safest) education possible, not a supplement.

My school is currently projected to lose 7 teaching positions with these budget cuts. That is 10% of our faculty. Are you also expecting us to have a 10% reduction in student enrollment? If not, how do you propose my students receive the same level of education and services with a 10% reduction in the workforce that provides said education and services? Are they just expected to do without an art or music teacher? Do they just miss out on their Honors, AP, and other college-prep courses? How about their special education or ELL services? Do we just tell them and their parents' attorneys that this is the price we pay for not valuing (or adequately funding) education in this state? Or do we just expect teachers to (yet again) pick up the slack and do more with less, combining all those kids without teachers into classrooms that will over-inflate to 30 or 40 students per class? That would be a really unsafe idea in the age of COVID, not to mention it would be a tremendously unsound educational practice.

What do I tell my colleagues who have invested their blood, sweat, and tears at my school, who are now being told they won't have a job next year? It doesn't matter whether you call it "reduction in force", "staff reduction", "layoffs", or whatever...the net result is these fine people who give everything to their students, their school, and their community will get booted out. What do I tell my friend who, in a few short years has worked her way up onto the school's leadership group and has helped to guide the school through some of our most difficult times ever, and now may lose her job because she's low in seniority? What do I tell her students? What does our school do with the vacuum of leadership this will create? How many years will we stagnate and fail to provide what our students and our community need as we try to recover from these cuts? And how many students will miss out on how many opportunities in their own lives because of these misguided decisions? Who bears the responsibility for the misfortunes they will find in life as a result?

And what do I tell my co-workers who are now losing their jobs even though they are currently the sole bread-winners in their families, because their spouses have already lost their jobs or had their pay cut? What do I tell their children when they ask why their family is being evicted for being unable to pay rent, or when they ask why there's no food to eat? These cuts aren't just data points on a spreadsheet. These are human beings, with real human needs, whose lives will be inexcusably upended and thrown into disarray if you allow these cuts to go through.

These cuts are a violation of federal law. But it's more than that. These cuts are wrong, plain and simple. Cuts to public education are wrong. Cuts to working families are wrong. Cuts that eliminate services our keiki and our communities rely upon are wrong. My children, my students, my colleagues, my school, and my community deserve more. There is another way, and it is the morally right way. I urge you to reject the proposed budget cuts, to do what is legal and to do what is right.

Mahalo for your time,

1/20/2021

Dell Marketing LP Mail - Testimony

Mike Landes
Kihei, HI



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

Testimony

1 message

Vanessa Picon <vanessa.picon@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 9:36 PM

My name is Vanessa Knoepfel I am a teacher at Kahalu'u Elementary School. I am testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I disagree with the HDOE proposing using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors. These funds should retain qualified teachers that know and have built important relationships with students. How is a tutor more qualified than a teacher who has training and experience? If teachers lose their jobs because of lack of funding this will hurt students. Class sizes will get bigger, the quality of education will decline.

Thank you for your time,
Vanessa Knoepfel



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

Testimony

1 message

Mon Kie <m1kie0star@gmail.com>

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 9:40 PM

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

Aloha BOE,

I'm a homegrown teacher born and raised on the islands. I started working as 1:1 paraprofessional working with kids with autism then worked as an education assistant for 10 years, now I'm a special education teacher. As a special education teacher I've been teaching since the beginning of this school year in person with my students while at the same time teaching all my online sped students who choose not to return face today face. I work a second job to help pay my student bills and make ends meet. As a special Education teacher I'm constantly doing work through the evenings and weekends from posting assignments and grading on google classroom, assessing each student progress, creating draft iep's, finalizing iep's, scheduling meetings, coordinating with the iep team, and in constant communication with parents. That's just the surface of things as a special education teacher during this pandemic. Im burnt out and I don't want to teach anymore. I'm ready to quit, but will most likely finish out the year because I won't abandon my students. I recently got a job offer in the mainland NOT as a special education teacher and I'm highly considering leaving the islands where I was born and raised because the added workload and stress of the inconsistent roller coaster of not knowing if pay cuts are in the near future. I already have 2 jobs, but with the uncertainty of pay cuts I may need to find a 3rd job or leave the islands.

Mahalo,
Sped teacher



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

Testimony

1 message

green stem <greenestem808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 9:54 PM

Aloha

I am testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

My name is Dorese Greene from Nanakuli High and Intermediate School. I am a computer science teacher for 7th graders. I am proposing a solution to gain more funds. This plan I am proposing can be implemented immediately and the DOE can begin to gain more money immediately.

Currently me and a whole bunch of teachers on the island are walking into empty classrooms. There is no need for us to be going into an empty classroom to teach online classes. Any teacher who does not have any physical students in their classrooms at this time should remain home.

Therefore the operational funds to keep the school functioning can be cut and used elsewhere. (Operational funds-money that is needed for the school to be operational on a daily bases-electric bill, gas bill, water bill, etc...-operational daily costs.) Less people on campus means the less the electric bill will be. The less the gas bill will be. The less the water bill will be.

It is a waste of money for me to sit in an empty classroom with all the lights on teaching an online class. So this money plus the additional funding should be able to eliminate any cuts. So what happened to all the operational money that wasn't used in mid March-June 2020??????????

No one was in school, only admin from mid March - June 2020 but there was a budget for the daily operational costs or some type of money was used to pay these utilities. But since there were minimal normal operations happening where did the \$\$\$ go to????

Mahalo

--

Dorese Greene
Computer Science Teacher
Nanakuli High and Intermediate School
[89-980 Nanakuli Avenue](#)
[Waianae, HI 96792](#)
Phone: 808-305-7644
Cell: 808-840-3110
Email: greenestem808@gmail.com



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

Testimony

1 message

Raechelle Villanueva <rvillanueva@waialae.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 10:25 PM

Aloha Chair Payne and Members of the Board of Education,

My name is Raechelle Villanueva and I am a proud 3rd grade public charter school teacher and proud public school parent of two. I am writing in regards to the Finance and Infrastructure meeting agenda items on the presentation on impact of 2021-2023 fiscal biennium budget cuts on School and Complex Area levels and on Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill. I strongly oppose the DOE's proposed budget cuts and use of the federal COVID-19 federal stimulus funds.

First of all, the stimulus bills prohibit states from reducing public education budgets. Specific language was written in these stimulus bills by Congress that require states to fund education at the same level the states did in the three previous fiscal years before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Section 315 of the bill further states that local education agencies, "shall, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of disruptions or closures related to coronavirus." I am left wondering how the proposed budget cuts meet the requirements of the federal stimulus bills? What consequences will it have on our state if we do not follow the restrictions? I cannot imagine consequences like stimulus funding being taken away due to this. Our state needs all the help we can get.

In addition, the DOE is proposing the use of 29% of the funding received from the stimulus bills to go towards funding private tutors and summer school to help accelerate learning. At the same time, the DOE is proposing to cut funding to services and personnel that directly impact students during the normal school hours. I just do not understand how this all makes sense. Why not adequately fund our schools instead of funneling funds towards private tutors who are not even highly qualified teachers? As a parent, I am appalled by this. I want my children to be taught by highly qualified teachers during the school day. I also do not want to see subjects like art, music, PE being taken away due to teachers positions being cut due to lack of funding.

Finally, furloughs are still on the table. The education budget is taking the biggest cut as well. WHY? If we go through with these budget cuts and impending future furloughs, our public education system in Hawai'i will not be able to recover. My heart breaks for my two daughters and the thousands of other public school students who deserve the highest quality public education. Why do budget cuts continue to be done on services that directly impact our keiki? Coupled with the high cost of living here in Hawai'i, I sadly wonder how much longer I can continue to live in Hawai'i. I am a 4th generation Japanese here in the islands. My family immigrated here from Japan to work on the sugar plantation. It is a history I am proud of and I want my daughters to be able to continue to live in Hawai'i. Funding our public schools in Hawai'i helps to sustain our communities and allows our future generations to continue to thrive. As a public school teacher and parent, our family is taking a hard hit if these budget cuts go through. There are so many amazing things happening everyday in our public schools across our state. Public school students, like my daughters, deserve a public school system that allows them to thrive and flourish. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Mahalo,

Raechelle Villanueva | 3rd Grade Teacher

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

Testimony

1 message

Cynthia Luafalemana <cynthia_luafalemana@icloud.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 11:07 PM

Aloha Members,

First of all, I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year!

Today I asked my grandchildren if they would want a private tutor to teach them or go to school? They all replied, "go to school!" Why?, "because our teachers teaches me numbers, kindness, the planets, and the list goes on..." Mind you I have 9 grandchildren at this moment due to the Covid living with me on the island of Molokai.

This budget cut is ridiculous to not just teachers but to our children of Hawaii and of course my grandchildren. Why would we hire private tutors when we have highly qualified teachers who are working hard to provide quality education to our children in Hawaii. Our teachers in this Department of Hawaii have gone beyond the walls of the educational system to bring success to every child as an 'Ohana where no one is left behind!!! We are caring and devoted professionals who spend countless hours planning, creating, and monitoring our student's every needs and support. We clothe, feed, purchase, and attend activities so that our students feel safe and secure. Can a private tutor do this? Ask yourself? What can a private tutor do that a highly qualified teacher can't do?

Teachers are working two or more jobs just to support their families but still their priorities are always their students. If you are looking at test scores right now, then you are looking at the lost results, why? Because teachers are teaching our students life skills first through our GLO's where character is build to allow our students to become successful citizens in this trying times.

Think about that student who came to school without any materials, a teacher see potential! Think about a student who is struggling to read or calculate his or her math assignments, a teacher sees potential! Why!!! Because behind every child potential is the key factor for our changing world? How can a teacher make a difference!!! They see future leaders, doctors, janitors, Ivy League graduates, and of course teachers.

What are you doing to make a difference in our children's lives?

Letting go an Educational Assistant who is working with an autistic student for the past 6 months because of budget cuts is crazy! Who will assist these students a private tutor who by now will affect these students with disabilities dramatically. Why??? Because of routines and transitions. Can you say to yourself, "I can do a better job?" I don't think so because working with students with high levels of disabilities takes a special kind of teacher and person. Are you qualified to take that position? Can a private tutor do it? Does this person have the creativity and qualities to do so? Are parents ready for this kind of change in their child's educational experience? Believe me, I'm not and I am a grandmother of three children with special disabilities. And they have placed so much trust with their assistance and SPED teachers.

Stop playing with our children futures and education. These children will determine your future as well. If we don't take care of them now, your future, our future of Hawaii will be a collapse of what we had done to their future.

Students need teachers and schools, not just to be educated but to socialize with their peers. To gain confidence and wellness knowing that they are being engaged with their own problem solving solutions and creativity. My eldest grandson enjoys his art teacher and wants to major in animation. His interest was due to a teacher who got him hooked on it when he saw my grandson doodling in his journal books. Can a private tutor help students to find interest in their future?

Today is a time to support teachers who live paycheck to paycheck, attending professional development courses to obtain professional movements and pay. Teachers go home with their work and attend late night activities or spend their weekends with their students and drag their own children with them. Being a teacher takes a special person and in Hawaii we have so many of them over 30,000 of them. Teachers will never give up on any of their students or families.

Here and now, you are giving up on our students and their hopes for a better tomorrow.

In closing, I would like to say, I am proud of being a teacher for the past 21 years. I am a product of a public school student who sent all six of my children to Molokai High as well as producing successful citizens who all graduated from college holding professional jobs. I am assisting my children with raising my grandchildren at this time due to the Covid all of my grandchildren are attending public schools. It took an entire community to raise my children and now grandchildren. And it began from humble beginnings of a teacher who believed in me so that I can continue that legacy to believe in my children, grandchildren, and other children.

Our children deserves the best!!! And that best are qualified teachers and educational people!

Mahalo Nui and God Be with you to make the best decisions for our students and teachers of Hawaii

Mrs. Cynthia Luafalemana

Sent from my iPhone



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

TESTIMONY - RE: Finance and Infrastructure Committee Meeting, 1/21/21 @ 11 am.

1 message

Ku'ulei Serna <kserna@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 1:15 AM

Dear Board Members of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee Meeting:

My name is Dr. Ku'ulei Serna. I am an Associate Professor and the Director of the Institute for Teacher Education, Elementary Education Program at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Education.

I am submitting written testimony on Agenda item III-A - Discussion item: *Presentation on impact of 2021-2023 fiscal biennium budget cuts on School and Complex Area levels*

Position and comment:

I am opposed to the proposed budget cuts to eliminate PE teacher positions, especially in elementary schools. The data and research prove that healthier children are more educable and educable children are healthier. Academic and health go together like a hand and glove. Also, children who develop and practice healthy behaviors are likely to become healthy adults thus preventing or minimizing risk for the onset of chronic disease. In turn, a societal decrease in adult chronic disease positively impacts limiting costs of the healthcare system in our communities.

I am a health education expert and former DOE state resource teacher who wrote and was awarded the CDC Coordinated School Health Program grant for the Dept. of Education in 2003-2008. This grant supported our work with schools in tandem with the Dept. of Health's Healthy Hawaii Initiative (HHI) whose inception was funded by the Tobacco Settlement. The HHI promoted health and well-being among Hawaii's keiki through prevention education using K-12 standards-based health and physical education and health promotion activities in DOE schools. The DOE and DOH worked together to create and coordinate systemic change for the promotion of healthy behaviors among school-aged children, their families, schools, and communities. Non-governmental agencies and businesses also partnered with us in an effort to educate and encourage school-aged youth to practice safer and less risky health behaviors thus empowering them to be change agents for health promotion in their own families and communities. Our efforts impacted policy changes, standards-based curriculum, school planning/design, teacher education, and teacher praxis. Our activities were informed by scientific research and data-driven.

You may think, "*That was then and this is now. So what?*"

Well, the research is clearer and much stronger. We still need our Keiki to be as healthy and physically active as ever.

- Young children (PK-8) learn social skills and become aware of their physical abilities through physical activity and play.
- Young children (PK-8) develop healthy behaviors through play/PA that counteracts issues and behaviors leading to childhood obesity.
- Play helps young children (PK-8) reduce their anxiety and stress (<https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/10-things-every-parent-play>)
- In order to succeed in the classroom, children need to be physically, emotionally, and academically ready
- Physically fit youth have higher levels of academic achievement
- Central adiposity (or fat) in youth is associated with lower test scores
- Physical activity and physical education have positive relationships with attention, concentration, student on-task-behavior, and attendance but a reverse relationship with discipline referrals and participation in high-risk behaviors
- PE quantity and quality are particularly deficient for less affluent students and those in racial and ethnic groups at high risk for overweight and obesity.

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/health_and_academics/pdf/320889-A_FS_Physical_Activity_behaviors_508tag.pdf

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/pdf/PE_Data_Brief_CDC_Logo_FINAL_191106.pdf

The COVID pandemic highlighted inequities among the disabled, multi-lingual learner, and children from poor and working-class families in regards to fair access to quality education, resources, and healthcare. As highlighted above, these students need PE and other co-curricular classes such as music and art. They need access to quality learning experiences that facilitate various learning styles and multiple intelligences, which may promote successful student learning in the core curricula areas.

It is imperative that the DOE does not eliminate PE positions in elementary schools. Schools need to provide equitable opportunities for all children to learn and practice healthy behaviors, which have been proven to support increased academic achievement, physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being. I ask the BOE to please have the political will to keep the necessary number of PE teachers/positions in our elementary schools. This will ensure a healthier, more educable, and literate student population.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ku'u lei Serna



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

Testimony

1 message

Alexandra Obra <alexandra.obra@k12.hi.us>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 7:14 AM

Hi!

I am submitting testimony for Thursday's BOE meeting, 1/21:

Alexandra Obra
Waiāhole Elementary School
Principal

My testimony is for the General Meeting and Finance Committee.

Thank you!

Ms. Obra

--

'Ike aku, 'ike mai, kokua aku kokua mai; pela iho la ka nohana 'oha
"Recognize others, be recognized, help others, be helped, such is a family relationship"
Mary Kawena Pukui

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**BOE Testimony Letter 1-21-21.pdf**

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**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Waiāhole Elementary School
48-215 Waiāhole Valley Road
Kāne'ohe, Hawai'i 96744

January 20, 2021

Dear Hawai'i Board of Education Members,

My name is Alexandra Obra, Principal of Waiāhole Elementary School. I am writing this testimony letter to share my thoughts about the impending budget cuts.

These budget cuts have had a profound impact on my small school. Each year, my goal is to protect and maintain the status quo with all of our school positions (i.e., teachers, office, custodians, educational assistants, cafeteria, and casual hires.) They are not just school positions, they are family. We are a tight-knit 'ohana and community.

Waiāhole barely has the resources that we need to function properly, but we make do with what we have because although we may lack in numbers, we are never at a loss for spirit and pride. I cannot continue to make any additional cuts as they will severely impact student outcomes, and our community does not deserve any additional disappointments.

I cannot let these budget cuts continue in good faith without expressing my disappointment. Our keiki deserve someone to advocate for them, and I will continue to do so. It is well documented and studied that money invested in early education leads to higher graduation rates, and higher graduation rates lead to a reduction in crime. As Members of the Board of Education, you know these statistics. You understand the correlations between crime and education. You know that an investment in our children is literally an investment into our future. It's an investment in our community. For our school, it's an investment into the Native Hawaiian population that has already been marginalized enough.

It's time to reinvest in our schools. Budget cuts for schools is not the answer. The keiki of Waiāhole deserve equitable funding and resources to ensure that they are prepared for their future. Education must be our priority. We need to find ways to preserve and fund what matters the most, our keiki and their futures. I urge you to preserve teaching and non-classroom teaching positions that impact our keiki across the State of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Obra

Alexandra Obra
Waiāhole Elementary School
Principal



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

Testimony against Proposals

1 message

Leona Watson <lpwright@hawaii.edu>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 7:47 AM

Aloha e Board members,

My name is Leona Watson and I am a Special Education Teacher at Ka Waihona O Ka Na'au'ao. I am against the proposal of private tutors and using funding for other alternatives because the students who have shown up daily to virtual learning has made tremendous gains and they have endure and adapted to virtual learning and has shown that learning can occur despite of a pandemic. However, the students who have chose to not attend are the ones who are falling behind and causing everyone else to suffer a lost in a budget cuts. Why would we go backwards to put money towards the students who chooses to not be apart of learning. I believe this will hurt all the students who choose to come to school everyday to grow and learn. Teachers have work hard in trying to get the students to attend class by provide them with a schedule, additional study hall, frequent phone calls, emails, and extended time for assignments. If these students chose to not achieve during the regular school year why should we use the budget to bend over backwards for extra learning time with tutors and summer school. I think parents should pay for the students to earn those credits, so the rest of the students who did work hard all year will not have to suffer.

Mahalo for your time and May you all

Have a blessed day,

Leona Watson

Sent from my iPhone



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

Testimony - Finance & Acellus

1 message

Zan Timtim <zanzibar722@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 8:17 AM

Aloha!

Testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee Meeting Action Item IV A

I am Testifying AGAINST spending stimulus funding on private tutoring. Please fold stimulus funding into retaining teacher positions to avoid mass teacher layoffs. I have family members and friends that are teachers that are fearful of losing their jobs after so many years of service. My son is a teacher in Oregon and was planning on moving back to teach, but is now uncertain of his ability to get a teaching job here. These educators as well as others paint a picture of demoralization among teachers, fear due to the lack of job security and declining mental health. If we want our educators to bring their best selves to the classroom, we must ensure they feel secure in their positions. If we want them to create a local based, distance learning curriculum to help our students effectively learn amid this pandemic, we must support their schools with funding.

I am also, **Testifying for GBM Agenda Item IV B., Acellus Update:**

Dear Board Members and Chairperson(s),

While I am happy to see that the October 2020 letter from the Superintendent was sent to ensure that parents and constituents have access to the information, I am extremely disappointed that the letter has been the extent of the Superintendent's communication with families on the Acellus issue since then. It is also disheartening to know that Acellus is still being used. Here is a quote directly from that letter:

*"Based on its analysis, the review team recommended the program should be discontinued as a primary curriculum resource due to **its inconsistency in quality and rigor**. The HIDOE recognizes the curriculum does contain content that reviewers found acceptable and aligned to standards, and will be working with schools that use Acellus to identify and leverage such content, as appropriate."*

Where in this letter are the rights' violations identified by the DOE reviewers in the full Acellus equity review disclosed to parents? No discussion of what reviewers called "nothing short of alarming" and that they "identified discriminatory content that rises to the level of being severe, pervasive and persistent". Parents and educators deserve to know what this discriminatory content is. It should not be hidden. These are our children and parents have a right to this information!

The DOE leadership should notify parents who's children are using Acellus that their students' rights may have been (or may continue to be) violated. Atleast, summarize the nature of those violations identified in the 140-page review (i.e., on the basis of religion, gender, race and ethnicity.). The letter sent out in no way conveys the severity of the situation. After much pressure from teachers and parents, the review was QUIETLY released on the DOE website in November. Parents were NOT notified of it's release and where to review it. Hewa!

Please understand that this issue will continue to be a problem as long as Acellus is still utilized in our schools. Right now as you are reading this students all across the Hawaiian islands are using this program.

With more than 80% of the DOE's own reviewers saying they would not recommend. This is just unacceptable quality and our keiki deserve much better.

My daughter attends Waipahu Intermediate and I was FORTUNATE to be able to immediately transfer out of the full distance learning option of Acellus at the beginning of the year. It is so sad to know that they are still using the Accellus learning Accelerator. I am extremely disappointed in the administration there that they have chosen to continue its use.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I especially appreciate the other parents and teachers that are testifying and fighting so hard to get this program removed and a much better program instituted for our keiki. Both the students and the teachers deserve so much better.

Mahalo!
Zan Timtim
Mother



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

TESTIMONY

1 message

Casey Ishitani <cishitani@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 8:32 AM

Hello

This testimony is regarding the Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting Action Item IV; A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of Federal stimulus funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual Federal spending bill. This is to advocate for maintaining the current teacher numbers and work days, along with providing them the necessary safety countermeasures to mitigate risk during the pandemic.

Our State cannot afford furloughed public educators nor can it afford to keep placing them in harms way. Please consider looking to other avenues regarding pay reduction or reduced spending, as the impact toward learned Hawaii residents will have drastic repercussions. It may already have, given the last time teachers have been furloughed or forced to strike.



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

Testimony

1 message

Eric Iwasaki <eric.iwasaki@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 8:35 AM

good morning BOE members,

I am testifying on the Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on the Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I think it's in the best interest of the entire state of Hawai'i to prevent further DOE budget cuts and further loss of teachers. We are not planning for our future if the youth of today do not have the support, the guidance, the resources necessary to carry us along.

Paying \$50 million to private tutors in the summer is a great example of the leaders in charge not having a clue of what's going on the grounds of schools and not having the courage to ask teachers for guidance on how to support our students.

With the budget cuts expected and what I've read from each school in the state of what their school will be losing, this is a great win for Betsy DeVos and for people who want to destroy public education. We are playing right into their hands and they must be grinning from ear to ear.

Also, on a more personal level, I am already fielding calls from other teachers about losing their jobs and how does staff reduction work. Since March, we have been living and teaching on a landslide ready to slip into the abyss at any time. If a teacher is feeling anxiety and unsure and fearful about the future, then these feelings will be passed onto other family members and their students. This is not an environment where learning will occur.

Please, take a step away from your pre-set dates of finalizing budgets and further look into how we can save our public education system. The biggest light at the end of the tunnel is that we dumped trump and we have a new administration with the first lady, Dr. Biden, as a living and breathing educator that knows the value of public education.

Sincerely,
Eric Iwasaki

This is a staff email account managed by Hawaii Department Of Education School District. This email and any files

1/20/2021

Dell Marketing LP Mail - Testimony

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

oppose cutting public education budget1 message

jennings001 <jennings001@yahoo.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 8:35 AM

Aloha and Yhank you for you time

Hawaii's school children are already at a disadvantage due to lack of funding and oversized classrooms.

By cutting more money to education the problem will increase..

Many students already have long term subs or non licensed teachers..Cutting funding will increase this problem.

Many students are already in an oversized class and are falling behind because they don't get the support they need...Cutting funding will increase this problems..

Many students are in classrooms that are falling apart, no working phones, no working fire alarm systems..Cutting funding would increase thus problem..

Please don't punish our students and give them the education they deserve...

Thanks for your time
Erik Jennings
8083856592

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device



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

Testimony for the Finance and Infrastructure and General Business Meetings

1 message

PE Erickson <hape2bfit13@gmail.com>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 8:40 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha this is Susan Lynn Erickson, the Physical Education Teacher at Jarrett Middle School and the current President of HAHPERD (Hawaii Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance).

Meeting: Finance and Infrastructure and General Business Meetings
Business and Infrastructure 3A; General Business Meeting 5B

Position: Opposed

Mahalo -

Susan Lynn Erickson
JMS PE Teacher
HAHPERD President
NBCT

**Erickson BOE PE Testimony .doc**

29K

Dear Chairperson Payne and Board of Education members,

I am a Physical Education teacher at Jarrett Middle School and the Current President of HAHPERD (Hawaii Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance), a non-profit professional organization for Health and Physical Educators. I understand that these are challenging times, and, unfortunately, the state is dealing with financial challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic. I am writing to you because I am very concerned about the current budget plan proposal. I believe that a well-rounded education is essential for all students, and in this time of crisis, teachers' jobs should be the last thing eliminated. The proposed budget cuts that include the elimination of physical education positions at the elementary level would be devastating to the health and wellness of our keiki. Our keiki deserve the very best of all curriculums. But it is critical that they learn how to be safe, active and healthy, so they can grow and continue to be life-long physically and healthy educated learners. Elimination of these positions works against the district's vision, which states, "to create students who are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners and who contribute positively to our community and global society." This vision says it all.

The Wellness Guidelines implement Board of Education Policy 103-1 and fulfill Public Law 108-265 Section 204 and the Healthy Hunger Free-Kids Act (2010). The Wellness Guidelines state that PE at the elementary level is required 45 minutes per week at the elementary level. Instruction in PE should ensure integrated, cumulative physical education in each grade level. Each child across the district should have an equal opportunity to meet all the content standards in each grade cluster (K-2 and 3-5). The proposed cuts in the budget specifically mention over 27 elementary PE positions that could be eliminated or reduced if this plan is approved. Additionally, two middle schools face specific cuts to physical education and over seven schools that specifically mention cuts to sports and intramural activities.

In the middle of a pandemic that affects people's physical and mental health, this proposed plan sacrifices children's social, emotional, and physical health. Additionally, it goes against the science that has us in our current situation. We know that pre-existing health conditions such as obesity and diabetes put people at higher risk of contracting COVID-19. Movement is good and essential for the body and the brain. Beyond that, though, physical education is designed to provide life skills that encourage students to be active and fit for a lifetime. Healthy students learn better, feel better and are happier and more successful individuals. Research clearly shows the associations between fit and physically active students and higher test scores, better attendance, increased concentration, and increased on-task behavior levels. Healthy children are more than twice as likely to become healthy adults putting youth at lower risk for obesity and chronic disease later in life.

I am honored to say that I have been teaching for over 30 years and we, Physical Educators, constantly have to remind others the importance of Physical Education, Health, Recreation and Dance. We need to teach and provide the appropriate education to meet the needs of the whole Child. As stated above, a healthy, physically educated keiki will be safe, active, healthy and more successful in all aspects of life. Being active and healthy also helps keiki to be happy and a happy child will feel better, do better, have more confidence and self esteem to help them now and for their life time.

When looking at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, students must meet basic needs before academic success can occur, including physical, social, and emotional health. Physical education quantity and quality are typically deficient for less affluent students, and often, those are the same students who are in racial and ethnic groups at a higher risk for overweight and obesity. Physical education teachers are critical to ensuring that all students in the district achieve their physical, social, and emotional health, which often correlates to academically successful students. While this is an extremely challenging situation, and there will be changes and losses to meet the budget requirements, I would like to encourage you to look at other solutions rather than eliminating teachers, especially the physical education teachers and programs in our schools. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Susan Lynn Erickson
Jarrett Middle School Physical Education Teacher
HAHPERD President
NBCT

Dear Chairperson Payne and Board of Education members,

I am a Physical Education teacher at Jarrett Middle School and the Current President of HAHPERD (Hawaii Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance), a non-profit professional organization for Health and Physical Educators. I understand that these are challenging times, and, unfortunately, the state is dealing with financial challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic. I am writing to you because I am very concerned about the current budget plan proposal. I believe that a well-rounded education is essential for all students, and in this time of crisis, teachers' jobs should be the last thing eliminated. The proposed budget cuts that include the elimination of physical education positions at the elementary level would be devastating to the health and wellness of our keiki. Our keiki deserve the very best of all curriculums. But it is critical that they learn how to be safe, active and healthy, so they can grow and continue to be life-long physically and healthy educated learners. Elimination of these positions works against the district's vision, which states, "to create students who are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners and who contribute positively to our community and global society." This vision says it all.

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In the middle of a pandemic that affects people's physical and mental health, this proposed plan sacrifices children's social, emotional, and physical health. Additionally, it goes against the science that has us in our current situation. We know that pre-existing health conditions such as obesity and diabetes put people at higher risk of contracting COVID-19. Movement is good and essential for the body and the brain. Beyond that, though, physical education is designed to provide life skills that encourage students to be active and fit for a lifetime. Healthy students learn better, feel better and are happier and more successful individuals. Research clearly shows the associations between fit and physically active students and higher test scores, better attendance, increased concentration, and increased on-task behavior levels. Healthy children are more than twice as likely to become healthy adults putting youth at lower risk for obesity and chronic disease later in life.

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Respectfully,

Susan Lynn Erickson
Jarrett Middle School Physical Education Teacher
HAHPERD President
NBCT



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

Testimony

1 message

Mekia Earle <mearle@punahou.edu>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 8:43 AM

Dear Chairperson Payne and Board of Education members,

I am a teacher at Punahou School and a board member of HAHPERD. I understand that these are challenging times, and, unfortunately, the state is dealing with financial challenges due to the Covid-19. I am writing to you concerned about the current budget plan proposal. I believe that a well-rounded education is essential for all students, and in this time of crisis, teachers' jobs should be the last thing eliminated. The proposed budget cuts the wellness of our keiki. Elimination of these positions works against the district's vision, which states, "to create students who are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners and who contribute positively to our community and global society."

The Wellness Guidelines implement Board of Education Policy 103-1 and fulfill Public Law 108-265 Section 204 and the Healthy Hunger Free-Kids Act (2010). The Wellness Guidelines state that PE at the elementary level is required 45 minutes per week at the elementary level. Instruction in PE should ensure integrated, cumulative physical education in each grade level. Each child across the district should have an equal opportunity to meet all the content standards in each grade cluster (K-2 and 3-5). The proposed cuts in the budget specifically mention over 27 elementary PE positions that could be eliminated or reduced if this plan is approved. Additionally, two middle schools face specific cuts to physical education and over seven schools that specifically mention cuts to sports and intramural activities.

In the middle of a pandemic that affects people's physical and mental health, this proposed plan sacrifices children's social, emotional, and physical health. Additionally, it goes against that science that has us in our current situation. We know that pre-existing health conditions such as obesity and diabetes put people at higher risk of contracting COVID-19. Movement is good for the body and the brain. Beyond that, though, physical education is designed to provide life skills that encourage students to be active and fit for a lifetime. Healthy students learn better. Research clearly shows the associations between fit and physically active students and higher test scores, better attendance, increased concentration, and increased on-task behavior levels. Healthy children are more than twice as likely to become healthy adults putting youth at lower risk for obesity and chronic disease later in life.

My children come to class so excited and happy and ready to move! Moving our bodies is essential in times like this. We are often the only time children get to move and play throughout their entire day. The entire day. Our forsee our next pandemic of childhood obesity in the horizon. We are the best role models for our students, and to think that a child will not receive a chance to learn how beautiful it is to move our bodies is the greatest tragedy. Please consider finding cuts elsewhere, as this will have a life long effect on our poor children. My student's LOVE coming to PE, they are happier and more joyful because of it.

When looking at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, students must meet basic needs before academic success can occur, including physical, social, and emotional health. Physical education quantity and quality are typically deficient for less affluent students, and often, those are the same students who are in racial and ethnic groups at a higher risk for overweight and obesity. Physical education teachers are critical to ensuring that all students in the district achieve their physical, social, and emotional health, which often correlates to academically successful students. While this is an extremely challenging situation, and there will be changes and losses to meet the budget requirements, I would like to encourage you to look at other solutions rather than eliminating teachers, especially the physical education teachers and programs in our schools. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mekia Ostrem Earle

--

Mekia Ostrem Earle '98
Girls Physical Education 4th-5th Teacher

1/20/2021

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

HE'E Testimony for HR Committee, FIC Committee and GBM, January 21, 2021

1 message

Cheri Nakamura <cheri.nakamura@gmail.com>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 8:56 AM

To: Board of Education Testimony <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Aloha,

Please see attached HE'E's testimony for the HR Committee Meeting, FIC Committee Meeting and the GBM, January 21, 2021.

Regards,

Cheri Nakamura

HE'E Coalition

3 attachments**HE'E Testimony HR Meeting 01 21 2021.pdf**

143K

**HE'E Testimony FIC Meeting 01 21 2021.pdf**

188K

**HE'E Testimony GBM 01 21 2021.pdf**

126K



January 21, 2021

Finance and Infrastructure Committee

Dear Chair Uemura and Members of the Committee

III. A. Presentation on Impact of 2021-2023 Fiscal Biennium Budget Cuts on School and Complex Area Levels

IV. A. Committee Action on Department of Education's Plan for Use of Federal Funds in the New COVID-19 Relief Package and Annual Federal Spending Bill

We would like to comment on these discussion and action items.

COVID-19 is creating a devastating impact to our state budget. As a Coalition supporting quality public education in Hawai'i, we absolutely advocate for maintaining full funding for our education system. However, the pandemic has created an unprecedented situation for our state, and reductions in all state departments appear to be unavoidable. We have reiterated that if reductions must be made, two tenants should be upheld. **The first is prioritizing health and safety, and the second is maintaining quality instruction in the classroom.**

Our testimony for these two items on the Finance and Infrastructure (FIC) Committee Meeting is basically the same as our testimony for the Human Resource (HR) Committee meeting on the Department's Reorganization Plan. With the 10% budget reduction directive to the complex and schools, we knew that personnel reductions would be impacted the most, since the bulk of educational expenses is on personnel. We are troubled to hear that the Department is projecting a reduction of 1338 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions, including 1317 positions at the school level, due to the 10% budget reductions, and we agree that the impact will be extremely damaging to the schools.

On a positive note, the second round of the Education Stabilization Fund's Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II) of \$184 million is on its way. We strongly advocate that the federal funds should go right back to restoring the positions cut at the school level, restoring the 10% cuts that the school were asked to make. Specifically, 10% of EDN 100 or School Based Budgeting funds, including Weighted Student Formula (roughly \$100 million), and EDN 150 or Special Education funds (\$40 million) should be restored. The remainder of the ESSER II Funds (roughly \$40 million) should be used on school level supports for vulnerable students, in particular, health and safety resources such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and additional personnel in the classroom to support teaching and learning.

We understand that the Department wants to address the learning loss which has occurred as a result of the impacts on schools due to COVID-19. We want to point out that learning loss was occurring prior to COVID-19, as evidenced by our large achievement gap. We agree that learning loss has been exacerbated by COVID-19, but rather than implement special programs like tutoring and summer school, we believe it is better to allocate more resources and supports in the classroom during the regular school year to address our struggling students. A

strategic move would be to steer more resources to the elementary level to focus on literacy. The reason is if a student cannot read, they will struggle throughout their journey through the education system.

We do not support spending \$53 million on a 1:1 Tutoring Program or \$9.7 million on Summer Learning. We do not believe that the Department has the infrastructure to or track record of implementing a successful system-wide tutoring program; therefore, it would not be a strategic use of funds. Regarding Summer Learning, our analysis provided to the Board on September 17, 2020 regarding last year's summer program showed that the program only reached roughly 20% of our estimated disproportionately impacted students at a considerable cost.¹ If a summer school program needs to be implemented, it should be a basic program that targets students who are needing credit to be promoted to the next grade or to graduate.

Finally, we have an observation about the Department's budget reduction analysis. When looking at the Department's process of determining how to make the 10% budget reductions, we did not see a strategic guidance process on how budget cuts should be made. It appeared that the decisions were left up to each school and complex. While flexibility is good to have, perhaps it would have been better if there were some higher level guidance with strategic parameters in place, especially when resources are so scarce. For example, there could have been recommendations like "as much as possible, classroom teachers should be maintained," or "resources should be preserved for both health and safety and teaching and learning to address our most vulnerable students." From the materials that the Department presented, we could not tell if schools were prioritizing classroom teachers (as we cannot tell if it is classroom or resource teachers that are being reduced) or if supports for our vulnerable students are being maintained. In using the \$184 million or any other funds, the priority should be health and safety of all in DOE Schools and maintaining quality instruction in the classroom.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

¹ <http://boe.hawaii.gov/Meetings/Notices/Meeting%20Material%20Library/Testimony%2020200917%20GBM.pdf>

HE'E Coalition Members and Participants

Academy 21	Junior Achievement of Hawaii
After-School All-Stars Hawai'i	Kamehameha Schools
Alliance for Place Based Learning	Kanu Hawai'i
American Civil Liberties Union	*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
Atherton YMCA	Keiki to Career Kaua'i
*Castle Complex Community Council	Kupu A'e
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS	*Leaders for the Next Generation
*Education Institute of Hawai'i	Learning First
*Faith Action for Community Equity	McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
Fresh Leadership LLC	Native Hawaiian Education Council
Girl Scouts Hawai'i	Our Public School
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation	*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*HawaiiKidsCAN	*Parents and Children Together
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance	*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice	Punahou School PUEO Program
*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists	Special Education Provider Alliance
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars	*Teach for America
*Hawai'i Children's Action Network	The Learning Coalition
Hawai'i Education Association	US PACOM
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition	University of Hawai'i College of Education
* Hawai'i State PTSA	YMCA of Honolulu
Hawai'i State Student Council	<i>Voting Members (*) Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.</i>
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	



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

Testimony

1 message

Kristi Okura <kristiokura@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 9:22 AM

Finance and Infrastructure Committee

IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I have been an early childhood educator for the past 16 years and 2.5 years ago, I transferred to the Hawaii State Department of Education. My experience with the DOE has been nothing but a great experience and looking forward to continuing my career in elementary education. I am currently a probationary (probie 3/4) teacher at Kipapa Elementary School, a Title 1 school on the island of Oahu and a mother of 3 children in the DOE system.

My current position at my school is being threatened along with over 1,000 other positions. Many of these positions are highly qualified teachers. The effect of losing so many teachers are: class sizes will be larger, children will fall through the cracks & not receive the attention/support they need to be successful, and teachers will be stretched to the limit to name a few.

I strongly feel children have already lost out on valuable time during 4th quarter of SY 2019-2020 when COVID first started to present day. The gap that will continue to grow will not be resolved by hiring private tutors. Children need teachers who know the content and standards required for each grade level. The teachers whose positions are being affected have gone through formal education and training to do what they do and love. Eliminating those who are qualified, passionate, and want to be in the classroom should not be robbed of their job/position they currently hold because of budget cuts when monies are being allocated for private tutors.

As a Kindergarten Inclusion teacher, the children in my class are scattered across the board as far as their academic ability. I have a few that are academically ahead however, the majority are experiencing difficulties grasping foundational concepts. 1:1 sessions are geared specifically towards where each child is academically and planned for building strong foundations. As we are coming to a close of quarter 2, my concerns grow as I am running out of time to close the gaps and ensure each child is prepared for first grade. The one less day I have with the children means less time to provide engaging activities, genuine discussions, and the foundational experience that I believe is needed for Kindergarteners.

On a personal level, my oldest receives SPED services through the DOE and has made some gains however, is experiencing other effects of COVID that he is receiving support for outside of the DOE. As he continues his educational journey, as his mother, I feel the need for me to advocate for him and express my concerns of lessening instructional days and the possibility of not having a highly qualified teacher providing adequate instruction & the consistency he needs. He currently attends school face to face three days a week for about 4 hours. The gap that I see in his academics will only grow as the grades continually get more difficult and build upon prior content knowledge.

My other 2 children (11 and 9) are currently in the general education setting and love learning. My 11 year old attends school face to face 1 day a week and the rest is distance learning. She is academically doing well. As for my youngest, she has her challenges and is pushing through with the support of her teacher and Educational Assistant. However, the social aspect of school and gaining life experiences are limited and again with the lessening of instructional days, content will need to be tweaked and tailored to fit the time each teacher has for instruction.

I understand there are many aspects to take into consideration when making decisions that affect a mass number of people. However, the quicker we act, the quicker we can begin to heal, and the quicker life can move on. The children of Hawaii need passionate educators to instill foundational concepts that will equip them with surviving in the world and to be model citizens.

Please help all of us educators by providing the funding needed to continue to do what we love, do it the fullest of our abilities, and to make an impact on the future generations. What affects the teachers, directly affects the children. We all have the choice right now to advocate and stand up for what is right.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kristi Okura



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

Testimony

1 message

Riker Kasamoto <riker.kasamoto@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 9:28 AM

Testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

My name is Riker Kasamoto and I teach 9th grade Biology, AP Environmental Science and Physical Science. As a first year teacher in Hawaii, I am the least tenure teacher in my department and my principal has shared that my science position is being cut. These cuts were made prior to the passage of the most recent stimulus package.

I was hoping that this stimulus money would be enough to save my job as well as numerous other teachers. However, it appears that the DOE is more concerned about spending money on private tutoring. The DOE is completely out of touch with reality.

In regards to struggling students, it appears the main reason for their struggles are due to their lack of attendance and commitment to education. In my classes, I have office hours after school for students to receive individual tutoring. However, struggling students are not attending these individual tutoring sessions. I fail to see how hiring private tutors will help these struggling students because many teachers like myself are already offering tutoring after school. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors.

In regards to my individual position, there are over 60 students that have signed up to take AP Environmental Science next school year. With my position on the chopping block, my department will be scrambling to meet these students' needs. Every teacher in my department currently teaches full sections of students in other science disciplines and with my position getting cut, it makes the lives of my colleagues much more difficult and demanding. Cutbacks on AP Environmental Science course offerings would be a travesty, considering the islands are facing a climate crisis and are struggling to meet its 2045 goal of 100% renewable energy. I believe AP Environmental Science is the most important course students will take in High School and my mission is to inspire our future generations to find solutions to these pressing environmental issues.

With my position on the chopping block, I am highly considering moving off island. It appears that the DOE is more concerned about protecting the jobs of its bureaucrats over the jobs of its teachers. It appears there would be better opportunities for teachers like myself elsewhere. Thus, I highly encourage the Board to protect as many teaching jobs as possible by spending the stimulus money via the weighted student formula.

--

Riker Kasamoto
Science Department



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

BOE TESTIMONY

1 message

Lei Lani <lkuheana@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 9:30 AM

ALOHA Board of Education Members,

I implore you today to work to save teacher positions for the next school year! I implore you to protect teacher positions which in turn will protect the education of our future generations. Cutting positions now, when all of these teachers have struggled to figure out and deliver distance learning day in and day out, will be a slap in their faces. If you cut teachers, who have labored during the pandemic to teach students as best as they know how, will be a clear sign of disrespect from our department officials and dishonor the educators that have dedicated their lives to Hawaii's children. For the teachers that remain what will their class sizes look like? Will each child receive the proper education they deserve in an over crowded classroom? I am a 23 year teacher and deeply disappointed that our leaders would even consider cutting teacher positions on such a large scale. I ask that you reconsider. The Department stands to lose thousands of exceptional educators who have devoted their lives and resources to Hawaii's keiki. Please consider the following:

- How will the federal stimulus bill's requirements reshape the governor's education budget?
- How will the Council on Revenues projections for FY20–21 and FY21–22 of an additional \$471.65 million in revenues for the current and next fiscal year impact the governor's budget?
- How has the \$10 million of **Governor's Emergency Education Relief** (GEER) funding given to the governor to spend on education been spent?
- How will the governor spend the \$4.4 million in additional GEER funding?
- How much money has the department saved this year due to distance learning? For example, savings from reduced busing, utilities, personnel, travel, etc.?

Thank you for your consideration,
Lorelei Kuheana



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

My testimony

1 message

Abraham Concepcion Berrios <abraham.concepcion_berrios@k12.hi.us>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 9:44 AM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov, HAHPERD <hahperd808@gmail.com>, Tammy Holt <Tammy.Holt@k12.hi.us>, erinyoung@waikikischool.org, trishafish@waikikischool.org

Dear Chairperson Payne and Board of Education members, my name is Abraham Concepcion, and I'm a member of HAHPERD (Hawaii Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance), a non-profit professional organization for Health and Physical Educators. I understand that these are challenging times, and, unfortunately, the state is dealing with financial challenges due to the Covid-19. I am writing to you concerned about the current budget plan proposal. I believe that a well-rounded education is essential for all students, and in this time of crisis, teachers' jobs should be the last thing eliminated. The proposed budget cuts that include the elimination of physical education positions at the elementary level would be devastating to the health and wellness of our keiki.

Elimination of these positions works against the district's vision, which states, "to create students who are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners and who contribute positively to our community and global society." and I am testifying as an advocate for physical education in the schools, especially at the elementary level also for the Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan to use federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

- I do not support the HIDOE using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. Especially for Physical Education and Health, PE and Health class, among other resources, provide students with the education and action to stay healthy. Health and Phys Ed class are vital during a pandemic, and there's so much physical literacy that would be lost if we get cut from our positions.
- The state of Hawaii should return this money to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors.
- The Department of Education should retain Highly Qualified Teachers as they have the classroom experience and knowledge of their students' needs. Further, they possess knowledge of their school culture. These experienced, professional teachers are effective at their job and can hit the ground running.
- We cannot afford a pay cut or loss of position. Any cuts directly affect our cost of living. Pay cuts would affect my dietary needs, gas mileage, car payment, mortgage payment, and household utility budget.
- As an elementary physical education teacher, I much appreciate any help that Sped services can bring. I see a direct effect on a child's life. Kindergarten is a crucial grade where the acquisition of skills and the use of those skills are imperative for a child to learn. Speech services, O.T. P.T services, and behavioral services are LIFE CHANGING for a young child. We must invest in our keiki, not take away from them. We must help our students get back what they have lost in the last year.
- Classroom services are not the place to cut.

When looking at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, students must meet basic needs before academic success can occur, including physical, social, and emotional health. Physical education quantity and quality are typically deficient for less affluent students, and often, those are the same students in racial and ethnic groups at a higher risk for overweight and obesity. Physical education teachers are critical to ensuring that all students in the district achieve their physical, social, and emotional health, which often correlates to academically successful students. While this is an extremely challenging situation, and there will be changes and losses to meet the budget requirements, I would like to encourage you to look at other solutions rather than eliminating teachers, especially the physical education teachers and programs in our schools. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo for allowing me to submit my testimony

Sincerely,

Abraham Concepcion M.Ed. Waikiki Elementary Phys Ed

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.

As a parent of 2 children that have been enrolled in DOE elementary, middle, and high schools, we were pleased with the increase in physical activity/education programming over the years. Considering our state has some of the lowest requirements for physical activity/education in the nation, it was reassuring that the DOE had increased programming - especially during the elementary years.

Please consider alternative measures before cutting Physical Education Programming and Instructors especially for elementary for the following reasons.

1. Physical Activity/Education is related to increased academic achievement, positive behavior, and increased attendance. Interestingly and to my knowledge, these items are generally used to judge administrators' effectiveness in schools.
2. Physical Activity/Education is also related to students' short and long-term health and wellness, unlike most other school subjects.
3. For the reasons stated above, Physical education helps meet local, state, and national goals for both education and health-care systems.
4. Cuts in programming will likely create greater disparities in both education and health between communities because most of the cuts will generally occur in lower income areas.

Lastly, we need to find a different funding source for our schools that are not heavily influenced on the fluctuations in the economy. After experiencing "Furlough Fridays" and considering the current situation, we need to solve the problem. Many localities have specific line items for education in property taxes – which is a more stable and predicable funding source.

Mahalo for your time and consideration. Concerned parents of longtime DOE students.



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

Testimony for recent budget cuts

1 message

Erin Severin <erinseverin@waikikischool.org>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 9:57 AM

Aloha kākou,

My name is Erin and I have been a part-time teacher at Waikīkī Elementary School since 2017. I was originally hired to teach music, my professional background, and have fallen in love with the teaching profession. This year, due to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, I offered to give up teaching music for the 20-21 school year to assist with virtual learning in 5th grade. While I miss teaching music and I am challenged to teach a subject area I'm less familiar with, I am incredibly grateful for my school 'ohana and the opportunity to keep giving my time and talent to learning and growth at Waikīkī School.

The recent proposed budget cuts alarmed me, however, as a part-time teacher who has sacrificed the important core subject of music in order to stay connected with my students and in order to use my expertise as a teacher. Many of my colleagues are in the same position, temporarily halting music instruction in order to help with reduced class sizes and other safety measures during the pandemic. To repay us, the important support and resource staff, with the possibility of losing our positions entirely is completely unacceptable. Resource and support teachers are not expendable - we make up the core of a well-rounded student's learning and growth. Ample study has shown that instruction in music, art, PE, and other "extended" learning areas improves student outcomes and reduces inequities in schools, including providing valuable support for special needs student populations.

Please reconsider this proposal, for the sake of our keiki and our education community.

Sincerely,

--

Erin Richardson Severin
5th grade Distance Learning aide
Waikīkī School



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

Re: SEAC Testimony for the 1.21.21 BOE Finance and Infrastructure Meeting

1 message

Rocco, Susan S. <susan.rocco@doh.hawaii.gov>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 10:01 AM

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

Cc: "Heidi.Armstrong@k12.hi.us" <heidi.armstrong@k12.hi.us>, Annie Kalama <annie.kalama@k12.hi.us>, Martha Guinan <mmguinan@gmail.com>, Steven Vannatta <steven.vannatta@k12.hi.us>, Susan Wood <susan@hilopaa.org>, Ivalee Sinclair <sinclairi001@hawaii.rr.com>

Dear Board Staff,

Please see the attached testimony from Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) Chair Martha Guinan and Legislative Committee Chair Ivalee Sinclair related to Agenda Item IV.A. on the Finance and Infrastructure Committee agenda for January 21st.

Mahalo for your assistance.

Susan Rocco
Staff to SEAC
(808) 284-3580

**1.21.21BOEFICMtg.pdf**

124K



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
January 21, 2021

**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
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Ms. Sarah Man
Ms. Dale Matsuura
Ms. Cheryl Matthews
Ms. Kaili Murbach
Ms. Kiele Pennington
Ms. Carrie Pisciotto
Ms. Kau'i Rezendes
Ms. Rosie Rowe
Dr. David Royer
Ms. Ivalee Sinclair
Mr. James Street
Mr. Francis Taele
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

Kenneth Uemura Chairperson
Hawaii State Board of Education
Finance and Infrastructure Committee
P. O. Box 2360
Honolulu, HI 96814

RE: IV. A. Committee Action on Department of Education's Plan for
Use of Federal Funds in the New COVID-19 Relief Package and
Annual Federal Spending Bill

Dear Chair Uemura and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) appreciates this opportunity to review the Department's plan for using the roughly \$184 million in ESSER II funds recently allocated by Congress. This plan addresses current budget shortfalls and mitigates anticipated cuts to the operating budget for SY 2021-2022. We are in strong support of the following priorities:

- **Pay differentials for special education teachers for SY 20-21.**
This program has been highly effective in recruiting and retaining qualified special education teachers after decades of chronic shortages. The budget notes indicate that this is the final year of the pilot program, and SEAC urges the Department to consider extending these pay differentials into the immediate future to maintain an adequate work force for Hawaii's most vulnerable students.
- **Allocating \$29 million to EDN 150 to offset program fund reductions for SY 21-22.** SEAC agrees with the Department that were these reductions imposed, they would not only significantly reduce the capacity of schools to support special education students, but may also result in Hawaii being out of compliance with IDEA's requirement for maintenance of effort. Restoring the 350 special education teacher positions and support staff will hopefully be targeted first, along with School Based Behavioral Support positions providing direct counseling and mental health supports to all students.



- **Restoring Weighted Student Formula funding for SY 21-22.** The current proposal would put back 26% of the funds identified in the Program Review cut, and SEAC supports assigning additional ESSER II funds to restore teaching positions and other needed resources to school campuses. These positions help to maintain an effective student-teacher ratio and are essential for expanding quality inclusive education.
- **Adequate funding to support the health and safety of students and school personnel.** As more and more students return to campus, the timely provision of PPE will ensure that schools can follow important health and safety protocols without having to dip into their school budgets.

SEAC is generally supportive of programs to minimize learning loss exacerbated by the pandemic, including summer programming and tutoring/therapies provided beyond the school day. However, without more information on these ESSER II priority areas, we are unable to comment on their potential impact for students with disabilities. We would also appreciate more information regarding efforts to ensure equity by providing additional access to computers, tablets and connectivity to students over the next school year.

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 Guinan
Chair

Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair



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

Testimony for Both the General Meeting and the Finance and Infrastructure Meeting1 message

Erin Centeio <erin.centeio@gmail.com>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 10:05 AM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Good morning,

Please find attached two different documents for written testimony. They are the same but addressed to the different committee and full board.

Erin E. Centeio, Ph.D. - Parent and Community Member

-

Meeting: Finance and Infrastructure AND General Business Meeting (full Board)

-

Agenda item: Finance and Infrastructure item 3A and the General Business Meeting item 5B

-

Position: Oppose

- Thanks,
- Erin

2 attachments

Erin Centeio Written Testimony_Board of Education Finance and Infrastructure Committee.pdf
153K



Erin Centeio Written Testimony_Board of Education General Meeting.pdf
165K

Dear Chairperson Payne and members of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee,

I submit testimony to you today as a concerned mother of a preschooler and a Kindergarten who attends Hawai'i Public Schools, but also as a scholar and researcher in the field of health and physical education.

I know that the budget cuts across the state are unprecedented and with that comes unique and impossible challenges and decisions. However, we need to keep our children at the forefront of our choices. Cutting the budget of the Department of Education is not the answer, and cutting teachers is especially not the answer.

A well-rounded education is important and focuses on educating the Whole Child not just academically but also on social, emotional, and physical health. A growing body of research shows that students succeed when schools embrace a whole-child perspective that integrates social, emotional, and academic development. Caring for the academic, physical, and emotional wellbeing of your students should be at the forefront of your thought. Even the vision of the Hawai'i state Department of Education states, "Hawaii's students are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners who contribute positively to our community and global society."

Today, I would like to address the proposed cuts for physical education specifically. In the proposed cuts submitted by individual schools, over 27 physical education teachers will lose their jobs. The same number of schools are planning to cut and not implement physical education. These cuts do not include those schools currently not offering PE to their students due to previous cuts and the current challenges of the pandemic. The HDOE Wellness Guidelines implement Board of Education Policy 103-1 and fulfill Public Law 108-265 Section 204 and the Healthy Hunger Free-Kids Act (2010). The Wellness Guidelines state that "PE at the elementary level is required for 45 minutes per week at the elementary level." Furthermore, it encourages quality PE that is standards-based and integrated at each grade level.

Physical Education provides life skills that encourage students to be active and fit for a lifetime. There are many benefits to a quality physical education program, and it is known that students who participate in PE are twice as likely to become active adults. Children form their health habits beginning in early childhood through adolescence. If we allow the elimination of physical education programming at the elementary level, we are risking our children not developing the skills they need to be physically active both now and in the future. The lack of physical activity and sedentary behavior can have detrimental effects on the academic success and the health of our keiki. There is strong evidence that physically fit youth have higher levels of academic achievement and increased attention, concentration, and on-task-behavior in the classroom.

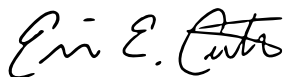
Furthermore, students who are active and fit have better attendance rates, fewer discipline referrals, and report lower participation in high-risk behaviors. These benefits are beyond the myriad of health benefits that students can achieve and maintain through the availability of quality physical education programming. Although chronic disease is not commonly seen in children, obesity and other risk factors for chronic diseases such as elevated insulin, blood lipids, and blood pressure are increasingly appearing in children. It is also established that these risk factors track into adulthood.

I understand that schools are empowered to make their own decisions for what's best for their communities. However, what we know is that physical education quantity and quality are significantly deficient for less affluent students, and often, those are the same students who are in racial and ethnic groups at a higher risk for being overweight and obese. Physical education teachers are critical to ensuring that all students in the district achieve their physical, social, and emotional health, leading to academically successful students. Especially in the current times of the pandemic, we know that those most vulnerable to the virus are those with pre-existing health conditions, such as obesity and diabetes. By eliminating physical education classes, we are putting our keiki at risk not only to fail academically but also to combat future viruses, like COVID-19. With the proposed state budget cut to education, principals are faced with an impossible decision to choose what's best for their keiki and community. Still, we must keep in sight the importance of the Whole Child and not just the significance of test scores.

I know that decisions are hard. However, please consider restoring funding for schools and not allowing cuts to teachers, especially physical education teachers. Cutting physical education programs and teachers is a decision that will affect the health of future generations, the communities they live in, and our state as a whole. Chronic disease alone costs our state an estimated \$470 million annually and another \$770 million annually due to diabetes-related medical costs. These costs do not account for the healthcare costs associated with social-emotional wellbeing. By cutting physical education, we are risking the future health of our youth. We can't afford this. We know that healthy students learn better, and they will have the opportunity to grow up and be healthy adults. Please help principals by restoring funding for schools. This will allow principals to offer programming they know is beneficial for their students and the overall community.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erin E. Centeio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Erin" and last name "Centeio" clearly distinguishable.

Erin E. Centeio, Ph.D.

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Testimony submitted by the Hawaii State Teachers Association on behalf of members who wish to remain anonymous

BOE Finance and Infrastructure Meeting, Jan. 21, 2021

Re: Action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

The Hawaii State Teachers Association compiled testimony from educators across the state with major concerns about the Hawaii State Department of Education's proposal to use \$183.6 million in federal funds from the most recent COVID-19 federal relief package. They asked for anonymity so they could speak freely about the many problems they encounter as they struggle to keep themselves, their coworkers, and students safe.

1. As a first year teacher, what I visualized my first year of teaching to be would not be our current situation. Never in a million years did I visualize my first year to be in a pandemic, while being moved between grade levels three times in the first semester alone; finally landing in 4th grade teaching 33 students. All of these changes are due to lack of resources to hire new staff to fill these positions, to provide a safer means, to provide education for the students that were on Acellus, calling my principal to ask his teachers for one fully virtual teacher per grade level to support families that do not feel safe to come back to school in a blended, face-to-face environment. My class size is already at 33 students, and to hear that class sizes next year could be higher due to teacher lines being cut is disheartening, along with stressful. As such, high numbers in class sizes makes it hard for teachers to provide more one-on-one support, differentiation, and overall a more difficult time creating genuine relationships with that many students. As a first year teacher, I knew the system wasn't the best. I knew we weren't really supported by our employer, but I guess you never really know how bad it is until you experience it first-hand. Prior to applying to the DOE after graduating from college, I had other offers of teaching under the private sector, but my heart is for the keiki in the public

school system. There's a popular analogy that people often use during social and emotional well-being PDs I've attended, "You can't pour from an empty cup." Yet, how many times have we been asked this school year alone, to go above and beyond and make adjustments to our curriculum, schedules, basically everything we know how to do, so that we can provide the best education for our students; numerous times. I can speak for all teachers, whether first year, tenured, and those that have been in this profession for 30+ years. We are tired. Physically, mentally, emotionally and psychologically. Knowing that we have all sacrificed so much, just to provide for the keiki of Hawaii, yet our system won't support us, is just sad. Reading the letter sent from Superintendent Kishimoto to the BOE, left me feeling heartbroken, and disgusted. What a way to treat your teachers at the end of the school year, with news like this, after we all have done so much for the system.

2. As a teacher, I'm sorely disappointed with the idea of teachers being let go in favor of hiring unqualified individuals to tutor students who need to be in class. This kind of move will further destroy the trust of parents in those that educate their children. Parents want and need their children to be in school with their teacher.

Students that have active IEPs need Special Education services and not tutors. They need to be in class and allowed to be taught by qualified Special Education teachers so they are allowed to give those students their hours and accommodations that are written in a legal document called their IEP. Anything less is criminal and will open a multiplicity of legal court cases against the State of Hawaii.

When this educator read online an article that a million dollars of COVID Care Relief was given to the Police Department and they used that money to purchase a robot dog that would take the temperatures of homeless people, I was upset. Here I am going in everyday to teach face to face students that struggle since August, using a mask and a goldfish bowl to teach with, someone buys an expensive robot dog to take temperatures with. Are you kidding me!

On top of that, is the extreme pressure of being furloughed or having your benefits taken, losing a PPT or EA to help you! I teach your students to succeed in their educational career and this is the thanks that you give? Not just myself, but all of my colleagues that have risked their lives teaching your children. I do it because I CARE!

3. I am very concerned about the cuts to staffing and for the funding to be used on private tutors instead of qualified teacher positions. It is unclear to me how hiring

private tutors will benefit our education system on the whole and for the long run. How is this showing teachers, EAs, and other school support staff that they are valued and important?

I am a Special Education teacher, and we will be losing EA positions and a teacher position for music. If our school's enrollment is less than the anticipated number of students, we will face even more losses of qualified teachers and support staff. Several of my peers have been nervously awaiting to see if their positions will be cut, particularly since there may not be positions at other schools for them to apply for since many schools are needing to cut positions.

My husband and I have also recently learned that we are expecting our first child. It is very disconcerting that we are losing teacher positions, because although I am not the lowest of the totem pole at our school at the moment and have seniority over a few teachers, I still worry that I could be cut from my school at some point if budgets continue to be cut.

With cutting teacher positions, our students will also be missing out on music from someone who is a qualified music teacher. Although many of us would figure something out, music is not the easiest thing for us to learn to teach, particularly when elementary school teachers are asked to teach the gambit of content areas. It would not be the same for students as if they learned from someone who has a music education background.

My school is anticipating losing an EA position. Since there have been changes in rules about people who can be skills trainers and 1:1 supports for those students that require it through their IEP (now they need to be RBT trained) and budgets being cut for these supports for our students receiving Special Education services, we need our EAs even more to be the 1:1 support people for those students while also having support staff to help with the other students in our caseload. With cutting the EA positions and still needing to provide these 1:1 support people for our students receiving Special Education services, how are we sufficiently supporting students with special needs? Now, not every SpEd teacher at our school is able to have an EA to support our students and are being required to share EAs amongst ourselves. Not only that, our EAs are being asked to do other tasks, such as working Grab-and-Go this year and are usually helping with morning and lunch supervision as well, since there is no budget for lunch supervisors.

My EA helps me to take data and practice skills that are on my students' IEPs that I do not always have a chance to address as well. He also supports my students in

small groups. My job would be very challenging without him. Why are we hiring private tutors instead of EAs that would support our schools and students?

Please look at using the funds to retain teachers and support staff. As it is, teachers are undervalued as shown by threats of furloughs and pay cuts. Now, we are cutting their jobs and other support people that help them to help their students.

4. Governor and Legislators;

The proposal of using the stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions is an extremely truncated and short-sighted view of coping with the impact of this pandemic. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding. We lose enough money in lawsuits because we don't have enough qualified teacher positions with adequate support! Why would we want to cut more teaching positions then hire tutors?

I live in a two-story house that provides shelter for 16 people; three families + one. I pay the mortgage. Everyone else has been laid off or furloughed. How are cut backs going to help the 15 others in my household?

For the past two years we have cut Special Education teachers from our staff. Caseloads increase, demands sky rocket, and revisions never cease until one no longer knows what they are supposed to do other than show up on campus! How do cut backs help students with special needs, meet IEP goals, make progress or achieve mastery? And it's not just teachers, it's educational assistant positions who don't get paid spit, but are expected to wear a red cape and have an "S" on their chest? So we entertain cutting more of their positions so they can exhibit their superpowers in a super pandemic? We're educators! We're supposed to encourage and foster intelligence as well as character among our students! But how are we supposed to encourage intellectual achievement when idiotic approaches to problem solving like this hit the table?

Common sense is a scarce commodity in these times! Find a better and more appropriate way to use the stimulus funds! Find a better way to deal with the present without sacrificing the future!

5. We have cut a curriculum coordinator, a librarian and a physical education position. These cuts directly impact student well-being, school progress and literacy/technology support. This is a time when our students haven't been active and will need to exercise when they return. Both math and reading have been impacted by

distance learning and we will not have the capacity to support student growth in these areas. I oppose hiring private tutors to address these needs. Our staff know these learners the best and would be better off serving them directly with the proposed positions being cut, than bringing in tutors who will need to spend time determining student needs where our staff would already have access to this data. I am worried our special education staff will have increased caseloads as students fall behind and are referred to SpEd. Please use the CARES money to support our schools instead of tearing them apart. Mahalo, NBCT

6. Dear Board Members,

This is the second week of school after the winter break. With more students returning to school for in-person learning, everyone in our school had to work so hard to make sure the students were safe. On Friday, I looked at other teachers taking students in and out to recess while I was on yard duty. I realized that everyone looked exhausted and stressed. As a SpEd teacher, I came to work on Friday with a migraine, inflammatory gums and lack of sleep. It is because I didn't rest over the weekend. I had to finish the progress reports, plan lessons, and organize the data collected earlier. It is because I couldn't drink enough water during teaching, juggling between in-person teaching and distance teaching, all the extra practice we have to do due to the pandemic and short of staff. EAs and PPTs were out because they were sick from the exhaustion.

With the budget cuts, our school will lose four teacher positions including two positions from our SpEd department. This means each teacher will have more students and more work. I don't know if I can keep up with the workload since I am struggling now already. Without enough support and staff, students will be impacted because more teachers cannot handle the increased workload. Of course, teachers' health is jeopardized.

With the position cuts, all of our new teachers have to leave. They are young but they are all great teachers. One of them is so upset that she thinks about leaving the education system. Why should we look at these qualified teachers leaving with disappointment while we can save them with the stimulus money?

7. Members of the Board of Education,

I cannot believe I am writing AGAIN about unsafe working conditions on my campus. While a majority of teachers are concerned about next year's budget cuts, I'm concerned about just being able to finish this current school year safely. I work

at Lokelani Intermediate on Maui and since the beginning of the school year, have been forced to work in unsafe conditions.

During the hybrid model, there were 250 students and staff on campus. Students rotate classes throughout the day with no attempts to follow the creation of small groupings that the HDOE, HDOH, or CDC recommends. Even worse, when students rotate, there is no protocol for cleaning their desks so the next students come to class and sit in an infected seat. Additionally, the cohorts that are being described to the public are anywhere from 150-175 students. That doesn't include the 70+ vulnerable students who come to school 5 days a week and sit in the same classrooms as the two cohorts making any mitigation of 2-day a week school completely void.

These are just the start of the safety problems. Band class, yes, you read that right, band class with wind instruments is happening indoors daily too. Drinking fountains are on and students use them one right after another, all day long. Recess is full of students playing football, wrestling, etc. Most classroom doors and windows are closed and the list goes on and on.

When Maui entered into the DOE/DOH "red" metrics the school remained open and in hybrid. It will be Tuesday, 1/19 before "distance" learning begins. I say "distance" in quotation marks because very little has changed. The vulnerable students will still be coming to campus daily and rotating, still without sanitation practices of desks. The principal has told teachers to expect that this vulnerable group will continue to grow larger. A letter was sent home to parents advising them that they could self-identify if they thought their child needed to come to school for academic, social, behavioral, or family hardships.

So here we are, waiting for Tuesday to go back to school where we will still be exposed to a growing number of students. Maui is now in the purple metrics, yet the dance team, cross country team, FAA club, and Reach program will all be meeting in person after school. HSTA has been involved, the local representative has been involved, and the CAS is well informed about these practices yet they continue.

8. As anxiety abounds around how Hawaii will recover from the ongoing pandemic, families eye the return of their children to full-time learning under the care of public school teachers. All those with school-aged children, public school teachers ourselves included, have gained greater appreciation for the value of our state public school system.

That we would return our charges, our beloved children, to a system stripped of resources does not bolster confidence. The evidence is clear: the greatest single determinant of student success is the teacher in the classroom.

I urge our state decision makers, therefore, to focus on retaining our qualified teachers. Please do not choose to divert funds away from the retention of teachers to the hiring of private tutors.

In 2021–22, my two youngest children will return to campus instruction in grades 1 and 3. They will not benefit from larger class sizes. They will not benefit from having fewer resources available directly to their classroom teachers.

I ask you to bolster the confidence of Hawaii families. Let them know you support the learning of their keiki. Let's work together to build our public school system in the wake of the pandemic. Make no mistake, it begins with ensuring that class sizes are appropriate through the retention of qualified teachers.

9. As a second-year teacher in the HIDOE, my principal had to talk to me recently about the possibility of losing my job. I can definitely say that because of this and other pandemic-related stress, my anxiety has been through the roof. The HIDOE is proposing using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. While this money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, it is instead being invested towards private tutors. If the HIDOE wants to hire private tutors, this completely destroys the point of having any classroom teachers in general.

Although not as many students are physically in classrooms this year, our workload has gotten fifty times larger with teaching our distance-learning kids while simultaneously teaching our face-to-face kids. Our working hours got longer and planning time was cut, and we've also needed to somehow fit in implementing and creating new plans for teaching our students virtually with the very little time we have after school. It's as though all of my hard work, and my fellow teachers' hard work, has been brushed aside, ignored, and discredited by the likely possibility of loss of jobs. This year, important staff such as our librarian, curriculum coordinator, technology coordinator, and more, have unwillingly switched to becoming classroom teachers because of the limited student-to-teacher ratio in each classroom, which has taken a hard toll on all of us. Because important people like our technology coordinator were forced to become regular classroom teachers, this has also led to the programs in our school, like robotics, to be cut. More

importantly, we also no longer have any technology coordinators as a resource for teachers, making our job even more difficult.

It feels like the blind leading the blind, and now the teachers have been the state's "guinea pigs" by allowing for students to come back on campus, with more than five kids in each class, which also does not even comply with the state mandate of having less than five people during social gatherings! Our school has already had two positive COVID cases, and it's just a matter of time before there will be an outbreak. Regardless, all of the work that is being done by myself and my fellow co-workers is being undervalued, and is affecting not only me and other new teachers, but my family, as well. The pandemic has negatively impacted me and my family's financial status. Losing my job during this time would lead to even more negative repercussions financially.

Teachers statewide have already struggled for years. With one of the most important jobs of educating students and preparing them for the future, teachers are still the lowest paid profession in the state. And now, because the HDOE wants to cut teacher positions to hire private tutors, while also cutting our budget at the same time, it just shows that we are once again being underappreciated for all the hard work that we do in and out of school.

10. I am adamantly against hiring private tutors to help our students. As it is, our school has difficulty getting UH-H students to tutor our AVID students. Our community is in an area where fewer people have college degrees than in Hilo or large cities. Often, even with PPTs and PTTs with only high school diplomas, we have difficulty because they lack the knowledge to help our middle school students especially because when those people went to high school, they did not learn Common Core standards. In fact, as a former high school teacher, I can tell you that what I once taught at the high school level (I taught grades 9–12), I have to now teach as part of the Common Core State Standards. When the tutors lack the knowledge and skills to tutor, the students and teachers suffer because those tutors teach the wrong things (so they don't look stupid) and we teachers have to re-teach. Students will get confused having to re-learn material and most likely will not catch on at all.

Rather than hiring tutors who are ill-equipped and most likely, only after the money (since they'll probably get paid more as a tutor than an entry-level part-time job in town), we should retain our highly qualified teachers, people who graduated from college, have gone through a teacher education program, and have experience teaching in the public schools. Hiring tutors and then having teachers re-teach or

undo what the tutors did, is the same as flushing money down the toilet or burning money.

As one of the teachers who will be retained for next year, I will have to teach grades 6, 7, and 8 ELA with 30-40+ students in each class. In addition, I will have to teach several electives as well as advisory, and go on yard duty. Each class will definitely have both SpEd students AND English learner students because the plan most likely calls for one section each of grades 6, 7, and 8. The plan is that there will be only four middle school teachers, one in each core content area. Talk about teacher burnout. All of this is making mid-year retirement not a possibility but a probability and a reality. I have taught three grade levels in a single year and done that many years both at the high school and middle school level; I have also had 30+ students in class with no educational assistant. Back then, however, many of the special education students were in self-contained classes, not in inclusion classes. Having the whole gamut of students' means teaching students who are reading at the pre-reader level all the way to the high school level all in one class. If social distancing is the norm next school year, then students will certainly get a watered down curriculum as I can only fit 11-12 students with 6-foot distance between them and that may mean I see each group once a week at best. To do that PLUS develop asynchronous lessons for students to do on the days they are not physically in school is total burnout. That will definitely make me retire mid-year and most likely mid-quarter to preserve my health and save my sanity. What will happen to the students? I don't know and I don't think I will care if the DOE doesn't care.

The DOE has to start caring about teachers as well as students. If teachers start leaving the profession, there is an even greater teacher shortage and we will see more unqualified people in the classroom. That will put the DOE in a worse position since students' education will be impacted and that will have a lifetime effect on students and the community. Is that what we really want? If not, then the DOE has to ensure a highly qualified teacher in every classroom with basic supplies at their disposal. In fact, every adult in the classroom has to be highly qualified if we are going to help students catch up and move ahead. We don't need just warm bodies.

11. Money should be spent on the many new teachers that are earning their tenure. The pay cuts that schools are experiencing means loss of positions and the new teachers that we want to grow and sustain will suffer. Why is there a plan to pay for tutors when our future educators could be working, teaching our keiki, and building relationships with our community?

Several teachers on my campus have expressed that they may need to leave the teaching profession because financially, they cannot make ends meet if we take a pay cut. Already things are tight. Others have said they will retire because they are already retirement age, they know the conditions will be worse since there will probably be fewer teachers on campus, larger class sizes, and less resources.

At my school we are losing a counselor, EAs and four teachers, one of which is a SpEd teacher. These losses will impact students greatly, 4 teachers x 25 students means 100 kids on campus will need to be in the remaining teacher classes during each period of the day. A loss of a counselor leaves two counselors to service 750 students (375 students each). It was already a sizable job with just three counselors.

A really sad note is that our Career Technology Education program is taking a large hit. A lot of the time, these CTE classes are the reason why kids love school and can see the value of how the knowledge they gain in their core classes apply to real world skills. Our students deserve the very best, but without resources these programs cannot continue.

12. I am a certified STEM Specialty Teacher, My STEM K-5 teacher position, along with my co-STEM teacher and our two PTTs are being cut from my school. I was told since Science is doing so well, it can now go back into the classrooms. I believe our students did so well because we standardized Science for all grades K-5 and it involves hands-on learning. Removing the STEM program in our school will jeopardize the students' learning because each teacher will be teaching units differently and of various amounts weekly. Those teachers already have full plates with other core subjects—not to mention all the other elective classes they must teach. They will not have enough time to dedicate towards the Engineering Design Process, which is a separate Science report card grade. This engineering process is the application process of what they learned and the project based learning allows ALL students to understand the content at a deeper level of understanding.

I am single, so this job cut would cause me great financial hardship. I have taught in Hawaii for 20 years, first as a certified CTE-Industrial Engineering Technology teacher for 14 years to grades 6th-12th. Currently as a certified STEM teacher for 6 years to grades K-5. I will not bump a classroom teacher out of their position because of my seniority. I believe they are the best person for that job. I would not be a qualified classroom teacher because I am a certified CTE-IET and STEM teacher. As a specialty teacher it puts me in a greater risk of not having placement options that I am qualified to teach. There are no other positions at my school that I

am qualified to teach. Other schools are cutting teacher positions too, so transfer options look non-existent.

STEM education is an extremely important class in today's society. It's already a struggling program within the DOE to getting it started in most schools. We all know when something closes, it's very hard to bring it back.

Please rethink the DOE budget. Stop using precious funds on hiring tutors and keep what's already proven to work with high HSA tests scores. Use the funds to save qualified teachers to work in their qualified content areas. That's what's best for all our keiki of Hawaii.

13. All teachers are struggling with spouses being laid off, children having to do virtual school or changing to plan B (and working to help support the family) and educators having to continue to keep up with the demands of a "regular" school year. Four to five days of the week we are in various meetings after teaching four hours straight. Meetings for school initiatives, safety protocol, ART specialized groups, Action Teams by department, extended faculty meetings, accreditation meetings, EES meetings, department meetings, all in addition to extra-curricular clubs that teachers choose to advise (I advise 2 clubs) and endless emails and phone calls we monitor and respond to on a daily basis.

The insanity continues and teacher burnout will result in teachers quitting or moving into other careers that demands less. Our physical health is in jeopardy. Budget cuts do not allow us to use curriculum once sustained us, positions cut and programs eliminated seem very unfair to our keiki. They need us more than ever. Many qualifying for 504s with depression, anxiety, suicide tendencies, please help us. EAs eliminated and programs that would allow differentiated instruction for high and low-end students is a crime.

Public education needs additional funding of a "regular school year" and extra support during this time. Alternative programs, extra funding for teachers doing more than others who do the very minimal, time to plan better strategies to implement to create the safe "classroom" blended and virtual classrooms require. SEL lessons take away from regular content, but so well worth the investment. Educators have become more than just teachers.

Our keiki are suffering, crying for help, withering away behind computer screens, falling deeper into hopelessness. Many being abused, neglected, left to do school

and reside in their dysfunctional homes with drugs, alcohol in their homes. Please help to save us teachers, support staff and students all alike. We need help!

14. Oversight is needed or a formula to determine what should be cut at each individual school based on student needs. Teachers, both special education and regular education are on the frontlines and are needed the most. They should be the last ones to be cut. For example, taking a look at personnel who are not working directly with students right now. Given the choice of teacher vs. counselor or librarian the obvious is to keep the teacher.
15. Please think of Hawaii's keiki and what will best support their growth as learners. The Hawaii federal stimulus funds should be spent restoring funding for schools so they can retain certified teachers. We already have an emergency hire issue. Students need to have the best trained teachers next year to help fill gaps.
16. To Whom This May Concern:

I just continued to be appalled at the state administration's plan to balance the budget on the backs of teachers at our children's expense.

As you might recall, it wasn't too long ago when the State of Hawai'i was concerned about the revolving door of teachers and the need to pay us more in order to retain us.

With COVID-19 and its effect on our ability to teach in-person, we teachers have proven our commitment to our profession by adapting and adjusting and essentially doing anything and everything to reach our children online.

Now, with a budget crisis, the state administration is looking to deny our children quality educators and is pitching tutors?! This plan was unveiled the same week that the administration unveiled their pitch to fix a leaky fountain on state grounds. These kinds of oxymorons just don't inspire public confidence in our state government at all. It's just truly a slap in the face to those of us with boots on the ground, doing all we can to give our 100% to those constituents who matter the most: our children.

I would suggest that the state of Hawaii get its priorities in order. Going after teachers with hatchets is pretty short-sighted and it's not going to be very palatable to the voters and taxpayers who are exasperated with navigating online learning for their children, growing increasingly alarmed about what is being described as the "lost generation" that is losing out on the full educational experience as a result of

COVID-19. Rather than continuing to deprive our children that full educational experience, state administrators should be looking for cost-cutting measures elsewhere in other departments or higher up the food chain. Look for ways to enhance our children's educational experiences. Defend teachers. Ensure they are paid fairly. Work diligently to get us back in school, safe and healthy! That should be the focus!

Mahalo for the opportunity to weigh in on this important matter.

17. In June 2020, I retired after THIRTY years in the DOE. As much as I loved teaching, the stress of new initiatives, COVID-19, rising expectations and demands on teachers to do virtual AND in-person teaching led me to solidify my decision about leaving the classroom. My husband and I are both teachers and went through the strike of 2001 and the furloughs that impacted over 10,000 teachers statewide.

Even after taking PD classes for the first five years of my teaching career and reaching Class VII, my pay did not make it to \$80,000 even after thirty years! Had I gone into law (which was my 2nd choice career), I would not be struggling financially for thirty years. I'm part of that group of teachers that were left behind on the pay scale. I got fed up waiting for pay that never came.

Working in a rural community, we serviced children of plantation workers, and have always been a Title I school. We spend hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars each year not just on classroom supplies, but food, clothing and field trip money to assist these students and their families.

My own family has still not recovered from the furloughs, and are still paying our bills month-to-month. We have told our daughter that we are trying to save college money, but the bulk of our money goes to paying our ridiculous mortgage and high cost of living.

I speak from experience when I say, if you cut the education budget, there WILL be a mass exodus of teachers. Those who are left on the frontlines will NOT be able to stay the course because of the even BIGGER burden on them with larger class sizes, higher expectations, and LITTLE support. Cutting positions such as custodial positions or cafeteria positions will result in a greater workload for teachers.

I am the founder of a Facebook group to help assist people during the pandemic with approximately 6,000 members throughout the state of Hawaii. I found that teachers were the group with the highest need! Since September, our group has

adopted over 110 teachers statewide. Most of them requested PPE, which the DOE promised would be given to them "soon." I am still hearing from those 110 teachers that though they received some PPE, they are still in short supply. Our group continues to donate to these teachers, who are afraid to speak up for fear of retaliation by administration.

PLEASE, do NOT cut the schools' education budget. The ripple effect will be devastating. Mahalo for your consideration.

18. My children attend Kapa'a Elementary and this year they are on a blended schedule. They are already barely learning anything due to only being with their teacher for half the time. Next year they are looking at a blended model of A/B/C due to this budget cut and the reality of having to still social distance. How are we okay with taking this much away from our children? How do we expect our future to do better if we don't provide them with the opportunity? Instead we ask parents to hire private tutors, or pay for homeschool curriculum on their own due to the lack of options from the DOE. We are not setting our students up to succeed.
19. It is absolutely atrocious and CRIMINAL that in today's educational climate with the pandemic ongoing and teachers being stretched so thin to provide the very basics to their students that you would even consider cutting the BOE budget at all. We are the worst state when it comes to teacher retention and I have heard on many levels our schools are lacking when it comes to providing an education that prepares our students for the competitive workforce and college. As someone who started studying towards a teaching degree in secondary science 6 months prior to the onset of the pandemic, I can tell you that it is disheartening and quite frankly makes me question whether I should pursue this path of study at all. If you aren't able and willing to do everything you must to ensure the success of our youth then you don't have the people's best interest at heart and don't deserve to represent us. An uneducated, unprepared, and disenfranchised youth does not create a strong, prosperous, and productive society. I hope people vote accordingly in the next election having seen the choices you have made. You have time to turn this decision around though. It would be wise to use the funds from the CARES act that were allocated to the state to help offset the hardships you are claiming. For the sake of our society at large, please make the right choice and stop playing games with our children's futures.
20. Numbers are low for enrollment and all classes are small at Radford. Many students are going to online learning. Teachers will lose their jobs and college students will choose another pathway, not a teaching career. When things get

back to normal we will be short many teachers years from now. If we don't support teachers now, there will be no more teachers to support.

21. Now more than ever, beginning Special Education teachers need to be supported and assisted with compliance responsibilities as well as accelerating their effectiveness in the profession. It is extremely disturbing and upsetting that there will no longer be funding for the Full-Release Mentor RT position for the complex areas. Next year, the new SpEd teachers will be mentored by school-based mentors who already have their plates full with regular teaching duties and their mentor assignments for general education teachers. Please help support the FRM positions so that we can retain and support these beginning teachers. The beginning teachers have expressed how much they need their mentors now more than ever!
22. This is the absolute worst time to cut teacher positions. The social/emotional and academic consequences of this pandemic will be far-reaching and long-lasting. Who knows how long it will take for our students to recover or "catch-up" in both of these areas? Teachers will be the ones at the forefront of this effort, and teachers are the ones who will try our best to mitigate the effects of this pandemic on our children. Personalized and individualized instruction and attention for students will be key in this effort to reopen schools and return to "normal" school. Cutting teacher positions will be going in the exact opposite direction of that. Class sizes will increase dramatically, even bigger than pre-COVID standards. The teacher's attention will need to be divided into even smaller increments for each individual child. Classroom management will be more difficult and student-teacher relationships possibly strained. Teachers will be stretched even thinner than we already are being stretched, and this may be the final factor in a teacher's decision to retire or quit. Thus leaving our state in an even worse position of teacher shortage. Please - if society thinks teachers are as important as they say, NOW is the time to show it! Do not cut teacher positions!
23. If tier 3 "Barton reading" teacher is taken away it will be detrimental for quite a few children in this very small school and community. A lot of children have learning disabilities at Hanalei but are not on an IEP or 504 plan. Tier 3 Barton program has been in place for many years and it works amazingly for the children in it. My daughter is a student of this program. The difference between her having this tier 3 and not having it is extremely apparent.

If this program is taken away she would be completely lost in her grade level classroom learning. She would most definitely need to repeat a grade or more and

would be very behind and always catching up in her learning. Therefore, making school not a place of learning but a place of frustration, and could possibly steer her and others that are in this tier 3 program down a path of school is too hard a path and not finishing.

There is not much to take away from Hanalei school as this small school is not Title 1 and has to do fundraising every year for teacher pay, art, PE, science, clubs, playground structures, the list goes on and on.

24. Board of Education and all concerned,

I feel like this is my 5,000th piece of testimony this year against, yet another proposed change that makes zero sense. In short, I truly have NO idea how anyone could have looked at the dire situation that the DOE finds itself in this year and think "you know, cutting classroom teacher positions and just getting some private tutors and having some summer school ought to catch these kids up."

I am appalled by the consistent disrespect that has repeatedly slapped teachers and students in the face this year, this one being one of the most outrageous. Have you thought about how this affects our students at all? We have a hard time finding qualified substitute teachers who literally just follow sub plans, but the DOE thinks we can find qualified private tutors? Come on! How does any of this replace the expertise of a qualified classroom teacher?

In looking at the document that outlines the positions/funding that schools intend to cut in order to meet the ridiculous new budget, there are some schools who literally plan to cut vital positions that serve their most needy students. Others are needing to cut counselors or all classroom supply funding! I don't know how you can sleep peacefully at night knowing that teachers and students in our state are in the worst predicament of our lives/careers and you are doing nothing to help us.

Why are you not fighting for us and our students? Why are you not pushing for the DOE to keep teaching positions? I implore you to save what is left of the DOE. Teachers are at our wits end this year. We (our students included) have experienced so much stress and trauma in the past year that you cannot even begin to understand. You cannot, in good conscience, allow these funding cuts to be made. Our teacher retention rate is awful as is and teachers have already begun to retire. If this comes down the pike and becomes reality, there is not a doubt that we will see one of the worst years of public education in Hawaii's history in school year 2021–22.

25. Teachers already don't make a lot, and they have enough stress added to their jobs. There's only so much they will be able to put up with before they start resigning or caring less about what they do. They need encouragement and extra motivation during these challenging times, not pay cuts. Mahalo for reading.
26. 1) Pay teachers to teach our children and prepare to help them create a better future for themselves and our society or pay teachers to be on unemployment? Which sounds better?
- 2) We already have a grave teacher shortage, why choose to make it worse by pushing more teachers out of the field?
27. I am a full-time, licensed secondary English teacher on Oahu, with a master's degree in my subject of licensure, and more than a decade of experience as an educator. I am extremely concerned about the DOE's proposal to allocate funds for private tutors and summer school in lieu of using these funds to retain desperately needed qualified teachers. Using these funds to keep these educators in the classroom, providing instruction for an entire school year using state curriculum-guided pedagogy, will serve students' education far better than short term tutoring.
- If these cuts are implemented, qualified teachers such as myself, and many others, will definitely leave the state of Hawaii, exacerbating an already critical educator shortage in this state. This is a major disservice to students and the entire community. The teachers who do remain, which will be substantially less, will be absolutely overwhelmed with larger class sizes. This will impact the quality of education greatly, due to the disproportionate student-teacher ratio.
- The treatment of educators, and education, in this state is disappointing, disrespectful, and staggeringly unfair to both faculty and students. It is quite clear why Hawaii has such significant issues keeping educators here. This state needs to re-evaluate its priorities, and those in positions of leadership should have the appropriate background to make decisions that are competent and actually helpful to the education community.
28. The HDOE is proposing using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, NOT private tutors. Our students need qualified teachers, LIBRARIANS, COUNSELORS, and other support staff such as PE, Music, Art, etc., to enrich their education. Every child should be LUCKY enough to have a certified LIBRARIAN to

teach them information literacy, and a certified counselor to guide and support their emotional well-being. Classroom teachers cannot do this alone. PLEASE DO NOT USE STIMULUS MONEY FOR PRIVATE TUTORS. Instead focus on providing quality education by supporting school level staffing. Thank you. Teachers, librarians, counselors and support staff are what the children need at every school!!!

29. I am a general education teacher in my fifth year, and I am always grateful for the opportunity to still have a job during these tough economic times. I am also aware of people who have lost and are in the process of losing their jobs. It has been stated that the BOE is planning to use federal funds to hire tutors for students as opposed to keeping the teachers who are already in place. I cannot fathom this decision, or comprehend whatever may have transpired such a move. I can only say that this will be like the old saying, "robbing Peter to pay Paul". Are we really that inconsiderate? Why remove teachers and replace them with tutors? This is beyond me. As a teacher, I empathize with fellow educators. We work hard and continuously, but whenever the rubber hits the road, we get driven on, or out. I hope you reconsider your actions, because teachers deserve more.
30. Aloha, I am a taxpayer and I do not support HIDOE's proposal to use a large share of the latest federal stimulus funds on private tutors instead of restoring funding for schools so they can retain teachers.

My partner's children will be negatively affected, so will many keiki in my ohana, and so will my friends who are excellent teachers in Maui County.

Please retain current teachers and do not lay off any teachers. Mahalo nui loa.

31. Spending millions of dollars of the DOE budget on private tutoring is just crazy. In the high school where I work the students who are faring poorly are refusing to attend class or not doing their assignments. That money should be used to retain the teachers who are working so hard for their students and have been told by their principals that they are being let go.

I know a first-year teacher who has been doing an excellent job teaching her students who has been told that she will not have a job due to the budget cuts. I know the parents of one of her students and the mother told me how much her son likes her class. It would be a shame if Hawaii was to lose the new talented, dedicated and hardworking teachers due to shortsighted and misguided policies such as spending much needed funds on private companies tutoring ventures.

32. Are we important or not? By furloughs and cuts, this does not send a good message on how important we are. It tells the public what our leaders think of us, "Teachers come and go!" How can you expect excellence and force us to do our work when we are consistently being treated like some piece of cheap tech to just satisfy your immediate needs and then tossed out when you don't need it. Remember, we vote for you folks too. This pandemic already made it hard and cut my wife out of a job, and her employer cannot afford to bring anyone back. There is no plan for it and there are no open jobs she can qualify for. I am a very low paid teacher and cannot get enough to cover both of us. We are living barely by the skin of our teeth and have expended our savings. Yes, I am appreciative to have my job but if you want me to work and others as well, make it worth it. Give us the respect and the jobs we need to fulfill. Not cuts and furloughs. Hard decisions shouldn't be hard when it comes to teachers. You need kids in school, then you need teachers. Who runs the schools, the teachers. We are doing all the educational work. Why are you spending on tutoring? We do that too. We are expected to help students on our breaks. Seriously! There is just not enough of us and our class sizes will not only get larger, we won't have monies to buy supplies we need. Our school does not qualify for Title I funds and there are grants that we do not qualify for either. Our middle class community puts us in a non-funding situation. How is this fair to our students? You are affecting us personally, financially, and work-wise. You really want to make some of our great teachers, who will be cut due to this situation, go away? Two of them are already fed up and will be returning to the mainland. Those two stayed two years and gave their best. Now, they will be gone after this year. Pretty sad. I plead with all of you to save our jobs and I am hoping someone will find us monies as well. Cutting and no-funds should not be a thing when it comes to educating our kids.
33. The past few years at our school have been like a roller coaster ride. Two years ago, we started the year with a shortage of 10 or more teachers. By the end of the year, we had only filled half of those, in some cases with under-qualified or unlicensed emergency hires. Throughout the year, it was the norm to have Vice Principals covering multiple classes at a time in the cafeteria because there were not enough subs. Last year, we had the wonderful luck of hiring new, young enthusiastic teachers to fill the vacancies. Some of the emergency hires from the previous years also came to have a heart for teaching our students, and decided to work towards licensing. This year, we have nearly twenty probationary teachers who may face getting bumped next year due to the budget cuts and anticipated statewide loss of positions. Our principal has put in every effort to keep every teacher employed at our school, and it is sad, to say the least, that we may still inevitably lose some of our brightest teachers. We must also look ahead to the

long-term effects of these cuts. We would be setting ourselves up for the day when the DOE can "afford" those positions again, but they will remain vacant because we have discouraged and driven away so many educators and we have once again devalued public education.

34. I can't believe I have to submit testimony on why the DOE shouldn't spend stimulus money on private tutors from private companies to "fix" student achievement. The very premise of tutoring ensures that these funds will not benefit all students. This just goes to show that decisions are not being made by people who have an understanding of what is currently really happening in classrooms. Students who are truly struggling during these times will not utilize a digital tutoring platform, period. Meanwhile, we are cutting teacher positions, when research (by John Hattie) shows that effective teachers have the highest positive effect size on student learning.

Yes, students are struggling right now and many will fall through the cracks while schools continue to be held to an impossible standard. The pressure to maintain the same amount of growth as a non-pandemic school year has been unrealistic from the very beginning. Teachers are literally expected to work magic through distance learning, and we are still being required to participate in state testing. We will overcome the logistical hurdle of coordinating everything, we will somehow make everything work because we are committed educators, but we just won't make the same gains this year and you won't reach them through private tutors either. Find another solution that actually supports schools in need. Like more counselors, because we will need them.

35. So let's take away from Special Education again!!

This COVID year has greatly impacted teachers and students across the state, but in my opinion Special Education teachers got hit the hardest! Imagine being a year 1 or 2 Special Education Teacher this COVID year? There was no training for IEP or re-evaluations in Quarter 1, endless overdue IEPs or re-evaluations that were not completed last school year in Quarter 4, figuring out how to teach virtually, countless meetings, and the list goes on. Special Education teachers were tasked beyond in Quarter 1 with ENDLESS paperwork due to Chapter 60 requirements. These teachers had little to no support or training. With the help of the Full Release mentor (supporting year 1 and year 2 Beginning Teachers) the BTs were supported in various aspects. It ranged from social emotional support, crucial Federal IDEA requirements- endless paperwork, IEP meetings, classroom management, communication with stakeholders, daily planning, etc. The FRM

supports a maximum of 13 BTs as part of their guaranteed support in accordance with our contract 180-minutes of instructional mentoring. If you take away this support-the one stable support, who are these teachers to turn to? Their colleagues at school level are taxed with the same exact SpEd issues! Who will support these BTs next year and provide the program requirements with FIDELITY? As one of the state FRM, I would field phone calls and emails late at night, review draft IEP over the phone, listen to the hardships they are enduring, help with collaboration with colleagues, assist in endless paperwork for IDEA requirements! These were just the tip of the iceberg of issues these teachers endured, and the FRM was there to support them through it all. As a full release mentor, the goal is to retain, accelerate teacher effectiveness and impact student achievement through a comprehensive rigorous evidenced based induction and mentorship program. How will this be achieved if the position is cut? Who will take on 13 new teachers? Provide meaningful collaboration at minimum 180-minutes a month? Engage in professional reflection through evidence based tools? Provide classroom based support through analysis of student work? Complete 2 observation cycles- with a planning and reflection cycle? These are mentor supports, but we all know that not only do they need professional support for the classroom, they do need social emotional support.

Our state pilot data has proven with the FRM in place, teacher retention for special education improved! This is a HUGE success of the pilot program.

I am advocating on behalf of all the Full Release Mentors statewide. We all play a crucial role for Year 1 and Year 2 SpEd Beginning Teachers. If special education is always a main concern in Hawaii, why would you remove a support that benefits not only the teacher, but their students as well? We impact many lives in a day by supporting the one SpEd teacher and that one teacher may have a caseload of 10 students? 15 students? Imagine that impact STATEWIDE!! Let's take a look at the scenario and how impactful a Full Release Mentor can make. I work with 14 BTs, each BT with a varying number of students. The FRM not only supports beginning teachers, they support a huge number of special education students. I am kindly asking that the cuts each district is facing, please reconsider the funds slated for private tutors and allow the additional funds to be used for a Full Release Mentor for the complexes that are not able to fund the position due to the budget crisis. Thank you.

36. Aloha, I am an elementary school teacher on Kauai. I have been successfully teaching Kindergarten on Kauai for 12 years.

I was very saddened, and extremely concerned, when I learned that our school may be losing up to 10 teachers next school year (nearly 17% of our teachers). A loss of this many teachers will be devastating to our student population of almost 1,000 elementary students - mostly low income and a large ELL population. All of our grade levels will be impacted, as well as our SPED dept. We need to find a way to save these positions! Our class-sizes will go up, making it difficult to provide in-person instruction on alternating days. We would then have to expand to an A/B/C day schedule, further cutting in-person learning time, in order to accommodate our increased class size during the COVID pandemic. This would be detrimental to our students causing them to fall even further behind than they might already be this school year.

Putting DOE monies into paying for after-school private tutors is not a good solution! It seems like a "temporary fix" that will only help a certain portion of Hawaii students who decide to take part in the program. This is NOT worth the loss of hundreds of talented, certified, and experienced teachers. Professional teachers can find a way to bring the students "up to speed" as time goes on, but not if we have no positions to teach from. Furthermore, with the loss of professional teachers, and even less in-person instructional time, this would just lead to a high need for tutors & additional support in the future. It doesn't solve the problem.

On a wider scope, cutting large numbers of teachers across the state will cause disruption at all schools, with teachers having higher years of service bumping other tenured teachers out of their positions at other schools causing anxiety, frustration, and resentment among our tenured professionals, and bumping experienced teachers into less familiar grade levels or out of their specialties, hence slowing their effectiveness. Morale during this already challenging time will sink lower. Even more quality (tenured) teachers may be lost, across the board.

It seems DOE monies should not be spent on private "tutors" to help our students "come up to speed" if it means the loss of hundreds of professionals who would be very difficult to recover for our workforce in the future. Couldn't the monies to pay for tutors come from another source of funding? Public/private sector relationships? Or other?

Additionally, should we not give the budget decisions a bit more time? Given that a new U.S. President and U.S. Senate is being sworn in this week? The Biden Administration has pledged (Thurs. 1/14/21) a desire to provide the states monies to help retain teachers, nurses, and other essential workers. It would be a shame

to cut so much of our teacher workforce only to learn that financial relief is coming soon.

Please consider all possible avenues to retain our teachers. We are essential! We love our students and our work! We have shown flexibility, creativity, and endurance during this extremely challenging time in education! And, despite the challenges, many students are flourishing. Please continue to support us in supporting our keiki!

Mahalo for hearing my statement. I love what I do! And I care deeply about our Hawaii's students and our teachers! Sincerely, an Elementary Teacher, Kauai

37. Aloha Kakou.

The BOE needs to realize that the only way to uplift Hawaii's educational system is by investing in public education. Hawaii has the lowest paid teachers when adjusting for cost of living. In addition, there are massive teacher shortages already. How is our educational system going to cope with even higher shortages of classroom teachers? Hawaii needs to start looking at itself. Invest in the educational system here. Raise teachers HERE. Stop looking outside for the magic bullet. There is no magic bullet. True change takes time and is a slow process, and requires resources.

Be a Board of EDUCATION. Don't be a Board of Ignorance and Incompetence.

38. For the last year and half, my SPED mentor has been my link to sanity and proper procedure. We meet weekly to go through my cases and we find solutions that benefit my students and help me gain knowledge for the next time that problem comes up. I could not have gotten through my first year without her as I had many unusual situations in my pool of students ranging from 504/IEP switches to RBT funding. I did have help from my Admin and my fellow SPED teachers, but having someone dedicated to me and my students alone? Invaluable. The pressure to be a perfect SPED teacher is daunting and depressing. Without this program, you will have teachers doing the wrong thing, not for lack of trying, but for lack of guidance. That hurts students and opens up areas for the state to be sued. The state already has a teacher crisis on its hands and you are taking away an invaluable program that educates and retains teachers. I am still a teacher because of my mentor. I would have been lost without her. Frankly, I would have quit without her help, knowledge and support.

Please - Stop and think before you do all these cuts. The state has resources they can use and are not. DO NOT HIRE TUTORS!!! How can you justify hiring new people and spending \$50 million dollars on tutors when you are looking at firing people that are needed and wanted? What kind of outcome do you expect in our students and future generations when the DOE is the first thing to get cut in any budget crisis? Teachers are treated as the least of us when we teach all of us. Think about that.

39. Aloha, I understand the state needs to seriously consider budget cuts in the DOE. As a teacher, this is important to me. I have also gotten paid to tutor. Taking school funds to pay private tutors is not OK. Use the teaching positions to work with students who need extra help. Trying to save money by paying outside contractors means is unethical in a number of ways - if you are saving money that way, the contractors are not getting a living wage, and if you are paying more money per hour, you are taking that from teachers. Teachers are there to consistently support students - supporting teachers helps our keiki. Mahalo
40. This is the third time I've had to write a letter trying to protect students from the unnecessary and unconscionable budget cuts. Student engagement is at an all time low. Universal screening test scores are at an all time low. Students' acquired skills and knowledge are at an all time low. Now is the time to support education, and more importantly educators to mediate this crisis. The psychic damage and blow to morale every time we have to defend yet another economic threat to our profession is more than some teachers are willing to suffer. Stop trying to balance the budget by sacrificing our most vulnerable - our keiki. You don't hurt teachers as much as you hurt the children we care for, we educate, and we support.
41. I work at a hard to staff school on the Big Island. We have a very difficult time staffing our classrooms during a normal school year, especially SpEd positions. When positions are cut, students get the short end of the stick. Larger class sizes are not what we need, especially going into a school year after one with such upheaval as this one. Our students deserve a smaller class size to build relationships, confidence, and the SEL that will be needed after this very stressful year. Cutting funding would make it even harder to do so. The DOE should NOT focus its funds toward tutors when we need highly qualified teachers in the classroom. Please use the funds towards hiring AND RETAINING classroom teachers. Mahalo
42. I am a 12-month SSC, who has been informed that my position will be cut to a 10-month position next school year. With this pay cut, I am very likely to have to go out

and look for a second job again, as I have needed to do for many years to be able to provide food and housing for my children. It doesn't make sense to cut teacher pay and positions and instead hire tutors to support our students. Teachers are trained professionals who deserve the funding and support from the state to be able to successfully fulfill their positions. When I work a second job, the amount of time and energy I have to invest in my work is lowered, and ultimately our children are the ones who suffer. Please show care and respect for your teachers who selflessly serve Hawaii's Keiki. Thanks!

43. Budget cuts will impact the students with special needs, as we already seemed short-handed, but these kids still need adults for feeding, diaper changing, learning, and accessing the general education curriculum. If a student with SpEd needs diaper-changing, sometimes it takes two adults to change him/her, and one adult needs to tend to the rest of the kids who need help with meal time, or need help spelling his/her name or walking. All adults in place are very important, valued, and needed.
44. I have been a teacher in the Hawaii DOE for over 20 years. I was forced to take unpaid leave from my position for the year because I do not feel it is safe going to campus to teach face-to-face right now. Because of that, my students have been receiving special education from a substitute who is not even a certified teacher or SpEd teacher for that matter. When speaking with my co-teacher for this class, she said she felt bad for the kids with IEPs because their needs are not being met by having a sub instead of a qualified SpEd teacher. How many substitutes are teaching our students who are most vulnerable? How many kids in our DOE have been put in this position and are failing to make progress for not having the appropriate support per their IEPs because they are not being provided special education? How many hours of EL programs weekly were actually provided to students who are English language learners? Where is the data on that? Students who have been coming to campus for face-to-face instruction as the 'most vulnerable' of the student population are reported by the DOE from their 1st quarter grades to be faring worse than the general population who have been learning online since the beginning of the year. Where is the data for the 2nd quarter? Now when faced with remedying this issue, the HIDOE is proposing using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher and EA positions? This is preposterous! This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors. Of the 5 tutoring companies that were selected to be a part of this program, 3 of them are on the mainland. This is not in the best interest of our students, teachers or schools. We need the help of our BOE to support the education of our public

school students, by giving them more time and access to teachers and assistants who are at our schools already and can provide them with the specific help that they need based on their school's programs, not some outside tutoring agency. Our schools and students cannot afford to have SpEd positions cut which would increase the loads for the remaining teachers and will further the gap between SpEd and gen ed. Please keep the money that our state receives for public education IN our public schools FOR our teachers and educational assistants who know what our students need and are ready, willing and able to provide that. Thank you.

45. The issue with cuts and the current proposal is that last SY, our state had concerns about a teacher shortage of 1,000 plus teachers. How is it possible that just about a year later, there is a declaration of the opposite from governing officials. Does that mean the vacancy positions were filled and now we are laying these people off? Being a senior teacher, I look forward to advancing in my career so that I may invest in my future, home and children's expenses. Investments have been made with the expectation that the money will be available. Does that mean the state will push for reduced mortgage payments or offer deferment on credit card bills or other investments? Why is there still a concern for the railway when the current situation proves traffic is not a problem when tourism is properly managed? Perhaps money can be managed differently by reducing or adding additional fees for tourists? I'm genuinely concerned for our future generation that will be the leaders of tomorrow when there is low investment in our children. If people are concerned with our system, cutting positions and reducing people available to service sounds like the opposite of providing the best for the people.
46. Due to budget cuts, my principal informed me that she may be reducing my 12-month Student Services Coordinator position to a 10-month position. Of course the reduction in pay is very concerning to me, but even more concerning is how my job expectations will be met and federal timelines followed if I am not working the entire year. Just because the school year ends does not mean the work of my position ends. I am fearful that I may have to work for free over school breaks to uphold my job expectations and complete my job responsibilities. I have a second, part-time job already to help make ends meet as a single income household; I cannot even fathom the thought of possibly having to find a third part-time job to pay my mortgage and bills, all the while having to work for free to make sure my job is done and done well.
47. I have been an English teacher for 23 years in the DOE and have been forced to endure the 2001 strike as well as the 2009 furloughs. If the state of Hawai'i cares

about the education of their children, they should not institute these cuts because now more than ever it is critical to teach students high level thinking skills in order to make the difficult decisions they will be faced with in the future. Hawai'i has been victim to a great out migration of the best and brightest students over the years and this situation will only worsen if the state chooses to hire tutors instead of qualified educators to instruct the children of Hawai'i. I urge you not to move forward with your plans to lay off over 1,000 educators in order to balance the budget.

48. I am an elementary Special Education teacher who has been teaching students in person since the first day of school. My class has grown from 3 in-person to 7, and will soon be creeping up to 8 while the rest of their grade level is still conducting online class sessions. I have 4 students enrolled in total distance learning. I'm well aware of what is going on as far as vulnerable learners go, and can easily tell you that 2 of my 11 total students are not consistently accessing the synchronous instruction I am providing.

Our school went through heartbreaking decisions to cut positions. It was our hope to keep all of our hard-working co-workers, but we have been forced to prioritize as we enter a new era of budget cuts. To hear that \$50 million will go to outside tutors is puzzling, frustrating, and even maddening. Can we hear more about it so we don't end up in a situation like we did going through removing Acellus?

Has the DOE considered the use of Part-Time Teachers who already have relationships with the schools and students and who knows the RTI routines, and who can work within the campus during the school day? I feel that this program is a band-aid to say that the DOE is doing "Something" but has it gone through a rigorous vetting process such as the one that should have occurred with the purchase of Acellus? And this time, will you listen to teachers and administrators?

I feel that my legislators have heard what we have to say. Administration's hands are tied. They take orders from the DOE, but has the DOE listened to what teachers are saying? Thank you for your time.

49. Keiki are more valuable than government or money. While teaching at Ilima intermediate, we did not have air conditioning for our children. I say we take the air conditioning cost out of every building on the island and fund the keiki as they should be. How dare you threaten our keiki who are unable to fight for themselves! Shame on you for proposing such detrimental cuts to such a vulnerable group.

50. I am a certified teacher fairly new to tech in Hawaii. I love my work in so many ways. I currently spend almost half of my wage on rent. As budget cuts loom I face moving to substandard accommodations or leaving the state. I love my work, but question the wisdom of the financial effects of the pay. I wonder how I will manage in this profession in this real estate market and cost of living in Hawaii. Our students need committed, skilled teachers who can stay in the school system to build relationships, teaching efficacy and community connections. If you cut the pay, you negatively impact the future of our children and all of us who will age and will count on them to run society, and look after our well being.
51. The HDOE is proposing using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors. This is what the federal funds are for.

I was a librarian, but my position will be cut next year. This year I taught 1st grade to decrease class size. Library was eliminated. I am also an ELL teacher. Again, due to budget cuts, this position is also not listed in the choices for next school year's position choices. The ELL teacher was also put in the classroom to reduce class size this year. I am also SpEd certified but we are losing SpEd positions; the options are multiple grades, increasing the caseload heavily. There are no choices for me at my current school. There was also no physical education this year, the PE teacher was a first grade teacher, then moved to sixth grade because a teacher quit. PE is not on the list of choices for next year's positions either.

These proposals are unacceptable. In unprecedented times such as these, where teachers have had to go above and beyond with virtual and hybrid teaching and learning, we need to find ways to pay teachers MORE not do more for LESS!!!

52. I worked as a contracted tutor, they are not qualified for specific subjects, instead they work all subjects. The money which might be spent on tutors could better be invested in teachers. If more time for specific students is needed, I recommend offering those funds to licensed teachers through the student's school. Then students will get qualified tutors who already have a relationship, which we know is key to student success.
53. What will Hawaii's DOE do when they have forced the hands of teachers who can no longer remain in the teaching profession and support future generations of children in Hawaii? We are already teetering on the edge of an educational disaster. One push of budget cuts that lead to almost 1,000 educators losing their

jobs and thousands left with huge pay cuts, we may never recover. Do I do what I love but take a 30% pay cut that won't allow me to meet my basic needs living in Hawaii or look for other fields that will value my skills and experience. I am tired of living in anxiety and fear if I am going to be able to survive. Is it even worth it anymore?

54. My wife and I both switched careers late in life to become teachers. I teach elementary school, and she teaches high school. As we are not tenured, both of us are likely to lose our jobs in light of massive budget cuts. I currently teach a "vulnerable" class of 10 students in person. I have seen and experienced firsthand how the children desperately need to be in a classroom, together with their peers, taught by a qualified teacher. Personal tutoring may help with some of the academic needs in a very limited way, but in the bigger picture, the children will really miss out on so much that only a "traditional" classroom can provide. One lesson this pandemic has shown all of us is that there are no substitutes for the relationships that are cultivated in the classroom during the school year, and this will only happen with qualified teachers doing what we are trained to do. Clearly, no one becomes an educator in order to become wealthy. We have sacrificed and dedicated our lives for the sake of the children. Please let us do what we love to do--educate, nurture, and equip the children to become ones who will go forth and make our state, our nation--and even the world--a better place to live.
55. The HDOE is proposing using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors. Teachers have worked endless hours from the beginning of the pandemic in order to provide the best education for their students asynchronously and synchronously. I don't think any other profession has had to learn a skill and get proficient at it in such a short amount of time. Our school went from asynchronous to synchronous in less than a month. Was this difficult? Yes, very, but our teachers are professionals and are very dedicated to their students' well-being and academic achievement. You won't find these qualities in private tutors who have no emotional connection to the students or the schools. Our school has worked so hard the past few years which is reflected in the increase in our students' growth and achievement. In order to keep our momentum going, we need to preserve our faculty because they are all a part of the successful systems we have in place. Loyalty, dedication, and professionalism are qualities you cannot buy.
56. Aloha, I am a single 30-year-old teacher from the mainland. I moved here to get a masters degree in education in 2013 and have been teaching first grade since

2015 at a school in Central Oahu. If my position is cut and I have to change schools, I will move off island and back to the mainland. I absolutely adore the community I work in, the staff I work with, the children and everyone does their part. I need to keep my job and my school with my same colleagues otherwise I will utilize my teaching degree in the state of Massachusetts. Think about our keiki. Thank you.

57. The State of Hawaii has a responsibility to use federal funds to retain teachers and maintain the students current level of academic support. Special education students in particular have been negatively impacted by the current situation. Tutors are not an acceptable solution to mitigate learning losses. Special education teachers' stipends need to continue to ensure we have certified teachers available to teach our most vulnerable keiki. The State of Hawai'i needs to act responsibly and use the funds where they are intended to be used and not to balance past budget deficits.
58. I cannot believe I am here again, submitting testimony, in fear once again for my livelihood. Why are educators so undervalued? I am still in debt for my teaching degree and now the governor is proposing to hire tutors and cut qualified teacher positions? It is absolutely ludicrous. It is a slap in every hard working teacher's face. This has been a difficult year for everyone in education, but our students especially. They need qualified teachers not tutors! Smaller class sizes, not larger, because they are fewer teachers. How will Hawaii ever be able to recruit and keep teachers? I will continue to fight, because I cannot stand idly by and say nothing, even though my face stings.
59. As a kindergarten teacher with over 15 years of experience, I can tell you that distance learning and online learning do not work for kindergarten students. We had no choice but to make the best of our fourth quarter last school year, when school abruptly came to a halt due to the pandemic and lockdowns. This year, we began our school year in full distance learning mode, and transitioned to in-person learning for grade K-2 in October. After teaching synchronously online, I can definitively say that learning online is absolutely horrendous and ineffective for kindergarten students. They must be in school all day, everyday in order to maximize their learning potential. Routines, rules, socialization, relationships, modeling, and first-hand experiences are all paramount to learning in early childhood education, and these important foundational skills cannot be taught through a lesson on the computer.

At our school this year, our principal chose to prioritize in-person learning for grades kindergarten through 2nd grade. Our classrooms could only accommodate 12 students per class safely with respect to social distancing. Therefore, our principal asked our faculty to adapt and be resilient this year, and act in the best interest of our students by returning to or entering the classroom as a full-time teacher. Our librarian, GT teacher, STEM teacher, Academic Coach, SSC, Counselor, and other Resource Teachers stepped into the classroom and agreed to teach classes in K-2 so that we could safely have our K-2 students come to school in-person all day, everyday. Our 3rd-6th grade students began and remain on a blended rotation schedule, and wish they could come back in-person all day, everyday, but we lack the resources and additional teachers to allow this to happen safely.

While I am still scared of contracting Covid-19 at school, I do feel safer having my “bubble” of 12 students, who are able to safely sit 6 or more feet apart at their desks in the classroom. Our principal strictly enforces the mask-wearing rule at our school, and we have systems in place to monitor the children’s temperatures and well-being upon their arrival at school. Our school developed a staggered start and end time schedule, as well as drop-off and pick-up protocols for families of students. Our school does not allow families or other outside individuals on campus without permission to limit our contact with the general public. These are necessary precautions that must continue next school year, to ensure that our school remains safe and healthy. While I am scared of the invisible potential threat that Covid-19 poses to myself and my family, I diligently take the necessary precautions for my own health and that of my students and their families. I show up at school everyday, giving 100% of my time and energy, because that is what my students deserve.

With the news of potential budget cuts to the DOE, our schools face additional cuts, and our students will reap the dire consequences of these budget cuts. In the current 2020-2021 school year, our classroom budget has already been eliminated. This means that every teacher needed to purchase supplies for their classrooms this year with their own money. This includes the necessary PPE that our school could not provide for us, on an already strained budget, such as Clorox Wipes and hand sanitizer. Teachers purchased additional items as out-of-pocket expenses, such as stickers for the children’s work, reward items for the treasure chest, posters for the classroom, extra supplies for children whose parents could not afford supplies due to loss of jobs, and so much more. We do this because we love and care about our students, and we want them to have the best year

possible, even though the circumstances may not be optimal; we want our children to be happy, feel safe and excited about school, learn, and succeed.

60. Aloha, I find the allocation of much needed funding for what will be a short-lived tutoring program a gross misuse of funds, that also smacks of Betsy DeVos-ish privatization of our prized public educational system. Monies should be spent to fund programs such as the music and arts as well as for teaching and support staff positions that are currently being cut at my school and others around the State. These are much needed and valued programs and positions that will enrich children's lives for an entire school year, if not longer.

Please consider the reality that a summer tutoring program will not reach all the students for a variety of reasons. And heaven forbid, if it's [tutoring] just a continuation of more online instruction that many kids are already losing interest in and disconnecting from. In addition, how much of that money will actually be spent on the bureaucracy: all those tutors will have to be screened and trained, materials etc., instead of instruction.

Money needs to be spent on making schools safe and properly staffed so that children can return to face-to-face (F2F) instruction as soon as possible. I have seen the benefit as I have been F2F with my preschool age special ed students since August 2020. Please consider the wise use of these funds to support our public schools. Mahalo Nui Loa, Malama Pono

61. Why are you using our Dept of Education money to hire tutors? As a teacher we have done our jobs by following all of the protocols given to us since the start of school with COVID-19. I have taught face to face risking my own life as I am at high risk due to age and disability. I came out of retirement to help since many newer teachers resigned out of fear. For students who are struggling from on-line learning, our school has created hubs so they can come to school and learn in person. At the beginning of the school year we struggled to have COVID-19 meetings for each of our students. It was not easy. We had to call 2 meetings per student. As difficult as it was, we abided by all that was requested of us. We met our deadline. We supported each other. We have gone through enough struggles and have done our best. Larger class sizes with the remaining teachers will be the straw that breaks the camel's back. No one benefits. I say we strike.



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

Testimony against proposed DOE budget cuts SY 2021-20221 message

Lizzy Laliberty <puchanus@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 10:25 AM

Aloha Chairwoman Payne and Boardmembers,

Superintendent Kishimoto's plan to direct stimulus money toward private tutoring is incredibly irresponsible and should be rejected immediately. As schools and teachers brace to absorb the impacts of proposed budget cuts we see our employer, the DOE, choosing to funnel tens of millions of dollars away from classroom teachers and into the hands of private tutoring. Her ability to lead the DOE is also called into question by yet another instance of very poor judgement.

The DOE's plan to cut over 1,000 teaching positions in SY 2021-2022 will further exacerbate our state's teacher shortage. We were just beginning to see gains from HSTA's initiatives to close the teacher shortage gap. That will all be flushed down the toilet if teacher positions are cut. Classroom teachers are the heart and soul of our educational system. We create the relationships with students and families that allow our students to succeed. For all the times we heard the words "my teacher Mr/Mrs so-and-so was that one person who believed in me and helped me to succeed" I wonder how many people likewise say, "wow, if it wasn't for that online reading program I wouldn't have made it in life." With each passing year the DOE pours more of it's scarce budget into private companies. The DOE needs to re-invest in the PEOPLE that DIRECTLY touch the lives of students. These people are teachers, administrators and counselors. WE make a difference. Any decision on the part of the DOE to cut teachers from classrooms means our employer does not really understand or appreciate the value of educators, in the institution of education. Dr, Kishimoto and DOE are choosing to play politics over choosing to stand for the future of our children. We are reminding them today who they are here to serve and who makes the difference.

Sincerely,
Liz Laliberte
Teacher, Hilo High School



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

Testimony - Finance and Infrastructure Committee

1 message

Hawaii Afterschool Alliance <hawaiiafterschool@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 10:27 AM

Name with position/title and organization:

Paula Adams
Executive Director
Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance

Meeting:

Finance and Infrastructure Committee
Thursday, January 21, 2021
11:00 a.m.

Position:

Comment.

Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance
1776 University Avenue, WA1-102
Honolulu, HI 96822
www.hawaiiafterschoolalliance.org

**Hawaii Afterschool Alliance Testimony_1_21_2021.pdf**
56K



January 21, 2021

Finance and Infrastructure Committee

Dear Chair Uemura and Members of the Committee,

We would like to comment on the following action item:

IV. A. Committee Action on Department of Education's Plan for Use of Federal Funds in the New COVID-19 Relief Package and Annual Federal Spending Bill

We appreciate that the DOE is looking to set aside \$9.65M to summer learning programs to mitigate learning loss. As we look toward this summer, it will be a critical opportunity to help youth re-engage and catch up on hours of lost learning time and social-emotional supports. We urge the Board of Education and Department of Education to keep the following in mind when planning for summer:

- Coordinate all summer programs within the DOE, including but not limited to Official Summer School, E-School, Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers, UPLINK summer programs, A+ summer programs, Credit Recovery, Alternative Learning Summer Programs, and other school-based summer programs. Inter- and intra- office coordination amongst all summer programs are critical to ensure that all students who need extra support can have access to it, and limit duplication of services. We also encourage the DOE to partner with community organizations to fill in gaps of service and align efforts to reach all vulnerable students.
- While we understand that the need to focus on academics is a huge priority, we equally need to address the wellbeing and social-emotional needs of our students during summer learning programs as well. Students will need support to feel safe, re-connect and re-engage after this period of loss and isolation. They need help sustaining and rebuilding relationships, talking about their experiences and emotions, developing as leaders and agents of change, and reengaging with their interests. Academic learning will not happen if our students are not socially and emotionally ready to learn. Summer programs that focus strictly on academics will not be an effective use of our scarce resources and time.

Regarding the \$53M set aside for intensive tutoring, we urge the DOE to keep the following in mind as well:

- Partner with and leverage our afterschool programs in your efforts to help students catch up academically. Many afterschool programs, such as the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers and UPLINK afterschool programs have tutoring already incorporated into their program design. Instead of having schools cut their afterschool

programs (almost 20 schools said they'd have to cut afterschool due to decreases in funding), partner with those programs to provide tutoring instead of "recreating the wheel."

- We also wanted to make the same point as above that students need not only academic support, but also social and emotional support. If the DOE is to pursue a tutoring program, there should also be an SEL component included.

Lastly, in the [DOE's reorganization plan](#) presented to the BOE on December 17, 2020, the language suggested that the Community Engagement Branch (CEB) could be cut. The CEB, which is the only branch within the DOE to coordinate community partnerships, manages the state's family engagement efforts and Out-of-School Time Network. We urge the BOE and DOE to preserve the CEB as it has been essential to promoting, coordinating, and delivering on important programs for student learning and achievement.

Mahalo,

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



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

Testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

1 message

Laverne Moore <laverne.moorehi@gmail.com>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 10:38 AM

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

Testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I, Laverne Moore, special education teacher at McKinley High School and person who served on the first Committee on Weights who lobbied passionately for English Learners and Sped students and Low- Income students be counted in the weights.

I speak in opposition of the HDOE proposal of using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors.

Why? Because we teachers, have developed a trusted relationship with our students, we know their academic needs and strengths and are far greater able to provide the tutoring than private tutors or software programs. We should be using our manpower to provide services rather than outsourcing.

We should treat tutoring like providing Extended Day Services that we provide for our special education students. Teachers should be given the same opportunity to tutor their students with extended day services.

Presently at McKinley High School, our targeted SPED students are offered after school tutoring by educational assistance in collaboration with the classroom teacher.

Our GEER UP program allows teachers to tutor up to 5 hours a week, students who need additional educational support.

I personally call students at night and weekends to follow up with them on completing assignments. A number of them have difficulty with internet connections for in the housing projects, those on the first level have better connections than students living on the upper levels.

Summer learning is useless for students in high school need the support to pass their classes rather than making up their classes. Also, if they are not attending school now, why would they attend in the summer?

The Board of Education has the responsibility to alleviate barriers and policies that hinder schools from unnecessary mandate's and procedures which places burdens on educators and take away from instructional time.

I urge the Board of Education to maintain Hawaii's qualified teacher positions and not out source tutoring to private tutors.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10



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

Physical education budget cuts

1 message

Alfred Torres Jr <atwre@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 10:39 AM

Good morning,

I am a retired health and physical education teacher from Saint Louis school . I am quite concerned about the proposed budget cuts of PE teaching positions and physical education curriculum in the public schools. Physical education is absolutely critical for the full child development in both the physical and intellectual realms. If you want to pursue a robust educational experience for our children then physical education is essential to achieve those goals. Speaking from personal experience I am a firm believer in the positive outcomes children experience participating in extracurricular activities and physical education. Don't deny our children all the positive impacts they receive from participating in a robust physical education program.

Regards
Alfred Torres Jr M.Ed

Sent from my iPad



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

Written Testimony Finance and Infrastructure AND General Business Meeting

1 message

HAHPERD <hahperd808@gmail.com>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 10:49 AM

To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Good morning,
Please find attached the written testimony.

HAHPERD (Hawaii Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance)

- Meeting: Finance and Infrastructure AND General Business Meeting (full Board)
- Agenda item: Finance and Infrastructure item 3A and the General Business Meeting item 5B
- Position: Oppose

2 attachments**HAHPERD PE Testimony_Finance and Infrastructure Committee.pdf**

155K

**HAHPERD PE Testimony_General Board Meeting.pdf**

155K



Dear Chairperson Payne and members of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee,

As HAHPERD (Hawaii Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance), a non-profit professional organization for Health and Physical Educators we would like to provide testimony to oppose cutting teachers and especially physical education teachers and programs. We understand that these are challenging times, and, unfortunately, the state is dealing with unprecedented financial challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Although these challenges face us head on, we are concerned with the current budget plan proposal. HAHPERD believes that a well-rounded education is essential for all students, and in this time of crisis, teachers' jobs should be the last thing eliminated. The proposed budget cuts that include the elimination of physical education positions at the elementary level would be devastating to the health and wellness of our keiki. Elimination of these positions works against the district's vision, which states, "to create students who are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners and who contribute positively to our community and global society."

The Wellness Guidelines implement Board of Education Policy 103-1 and fulfill Public Law 108-265 Section 204 and the Healthy Hunger Free-Kids Act (2010). The Wellness Guidelines state that PE at the elementary level is required 45 minutes per week at the elementary level. Instruction in PE should ensure integrated, cumulative physical education in each grade level. Each child across the district should have an equal opportunity to meet all the content standards in each grade cluster (K-2 and 3-5). The proposed cuts in the budget specifically mention over 27 elementary PE positions that could be eliminated or reduced if this plan is approved. Additionally, two middle schools face specific cuts to physical education and over seven schools that specifically mention cuts to sports and intramural activities.

In the middle of a pandemic that affects people's physical and mental health, this proposed plan sacrifices children's social, emotional, and physical health. Additionally, it goes against that science that has us in our current situation. We know that pre-existing health conditions such as obesity and diabetes put people at higher risk of contracting COVID-19. Movement is good for the body and the brain. Beyond that, though, physical education is designed to provide life skills that encourage students to be active and fit for a lifetime. Healthy students learn better.

Research tells us:

- there are strong associations between fit and physically active students and higher test scores, better attendance, increased concentration, and increased on-task behavior levels,
- healthy children are more than twice as likely to become healthy adults putting youth at lower risk for obesity and chronic disease later in life,
- there is NO evidence that demonstrates a decrease in academic achievement in districts that have mandated *daily* physical education,
- *daily* physical education has shown improved outcomes in academic achievement (in reading and math), decreased behavior referrals, and increased attendance which are **key indicators of success** for our neediest students,
- data shows that 91 percent of parents nationally feeling that there should be more physical education in schools, particularly for addressing obesity,
- and many prominent organizations such as the American Heart Association, SHAPE America, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the U.S. Department of Education, the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sport, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) ALL support the need for physical activity for youth and for effective physical education in schools.

When looking at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, students must meet basic needs before academic success can occur, including physical, social, and emotional health. Physical education quantity and quality are typically deficient for less affluent students, and often, those are the same students who are in racial and ethnic groups at a higher risk for overweight and obesity. Physical education teachers are critical to ensuring that all students in the district achieve their physical, social, and emotional health, which often correlates to academically successful students. While this is an extremely challenging situation, and there will be changes and losses to meet the budget requirements, we would like to encourage you to look at other solutions rather than eliminating teachers, especially the physical education teachers and programs in our schools. Thank you for your time and consideration.

The HAHPERD Board

Hawai'i Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance



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

Testimony for Jan 21, 2021 FIC IV. A.

1 message

Tui, Osa <otui@hsta.org>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 10:50 AM

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

Committee Action on Department of Education's Plan for Use of Federal Funds in the New COVID-19 Relief Package and Annual Federal Spending Bill

Finance and Infrastructure Committee Chair Uemura and members of the committee,

The difficulties facing all of us regarding the education of our keiki over the past year and continuing into the immediate foreseeable future are gargantuan and unrivaled.

Data shows that a significant portion of our students are falling behind, but the solution to ameliorating learning loss should not be to expend nearly 30% of the ESSER II federal funds to five private companies - Ahead of the Class Educational Services, Inspired Education LLC, Kahala Academic Center Inc, One on One Learning, and University Instructors.

(<https://hands.ehawaii.gov/hands/awards> and search for "tutoring")

These contracts are already listed as being awarded and so does that mean this issue is already moot?

After the debacle with Acellus, obvious questions arise as to just how well vetted these companies are.

Most of these companies are from the mainland and despite some of them subcontracting to local tutoring companies, can we be assured that their strategies will adapt well to our local communities?

For one of them, information on their relatively simple website is notably lacking with links that lead right back to the homepage or to broken pages.

\$53 million dollars is a significant amount of money to throw at a problem.

Do we know why students are falling behind as even before the pandemic, there were students who were deemed to be behind grade level?

Is attendance a driving factor when it comes to students experiencing "learning loss"?

Availability of tutors isn't going to make students more likely to attend when some of them refuse to attend classes that are regularly offered.

Availability of tutors isn't going to improve the technology situations and other issues that families have at home which might prevent participation in tutoring.

Schools sometimes try to fix, for example, students struggling in certain courses by "double-dosing" them with an additional course in that subject, particularly mathematics.

Back during the era of Race to the Top, certain areas of the state had Zones of School Improvement which involved extending the school day, but showed there to be "more challenges in improving school performance, such as student behavior problems, a high rate of student turnover, low staff morale, and lack of support from students."

Can we be sure the same won't happen again if we force students into tutoring which the request for proposal lists as "extended learning time ... before, during, or after school hours"?

The best tutors for our students are our own qualified teachers who know our students and their needs. However, when schools cut numerous teaching positions as is being discussed today, that is ultimately where harm will come to them.

Schools are planning to reduce and eliminate elective options for students and curtail essential services.

Some of these curtailments may not be in tested grades or subject matters, but will most certainly have an effect on students wanting to come to school and learn when enacted next school year.

In the meantime, monies are being purposed for "a targeted, one to one, high touch program."

What does high touch mean in COVID times?

Expending money like this on tutoring services is only going to be filling a void that we're creating ourselves - digging a hole by eliminating positions, then filling that hole with for-profit service providers who continue to milk our system.

Like missionaries coming to our shores to enact their reforms, teachers are tired of having their hands tied with various mandates and then bringing in others to espouse the proper way to do things.

Shipping students into private tutoring further erodes the true promise of public education.

Please be wise about where these critical funds are being spent. Please be akamai about what is truly best for our keiki and will make a difference. Please keep in place and unshackle our current workforce.

\$53 million being spent on these service providers? This is not the way.



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

Finance committee testimony

1 message

Kathleen Algire <kalgire@hawaii-can.org>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 10:54 AM

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

Aloha,

Please find my testimony attached for the 11AM FIC hearing on 1/21/21.

Thank you,

Kathleen

Kathleen Algire (she/her)

Director of Early Learning and Health Policy

Hawai'i Children's Action Network

(808) 531-5502 (443) 286-9330

kalgire@hawaii-can.orgwww.hawaii-can.org**BOE 1-21-21.docx**

707K



To: Board of Education, Finance and Infrastructure Committee
January 21, 2021 11AM

RE: Agenda Item IV-A Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill

Chair Uemura, Vice Chair De Voss, and committee members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, we write with comments on Agenda Item IV-A Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

In December, Congress passed a second COVID relief bill, Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, with significant financial assistance for states. Specifically related to education, the state was appropriated \$183.6 million.

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II)

Through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II), the state can build off of the work previously started with ESSER I funds and also address additional issues that have developed due to COVID-19. In the Department of Education's plan to spend ESSER II funding, the Department identified five areas where funding could be utilized. However, the recommendation is only to fund four of the areas; "The Department does not recommend supplanting the \$100.2M base budget reduction from Act 9, SLH 2020 with federal funds, but rather recommends a request to legislature to fully restore these dollars". While the very recently elected federal administration and Congress may provide opportunities in the future to assist states with their budget shortfalls, we cannot be sure of the timing. We recommend that a portion of the ESSER II funds be used to address the base budget reductions. We would also like to express concern over the use of private tutors to address learning loss. Hiring of private tutors while simultaneously cutting teachers seems like a short-sighted endeavor. We would recommend the money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors.

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire
Director, Early Learning and Health Policy



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

Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

1 message

Laverne Moore <laverne.moorehi@gmail.com>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 11:01 AM

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

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

I, Laverne Moore, special education teacher at McKinley High School and person who served on the first Committee on Weights who lobbied passionately for English Learners and Sped students and Low- Income students be counted in the weights.

I speak in opposition of the HDOE proposal of using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. This money should be returned to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors.

Why? Because we teachers, have developed a trusted relationship with our students, we know their academic needs and strengths and are far greater able to provide the tutoring than private tutors or software programs. We should be using our manpower to provide services rather than outsourcing.

We should treat tutoring like providing Extended Day Services that we provide for our special education students. Teachers should be given the same opportunity to tutor their students with extended day services.

Presently at McKinley High School, our targeted SPED students are offered after school tutoring by educational assistance in collaboration with the classroom teacher.

Our GEER UP program allows teachers to tutor up to 5 hours a week, students who need additional educational support.

I personally call students at night and weekends to follow up with them on completing assignments. A number of them have difficulty with internet connections for in the housing projects, those on the first level have better connections than students living on the upper levels.

Summer learning is useless for students in high school need the support to pass their classes rather than making up their classes. Also, if they are not attending school now, why would they attend in the summer?

The Board of Education has the responsibility to alleviate barriers and policies that hinder schools from unnecessary mandate's and procedures which places burdens on educators and take away from instructional time.

I urge the Board of Education to maintain Hawaii's qualified teacher positions and not out source tutoring to private tutors.



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

TESTIMONY for BOE Committee on Finance and Infrastructure Meeting 1-21-212 messages

Sen. Bennette Misalucha <senmisalucha@capitol.hawaii.gov>
To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>
Cc: "Sen. Bennette Misalucha" <senmisalucha@capitol.hawaii.gov>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 10:59 AM

Aloha,

Please find attached testimony from Senator Bennette E. Misalucha for the Board of Education Committee on Finance and Infrastructure Meeting on Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 11:00am. If you have any questions, please contact our office at 586-6230 or email senmisalucha@capitol.hawaii.gov.

Mahalo!

Office of Senator Bennette E. Misalucha

[415 S. Beretania Street, Room 215](#)

[Honolulu, HI 96813](#)

(808) 586-6230

senmisalucha@capitol.hawaii.gov



BOE Testimony - Senator Bennette Misalucha, 1-21-21.pdf
163K

Sen. Bennette Misalucha <senmisalucha@capitol.hawaii.gov>
To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>
Cc: "Sen. Bennette Misalucha" <senmisalucha@capitol.hawaii.gov>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 11:02 AM

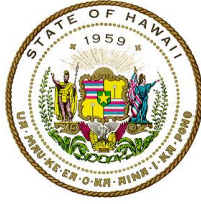
Aloha,

My apologies as there was a minor error in the last document attached, please kindly see attached for the updated testimony file. Thank you so much!

[Quoted text hidden]



BOE Testimony - Senator Bennette Misalucha, 1-21-21.pdf
163K



STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

January 20, 2021

TO: Chairperson Kenneth Uemura
Committee on Finance and Infrastructure
Board of Education, State of Hawaii

FROM: Senator Bennette Misalucha
Senate District 16

RE: **TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE MEETING – AGENDA ITEM IV.A: COMMITTEE ACTION ON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION’S PLAN FOR USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS IN THE NEW COVID-19 RELIEF PACKAGE AND ANNUAL FEDERAL SPENDING BILL.**

Hearing: Thursday, January 20, 2021, 11:00 a.m.

Aloha!

First of all, on behalf of the areas that I serve (Pearl City, Aiea and Pearl Harbor), thank you for your dedicated volunteer service to our State. I realize it must not be easy to make difficult decisions, particularly those that have a profound impact on our school communities.

I was able to recently review the Department of Education’s (DOE) budget plan on using the new federal stimulus, and commend the efforts to utilize these funds for the benefit of our students. Many of the purposes are necessary in response to COVID-19’s impact on our schools, but I respectfully want to share my opposition on using these precious resources towards the 1:1 Tutoring Program – English Language Arts (ELA) & Math, which would go towards hiring private tutors instead of retaining qualified teacher positions throughout the state. The \$53,000,000 in federal funds proposed for the private tutors, which accounts for 29% of the aid available, could go towards saving teachers who have a greater, direct impact on students in providing the guidance and support they need to succeed during these trying times.

In my district alone, the proposed budget cuts would remove over 30 of our teachers (including special education teachers) and other personnel vital to the success of our students. On a statewide level, over 1,000 jobs would be lost, with at least half affecting teachers. I kindly ask that before considering spending money on outside/private tutoring, to please look at using these funds to go back to the schools. Nothing can ever replace the 1:1 time and support that students receive from their teachers. Thus, restoring parts of the budget would be beneficial to all concerned.

We are living in challenging times and many tough decisions have to be made. However, keeping and retaining our teachers should be a priority if we hope to navigate and support all of our students and keep their best interests at heart. Therefore, I respectfully request the Board consider using federal funds to restore budget cuts on teacher positions across the state, rather than on proposed COVID Response Measure for the 1:1 Tutoring Program – English Language Arts (ELA) & Math.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (808) 586-6230 or via email at senmisalucha@capitol.hawaii.gov. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



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

Testimony

1 message

Shelley Fey <sfey@punahou.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 11:03 AM

Presentation on impact of 2021-2023 fiscal biennium budget cuts on School and Complex Area levels
Testimony for Item V.B.

Dear Chairperson Payne and Board of Education members,

I am a teacher at Punahou School and a member of HAHPERD (Hawaii Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance), a non-profit professional organization for Health and Physical Educators. I understand that these are difficult times, and it is unfortunate that the state is dealing with financial challenges due to the Covid-19. As a member of this professional organization, I work alongside my colleagues in the DOE and across the state in providing professional development opportunities. I am writing to you concerned about the current budget plan proposal. I believe that a well-rounded education is important for all students and in this time of crisis teachers jobs should be the last thing being cut. The proposed budget cuts that include the elimination of physical education positions at the elementary level would be devastating to the health and wellness of our keiki. Elimination of these positions works against the vision of the district which states, "to create students who are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners and who contribute positively to our community and global society."

The Wellness Guidelines implement Board of Education Policy 103-1 and fulfill Public Law 108-265 Section 204 and the Healthy Hunger Free-Kids Act (2010). The Wellness Guidelines state that PE at the elementary level is required 45 minutes per week at the elementary level. Instruction in PE should ensure integrated, cumulative physical education in each grade level. Each child across the district should have an equal opportunity to meet all the content standards in each grade cluster (K-2 and 3-5). The proposed cuts in the budget specifically mention over 27 elementary PE positions that could be eliminated or reduced if this plan is approved. Additionally, two middle schools face specific cuts to physical education and over seven schools that specifically mention cuts to sports and intramural activities.

In the middle of a pandemic that affects people's physical and mental health, this proposed plan sacrifices children's social, emotional, and physical health. Additionally, it goes against that science that has us in our current situation. We know that pre-existing health conditions

such as obesity and diabetes put people at higher risk of contracting COVID-19. Movement is good for the body and the brain. Beyond that, physical education is designed to provide life skills that encourage students to be active and fit for a lifetime. Healthy students learn better. Research clearly shows the associations between fit and physically active students and higher test scores, better attendance, increased concentration, and increased on-task behavior levels. Healthy children are more than twice as likely to become healthy adults putting youth at lower risk for obesity and chronic disease later in life.

I know this through my own experiences as a mother of two young adults, as the Department Chair overseeing the physical education curriculum within one of the largest Independent schools in our country which emphasizes the importance of developing a well-rounded education and as a leader in my profession.

When looking at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, students must meet basic needs before academic success can occur, including physical, social, and emotional health. Physical education quantity and quality are typically deficient for less affluent students, and often, those are the same students who are in racial and ethnic groups at a higher risk for overweight and obesity. Physical education teachers are critical to ensuring that all students in the district achieve their physical, social, and emotional health, which often correlates to academically successful students. While this is an extremely challenging situation, and there will be changes and losses to meet the budget requirements, I would like to encourage you to look at other solutions rather than eliminating teachers, especially the physical education teachers and programs in our schools. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Shelley Kahuanui Fey
HAHPERD Board member
Physical Education Department Chair - Punahou School



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

Budget cuts

1 message

Danica Walsh <dwalsh@wailukuelem.k12.hi.us>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 11:30 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

I am a Special Education teacher in BKM complex. I know first hand how vital my position is and also that of my educational assistants. We are already stretched thin as it is, as far as limited support for all students. We cannot bear to lose another position. I rely on my EA's to support my high needs students who need help with toileting, behaviors while I am co-teaching in an inclusion classroom. I am also doing hybrid teaching at this time, so to possibly lose my support will only make everyone suffer. I cannot do my job effectively if I lose my support. I know that I am vital for my students also, and to possibly cut trained Special Education teachers is criminal! I have a Masters in Special Education and should not be replaced by a "tutor" simply because they are cheaper.

Please reconsider how this will affect everyone, and most importantly how it will affect the students.

Danica Walsh

BKM complex MAUI



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

Testimony for 1/21 BOE mtg.

1 message

Adrienne Robillard <adrienne.robillard@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 11:33 AM

Dear Board Members and Chairperson(s),

I am testifying on two of the action items for this week's meeting.

Testifying on Finance and Infrastructure Committee Meeting Action Item IV A

I am testifying AGAINST spending stimulus funding on private tutoring; please fold stimulus funding into retaining teacher positions to avoid mass teacher layoffs. It is more important than ever that the DOE retains its talented teaching force, supports the morale of our educators, and restores faith in the public's perception of public education here in Hawai'i. We must support our schools with funding for teachers and not resort to spending on private tutoring. There are better ways to allocate these funds while supporting both student and teacher needs.

Testifying for GBM Agenda Item IV B., Acellus Update

By allowing the Acellus software to remain as a distance learning standard in many schools across the state, parents, myself included, feel that we have no alternative to selecting the hybrid model if/when students return to the classroom. At the same time, I am very anxious about my children attending school in person as the Covid numbers rise and the mutant variants increase the rate of contagion. I urge the BOE to use stronger wording, issuing warnings against the use of Acellus, as its lack of rigor is robbing students of a quality education in this trying time. Better yet, remove Acellus completely from use, as it is of negative value and identified alternatives are available. Without clear directive from the DOE, some schools may think it's fine to continue to use Acellus, when in actuality this is a grave disservice to our keiki. Plus, the more students use Acellus, the more 'catching up' will be required in the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Adrienne Robillard

Public School Parent

Educator, Windward Community College



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

TESTIMONY

1 message

Susan Pcola-Davis <Supcola@hawaii.rr.com>
To: testimony_boe <Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 11:43 AM

TESTIMONY

BOARD OF EDUCATION FINANCE COMMITTEE

JANUARY 21, 2021

STRONGLY OPPOSE BOTH AGENDA ITEMS

Susan A. Pcola-Davis



2021 JANUARY 21 FINANCE 2.pdf
100K

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

FINANCE COMMITTEE

11:00 A.M.

JANUARY 21, 2021

IIIA. PRESENTATION ON IMPACT OF 2021-2023 FISCAL BIENNIUM BUDGET CUTS ON SCHOOL AND COMPLEX AREA LEVELS-**STRONGLY OPPOSE**

I FIRST WANT TO STATE THAT IN A RECENT ARTICLE IN THE STAR ADVERTISER, "UH, DOE BRACING FOR BUDGET CUTS," INFERS THAT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVED A 10% BUDGET CUT BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, REPRESENTING 102.5 FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITIONS AT THE STATE OFFICE LEVEL AND \$164.3M DEPARTMENT WIDE."

THE PUBLIC NEEDS TO HEAR AND KNOW THAT ON DECEMBER 3, 2020 WHEN THIS WAS ON THE BOE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL, THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HAD ALREADY BEEN TOLD THAT THIS BUDGET PROPOSAL WAS ALREADY ON THE GOVERNOR'S DESK. THE BOE COULD REVIEW AND APPROVE IT, BUT THERE WAS NOT REASON TO DISCUSS IT, SINCE IT WAS ALREADY ON THE GOVERNOR'S DESK.

AT THE DECEMBER 3, 2020 GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING, THE FINANCE COMMITTEE PROVIDED THEIR REPORT.

ON THE AGENDA FOR THE GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING WAS THE APPROVAL OF THE DOE'S BUDGET TO THE GOVERNOR. UPON FINDING THAT THE BUDGET HAD ALREADY BEEN SUBMITTED, THE BOARD DID NOT WASTE TIME IN DISCUSSION, AND APPROVED IT "WITH RESERVATION."

I POINT THIS OUT BECAUSE IT IS JUST ANOTHER INSTANCE OF THE DOE BLINDSIDING THE BOE.

IN THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 3, 2020, "HE (CHAIRPERSON UEMURA) NOTED THAT THE B&F HAS STATED THAT IT WILL US THE OPERATING AND CIP BUDGETS ON TODAY'S AGENDA, AND TOMORROW IS THE LAST DAY THAT B&F WILL TAKE ANY SUBMISSION OF CHANGES TO THE BUDGETS. HE STATED THAT THE BOARD IS DEPRIVED OF HAVING ANY SIGNIFICANT INPUT IN TO THE BUDGET SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNOR, BUT THE PROCESS WILL CONTINUE AND MAY UNDERGO CHANGES AND, AFTER LEGISLATIVE REVIEW, AND WILL REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO ADDRESS ANY ADJUSTMENTS TO THE BUDGET. CHAIRPERSON UEMURA STATED THAT THE COMMITTEE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO FULFILL ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE COMMITTEE'S CHARTER TO APPROVE THE BUDGETS PRIOR TO SUBMITTAL TO THE GOVERNOR.

ALSO STATED BY CHAIRPERSON UEMURA, "IF THE COMMITTEE DOES NOT HAVE SIGNIFICANT CORRECTIONS TO THE BUDGET, THEN IS DOES NOT MATTER WHETHER OR NOT THE BOARD APPROVED THE RECOMMENDATION BECAUSE THE DEPARTMENT HAS ALREADY PROVIDED IT TO THE GOVERNOR.

I WILL LEAVE IT AT THAT.

IN ADDITION TO ISSUES RELATED TO "BEING IN THE PRESS," JANUARY 17, 2021 ISSUE OF CIVIL BEAT PROVIDED MORE INSIGHT INTO THE SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSAL TO HIRE TUTORS TO HELP CURB THE LEARNING LOSS. A LINK IN THE ARTICLE DIRECTED ME TO THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL THAT

WENT OUT ON OCTOBER 23, 2020. THIS RFP "REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TO PROVIDE TUTORING SERVICES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WAS ADVERTISED ON OCTOBER 23, 2020. ACCORDING TO HAWAII AWARDS AND NOTICES DATA SYSTEM, 5 CONTRACTS WERE AWARDED ON DECEMBER 23, 2020 TO

- AHEAD OF THE CLASS EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
- UNIVERSITY INSTRUCTORS
- INSPIRED EDUCATION LLC
- KAHALA ACADEMIC CENTER INC.
- ONE ON ONE LEARNING

ON JANUARY 16, 2021, KISHIMOTO DID A PRESENTATION TO THE JOINT SENATE AND HOUSE COMMITTEE REGARDING EDUCATION. DURING HER PRESENTATION SHE MENTIONED REVIEWING TENNESSEE'S USE OF TUTORING SERVICE TO ASSIST WITH LEARNING LOSS.

AT NO TIME DID SHE EVER STATE THAT THE CONTRACT WENT OUT FOR BID OR THAT THE AWARDS WERE COMPLETE.

IS THIS CONSIDERED BLINDSIDING OR SOMETHING ELSE MORE BLATANT?

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

FINANCE COMMITTEE

11:00 A.M.

JANUARY 21, 2021

IV A. PRESENTATION ON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S PLAN FOR USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS IN THE NEW COVID-19 RELIEF PACKAGE AND ANNUAL SPENDING BILL-**STRONGLY OPPOSE**

I'LL MAKE THIS ONE SHORT, HSTA WILL SURELY ADDRESS THIS BETTER THAN I.

IF YOU PUT TUTORING SERVICES \$53M + SUMMER SCHOOL AT \$9.65M = \$62.65M, TO REDUCE LEARNING LOSS DUE TO COVID.

AND WE WILL BE REDUCING OUR COSTS FOR PAYROLL BY CONDUCTING A REDUCTION IN FORCE AND THEN USE FUNDING TO AWARD 5 CONTRACTS FOR TUTORING SERVICES.



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

Testimony

1 message

Ashley Lau <kayesachie@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 11:59 AM

Federal funds(53 million dollars) should not be used to hire private tutors while the state may fire more than 1,000 qualified teachers and other public school staff. You need qualified teachers to teach before students can be tutored!

If this is the case I, a local teacher, should take my 7 years of secondary education experience in with a Bachelor's and Master's degree in education and become a tutor. It would be so much easier than being a teacher right now. Less planning and stress. No need to stay up till 2am or 4am planning and grading. I'm currently on maternity and had to teach my substitute about setting up a Google Meet and how to use Google Classroom, Google Slides and all the other platforms/websites we use in class. While on maternity leave I've still planned lessons and graded all of my student's work for continuity for my students and so I wouldn't have to also teach my sub how to do that as well since I use a variety of assessments.

By the way, teacher's "maternity leaves" sn't really maternity leave just all of my accumulated sick days, meaning there were many days throughout the years I was sick but went to work anyway because I knew if I wanted to have another child I'd need to sacrifice and accumulate as much sick leave I could.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



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

Testimony

1 message

Deborah Anderson <Deborah.Anderson@waiakeai.k12.hi.us>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 12:27 PM

For: 1:30 p.m. Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

Aloha, Chair Payne and BOE Members,

Please delay approving the Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE)'s [stimulus funds plan](#). If passed, the HIDOE plan will violate recently passed federal law, [Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021](#) (H.R. 133), hurt relations with the state Legislature, and cause long-term, lasting damage to Hawaii's keiki and their teachers. The Governor's current proposal violates the stimulus bill by supplanting the funding designated for education to balance the state's budget, which Congress designed Section 317 to avoid.

You likely know that the DOE budget represents about 21% of the state's general fund (down from over 30%). Supplemental funding has been allocated from \$183.5 million stimulus funding. As of Dec. 31, 2020, the CARES ESSER Balance of \$14,386,730 is anticipated the unallocated balance will allow for investment into an On-Line Learning Management System. According to DOE budget documents, the department wants to spend \$53 million of the federal aid funds on English and math tutoring "beyond classroom instruction and to accelerate learning and minimize learning loss." However this allocation is against the funding structure, and will not alleviate its intended target of 1,300 school employees losing their jobs, including nearly 800 teachers. H.R. 133 states in [CONTINUED PAYMENT TO EMPLOYEES](#):

SEC. 315. A local educational agency, State, institution of higher education, or other entity that receives funds provided under the heading "Education Stabilization Fund", shall, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to coronavirus.

These provisions suggest that the state of Hawaii can neither reduce education positions nor furlough employees. There is no doubt the federal legislation requires both the use of stimulus funds, additional funding from the governor, and potential revenue increases from the Legislature to avoid school cuts and furloughs.

Most concerning to me with a Masters degree in Special Education is that the brunt of these cuts are being borne by our most vulnerable and legally protected students. **EDN 150 (22.2%)** supports [special education](#) students who may require or have an Individualized Education Plan ([IEP](#)). These Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) students may be eligible on their IEPs for Extended School Year (ESY), which includes licensed Summer School teachers. Hawaii's public schools are bracing for a 9% cut to special education funds, or, amounting to about \$24.5 million, and parents and teachers alike say that will have a direct impact on students. Special education losses will mean fewer services and potentially lead to federal free appropriate public education (FAPE) violations for students with special needs. We are working diligently as a staff to support these students, and further cuts would be more devastating and unsafe.

My middle school's usual budget has been stressed especially because we have a small class due to the change in DOE Kindergarten policy years ago. As my school Librarian/literacy support position is

being eliminated, I am sad to be likely to bump out a less experienced SpEd teacher who is losing their options. As my spouse has been a substitute teacher for decades, he has been practically out-of-work. A revamped DOE plan could move to alleviate deficits at the school level to preserve school positions and avoid devastating cuts. Those prudent moves would avoid violating H.R. 133 and protect our keiki for years and decades to follow. Please request a more appropriately aligned plan which would enable our students to experience strong relationships and supports that mitigate disempowering differences during COVID-19 to enable them to thrive academically, socially, and civically.

Mahalo for your consideration,
Deborah V. Anderson, M.Ed., M.L.I.S., NBCT
Waiakea Intermediate School, Hilo



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

"Testimony"

1 message

Abraham Concepcion Berrios <abraham.concepcion_berrios@k12.hi.us>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 12:52 PM

Dear Chairperson Payne and Board of Education members, my name is Abraham Concepcion, and I'm a elementary school physical education teacher at Waikiki Elementary and a member of HAHPERD (Hawaii Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance), a non-profit professional organization for Health and Physical Educators. I understand that these are challenging times, and, unfortunately, the state is dealing with financial challenges due to the Covid-19. I am writing to you concerned about the current budget plan proposal. I believe that a well-rounded education is essential for all students, and in this time of crisis, teachers' jobs should be the last thing eliminated. The proposed budget cuts that include the elimination of physical education positions at the elementary level would be devastating to the health and wellness of our keiki.

Elimination of these positions works against the district's vision, which states, "to create students who are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners and who contribute positively to our community and global society." and I am testifying as an advocate for physical education in the schools, especially at the elementary level also for the Finance and Infrastructure Committee recommendation for meeting action item IV.A: Committee Action on Department of Education's plan to use federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

- I do not support the HIDOE using stimulus money to hire private tutors for students instead of saving qualified teacher positions. Especially for Physical Education and Health, PE and Health class, among other resources, provide students with the education and action to stay healthy. Health and Phys Ed class are vital during a pandemic, and there's so much physical literacy that would be lost if we get cut from our positions.
- The state of Hawaii should return this money to schools via the weighted student formula and special education funding, not private tutors.
- The Department of Education should retain Highly Qualified Teachers as they have the classroom experience and knowledge of their students' needs. Further, they possess knowledge of their school culture. These experienced, professional teachers are effective at their job and can hit the ground running.
- We cannot afford a pay cut or loss of position. Any cuts directly affect our cost of living. Pay cuts would affect my dietary needs, gas mileage, car payment, mortgage payment, and household utility budget.
- As an elementary physical education teacher, I much appreciate any help that Sped services can bring. I see a direct effect on a child's life. Kindergarten is a crucial grade where the acquisition of skills and the use of those skills are imperative for a child to learn. Speech services, O.T. P.T services, and behavioral services are LIFE CHANGING for a young child. We must invest in our keiki, not take away from them. We must help our students get back what they have lost in the last year.
- Classroom services are not the place to cut.

When looking at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, students must meet basic needs before academic success can occur, including physical, social, and emotional health. Physical education quantity and quality are typically deficient for less affluent students, and often, those are the same students in racial and ethnic groups at a higher risk for overweight and obesity. Physical education teachers are critical to ensuring that all students in the district achieve their physical, social, and emotional health, which often correlates to academically successful students. While this is an extremely challenging situation, and there will be changes and losses to meet the budget requirements, I would like to encourage you to look at other solutions rather than eliminating teachers, especially the physical education teachers and programs in our schools. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo for allowing me to submit my testimony

Sincerely,

Abraham Concepcion M.Ed. Waikiki Elementary Phys Ed

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>

Testimony

2 messages

Shelley Fey <sfey@punahou.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 11:03 AM

Presentation on impact of 2021-2023 fiscal biennium budget cuts on School and Complex Area levels
Testimony for Item V.B.

Dear Chairperson Payne and Board of Education members,

I am a teacher at Punahou School and a member of HAHPERD (Hawaii Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance), a non-profit professional organization for Health and Physical Educators. I understand that these are difficult times, and it is unfortunate that the state is dealing with financial challenges due to the Covid-19. As a member of this professional organization, I work alongside my colleagues in the DOE and across the state in providing professional development opportunities. I am writing to you concerned about the current budget plan proposal. I believe that a well-rounded education is important for all students and in this time of crisis teachers jobs should be the last thing being cut. The proposed budget cuts that include the elimination of physical education positions at the elementary level would be devastating to the health and wellness of our keiki. Elimination of these positions works against the vision of the district which states, "to create students who are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners and who contribute positively to our community and global society."

The Wellness Guidelines implement Board of Education Policy 103-1 and fulfill Public Law 108-265 Section 204 and the Healthy Hunger Free-Kids Act (2010). The Wellness Guidelines state that PE at the elementary level is required 45 minutes per week at the elementary level. Instruction in PE should ensure integrated, cumulative physical education in each grade level. Each child across the district should have an equal opportunity to meet all the content standards in each grade cluster (K-2 and 3-5). The proposed cuts in the budget specifically mention over 27 elementary PE positions that could be eliminated or reduced if this plan is approved. Additionally, two middle schools face specific cuts to physical education and over seven schools that specifically mention cuts to sports and intramural activities.

In the middle of a pandemic that affects people's physical and mental health, this proposed plan sacrifices children's social, emotional, and physical health. Additionally, it goes against that science that has us in our current situation. We know that pre-existing health conditions

such as obesity and diabetes put people at higher risk of contracting COVID-19. Movement is good for the body and the brain. Beyond that, physical education is designed to provide life skills that encourage students to be active and fit for a lifetime. Healthy students learn better. Research clearly shows the associations between fit and physically active students and higher test scores, better attendance, increased concentration, and increased on-task behavior levels. Healthy children are more than twice as likely to become healthy adults putting youth at lower risk for obesity and chronic disease later in life.

I know this through my own experiences as a mother of two young adults, as the Department Chair overseeing the physical education curriculum within one of the largest Independent schools in our country which emphasizes the importance of developing a well-rounded education and as a leader in my profession.

When looking at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, students must meet basic needs before academic success can occur, including physical, social, and emotional health. Physical education quantity and quality are typically deficient for less affluent students, and often, those are the same students who are in racial and ethnic groups at a higher risk for overweight and obesity. Physical education teachers are critical to ensuring that all students in the district achieve their physical, social, and emotional health, which often correlates to academically successful students. While this is an extremely challenging situation, and there will be changes and losses to meet the budget requirements, I would like to encourage you to look at other solutions rather than eliminating teachers, especially the physical education teachers and programs in our schools. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Shelley Kahuanui Fey
HAHPERD Board member
Physical Education Department Chair - Punahou School



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Shelley Fey <sfey@punahou.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 1:08 PM

Testimony for 1/21/21 BOE meeting.

- Meeting: Finance and Infrastructure AND General Business Meeting (full Board)
- Agenda item: Finance and Infrastructure item 3A and the General Business Meeting item 5B
- Position: Oppose
- Mahalo!

Comments:

Shelley Kahuanui Fey
HAHPERD Board Member/Past-President
(Hawaii Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance)

Dear Chairperson Payne and Board of Education members,

I am a teacher at Punahou School and a member of HAHPERD (Hawaii Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance), a non-profit professional organization for Health and Physical Educators. I understand that these are difficult times, and it is unfortunate that the state is dealing with financial challenges due to the Covid-19. As a member of this professional organization, I work alongside my colleagues in the DOE and across the state in providing professional development opportunities for teachers in our state. I am writing to you concerned about the current budget plan proposal. I believe that a well-rounded education is important for all students and in this time of crisis teachers jobs should be the last thing being cut. The proposed budget cuts that include the elimination of physical education positions at the elementary level would be devastating to the health and wellness of our keiki. Elimination of these positions works against the vision of the district which states, "to create students who are educated, healthy, and joyful lifelong learners and who contribute positively to our community and global society."

The Wellness Guidelines implement Board of Education Policy 103-1 and fulfill Public Law 108-265 Section 204 and the Healthy Hunger Free-Kids Act (2010). The Wellness Guidelines state that PE at the elementary level is required 45 minutes per week at the elementary level. Instruction in PE should ensure integrated, cumulative physical education in each grade level. Each child across the district should have an equal opportunity to meet all the content standards in each grade cluster (K-2 and 3-5). The proposed cuts in the budget specifically mention over 27 elementary PE positions that could be eliminated or reduced if this plan is approved. Additionally, two middle schools face specific cuts to physical education and over seven schools that specifically mention cuts to sports and intramural activities.

In the middle of a pandemic that affects people's physical and mental health, this proposed plan sacrifices children's social, emotional, and physical health. Additionally, it goes against that science that has us in our current situation. We know that pre-existing health conditions such as obesity and diabetes put people at higher risk of contracting COVID-19. Movement is good for the body and the brain. Beyond that, physical education is designed to provide life skills that encourage students to be active and fit for a lifetime. Healthy students learn better. Research clearly shows the associations between fit and physically active students and higher test scores, better attendance, increased concentration, and increased on-task behavior levels. Healthy children are more than twice as likely to become healthy adults putting youth at lower risk for obesity and chronic disease later in life.

I know this through my own experiences as a mother of two young adults, as the Department Chair overseeing the physical education curriculum within one of the largest Independent schools in our country which emphasizes the importance of developing a well-rounded education and as a leader in my profession.

When looking at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, students must meet basic needs before academic success can occur, including physical, social, and emotional health. Physical education quantity and quality are typically deficient for less affluent students, and often, those are the same students who are in racial and ethnic groups at a higher risk for overweight and obesity. Physical education teachers are critical to ensuring that all students in the district achieve their physical, social, and emotional health, which often correlates to academically successful students. While this is an extremely challenging situation, and there will be changes and losses to meet the budget requirements, I would like to encourage you to look at other solutions rather than eliminating teachers, especially the physical education teachers and programs in our schools. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Shelley Kahuanui Fey
HAHPERD Board member
Physical Education Department Chair - Punahou School

[Quoted text hidden]



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

HGEA Testimony - BOE 1/21/2021 Meeting - Action Item B

1 message

Joy Bulosan <jbulosan@hgea.org>

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 1:28 PM

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

Dear Chair Catherine Payne and Members of the Board of Education:

Attached is HGEA's testimony for tomorrow's meeting on Action Item B.

Mahalo,

Joy Bulosan

Field Services Officer

Hawaii Government Employees Association / AFSCME Local 152
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HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

State of Hawaii
Board of Education

Testimony by the
Hawaii Government Employees Association,
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

January 21, 2021

Relating to Action Item B on Finance and Infrastructure Committee
recommendations concerning Department of Education's plan for use of
federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO, is concerned that cutting education funding would hurt Hawaii's economic recovery. Economic experts both locally and nationally advocate for investing in education because it is a major contributor to any state's economic growth. President Joe Biden's Treasury secretary nominee Janet Yellen testified before a Congressional committee on Tuesday that governments need to "spend big" to shore up the economic recovery. Yellen said, "Over the next few months, we are going to need more aid to distribute the vaccine; reopen schools; to help states keep firefighters and teachers on the job." With that type of signal from Washington, D.C. it is premature to move forward with a plan that drastically cuts the Hawaii Department of Education's budget and slashes positions.

We ask the Board to not repeat the mistakes made during the Great Recession when drastic across-the-board cuts badly hurt public education and services. We advocate for the use of all federal money available to us, and we are hopeful that additional relief and assistance is coming to schools not only to provide the funds needed to withstand the COVID-19 pandemic, but also to strengthen the future of education. We urge the Board to defer action on this agenda item until they get answers to all of the questions and concerns being raised about the proposed use of the federal relief funds.

Last June, the Board passed a resolution in which you asked the Department to "act with hope" amid this global pandemic. It is now time for the Board to also "act with hope" and continue to support and invest in our future through public education.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony.

Sincerely,


Randy Perreira
Executive Director



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

Testimony for 1/21 BOE mtg.

1 message

Piper Selden <piperselden@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 1:30 PM

Aloha Board Members:

I humbly submit this short testimony AGAINST spending stimulus funding for private tutoring.

Finance and Infrastructure Committee Meeting Action Item IV A

I am testifying AGAINST spending stimulus funding on private tutoring. My preference would be to better support the hardworking teachers and faculty of public schools who have put in (and continue to put in) ridiculously long hours these many months since the pandemic hit. I speak only for myself when I tell you that I have been working an average of 10-14 hour days, seven days a week. Yes, working over the weekend and working during breaks. Many of us worked over the summer to help students with their studies. And now we find out there will be mass layoffs (excuse me... reductions in workforce). Please don't slap the faces of teachers who have worked through the uncertainty and sleepless nights, working for the good of the students we care so much about. We answered the call to serve. Please do not displace us. We deserve thanks not pink slips.

Respectfully,

Piper Selden

Teacher

Piper Selden

Writer, Teacher, Liver of Life
Planet Earth and Beyond

Subscribe for my latest writing: www.piperselden.com

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



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

Testimony

1 message

Julie Tanigawa <julietanigawa@waikikischool.org>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 1:55 PM

To: The Board of Education

I am writing to testify on **action item IV.A: Committee Action on Dept. of Education's plan for the use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.**

At this time it should be more important to maintain our HQ teachers instead of private tutoring. Loss of enrichment classes such as Art and Physical Education will continue to have lasting effects on students. This pandemic has already strained incomes for many families and reducing those positions and hours will force many teachers to move from our islands. These decisions will have detrimental effects on our teachers and state. Please consider these reasons to withhold major budget cuts at this time.

Thank you,
Julie T.