



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

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**Testimony on BOE General Business Meeting action item V.B**

1 message

**Charity Baloran** <cbaloran@gmail.com>

Thu, Feb 18, 2021 at 10:23 AM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Pre-Covid, public education...compromised. Covid times, public education is still compromised. Time and time again, we need to fight for education. Why? Education should be at the forefront, right? Our keikis should be at the forefront, right? We want the best for our keikis, right? Then, why are cuts being made yet again?! Our keikis deserve quality education! They deserve quality teachers! They deserve to thrive! We've seen the ramifications of budget cuts to our education system. Why are we back-peddaling? Let's continue to place an emphasis on what is clearly working. With teacher incentives, we've been able to retain teachers here in Hawaii. We need to keep our quality teachers here that know our keikis and our culture.



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

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**FW: Testimony for full Board Item V. B**

1 message

**Alex Harris** <aharris@castlefoundation.org>

Thu, Feb 18, 2021 at 10:09 AM

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

Kala mai

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**From:** Alex Harris  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:55 AM  
**To:** [boe\\_hawaii@notes.k12.hi.us](mailto:boe_hawaii@notes.k12.hi.us)  
**Subject:** Testimony for full Board Item V. B

Mahalo!

**Alex Harris**  
Vice President of Programs  
**Harold K.L. Castle Foundation**  
[1197 Aulua Road](#)  
Kailua, Hawai'i 96734  
cell 808 284 7217

Twitter: @Alex\_HKLCastle  
[www.castlefoundation.org](http://www.castlefoundation.org)

Parents, students and educators - please also visit [www.hawaiicareerpathways.org](http://www.hawaiicareerpathways.org) to learn more about how to prepare for Hawaii jobs

**BOE testimony 2.18.2021.pdf**

114K



To: Hawaii State Board of Education Chair Catherine Payne  
Members of the State Board of Education

From: Alex Harris, Vice President of Programs

Date: February 18, 2021

Re: **Item V. B. Board Action on Department of Education's Plan for Use of Federal Funds in the New COVID-19 Relief Package and Annual Federal Spending Bill**

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Like you, the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation cares deeply about narrowing the academic achievement gap. Past Strive HI reports show just how large this gap is between high and non-high needs students. Recent Return to Learn metrics now reveal that the pandemic has in fact made things worse for many struggling students. One in five students does not regularly show up for school and 1 in 3 students are one or more grade levels behind by middle school.

We commend Department leadership for their willingness to target off-track students with smart interventions. Our Foundation recently opened a call for partners to provide intensive academic tutoring support. More than 25 Hawaii-based organizations responded to this call; from this list, we have identified five strong proposals for funding. Together, these five organizations propose to hire off-duty educators, college students and community volunteers to tutor nearly 1,000 students in early grades literacy and/or later grades mathematics through the end of the summertime.

This is important and necessary work. Yet our effort barely scratches the surface of the scale that is needed. On behalf of the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation, I urge the Board to **provide significant resources to proven strategies that help countless students re-engage in the learning process** so that more students can catch-up as we head into the 2021-22 school year.



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

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**Testimony**

1 message

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**Aravind Byju** <aravind.byju@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Feb 18, 2021 at 7:46 AM

Hi,

I am testifying on BOE General Business Meeting action item V.B: Board Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill. Thank you for the opportunity, my name is Vinny Byju with the HSTA.

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Best Regards,  
Aravind Byju  
(941) 400-5445

*Too brief? Here's why:*

<http://arthistory2015.doingdh.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2015/07/Save-Our-Inboxes-Adopt-the-Email-Charter.pdf>



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

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**Testimony**

1 message

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**Raenette Marino** <raenettetmarino@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Feb 18, 2021 at 6:55 AM

Aloha:

I am testifying regarding the **BOE General Business Meeting Action Item V, B** and I am asking the Board of Education to prioritize the restoration of all cuts to the weighted student formula (WSF) and special education per-pupil allocation (SPPA), which would eliminate the need for layoffs of any HIDOE employees, including all teachers. I am also pleading with the HIDOE to follow the law by using federal stimulus funding to avoid future pay cuts.

I am a secondary teacher licensed and highly qualified to teach English and English as a Second Language. To reach this position, even without a Master's Degree, I have had to pay graduate tuition to earn the certification required to teach in Hawaii; I have had to pay for each praxis test and there have been many; I have had to work as a student teacher for free; I have had to pay for professional education credits, and I have had to endure the incredibly long process of probation. Now, as I approach retirement age, I have to worry and endure the following because of the state's proposed cuts: paying my bills, having bigger classes while having to prepare to teach synchronous in-person and virtual classes, increased medical problems because of the stress, and increased medical expenses.

Placing value on our students means placing value on our teachers. Please establish this concept once and for all: When you value teachers, you value students.

Mahalo.

Raenette Marino  
EL, ELA Teacher  
Hilo High School  
313-5597



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

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**Testimony**

1 message

**R.Shiroma** <shiroma2000@yahoo.com>

Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 10:26 PM

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

Aloha Hawai'i BOE,

I am writing to testify against the proposed budget by the HIDOE. HIDOE needs to follow federal law and use the stimulus funding to prevent school layoffs and teacher pay cuts. The proposed budget and position cuts will ultimately impact our school and students performance which we all have work so hard to make improvements toward success.

As a highly qualified classroom teacher, I feel like this proposal is a "slap in the face" to myself and my colleagues who work so hard to uphold our profession in education. The mishandling of the deeply needed funds intended to sustain Hawai'i's schools and support teachers will undoubtedly deflate morale and negatively impact the currently stressful school year and/or year to come. The budget cuts will increasingly add pressure to job security, add stress to the workload, and force teachers to be stretched beyond uncomfortable limits. Potentially the funding cuts will impact teachers next year to teach in larger class sizes and in multiple subjects and grades levels. I believe the students have the most to lose from the lack of quality education. Students in special education and special need will also suffer from the shortfalls in the classrooms. My fellow teachers and our families are already awaiting the news regarding furloughs and surviving the cuts in our income.

The superintendent's proposal includes a strong bias for outside tutors and academic coaches (\$49 million) which honestly does not make have any logical nor reasoning that support Hawai'i's students and teachers. Current teachers already have earnestly served for years and the long term investment is much more deserving than a short term solution with tutors and coaches. Secondly, the proposal includes Unmet needs (\$47.5 million) and FY21 differentials (\$32.5 million) which include line items that could be audited.

I wish the proposal could address a few common sense items such as: a) keeping teacher salaries protected and b) funding supplies for teachers. This year I personally spend numerous after school hours and on weekends to accomplish my teaching responsibilities due to the COVID-19 crisis. I purchased classroom supplies with my own money and needed to fundraise for additional supplies needed for student supply kits. COVID-19 and CDC guidelines support the practice for students to be in a "non sharing" environment. Therefore all students need to have their own supplies and families are already in need of help to much the extra purchases.

In this testimony, I have shared several reasons why I stand against the proposed budget by the HIDOE. So I implore you to examine the facts and potential negative impacts should you decide to overlook the reasons to allow the budget cuts for teachers salaries and school layoffs. The proposal breaches federal law and does not prevent school layoffs and teacher pay cuts.

Mahalo,  
Mr. Shiroma



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

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**Testimony**

1 message

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**Cindy Martin** <cinm1970@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 9:43 PM

**Testimony for:**

**B. Board 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 testifying regarding the furloughs, pay cuts, and discontinuing the differentials for special education, hard to staff locations, and Hawaiian immersion schools. I have been teaching here on the Big Island of Hawaii for three years now. I moved here from the mainland and have had to struggle paying my bills ever since. When I first moved here I was eating only one meal a day and it was Costco cereal. I also had to have roommates help with the rent. At one point, I had seven people living with me so I could make ends meet. Thank goodness for my parents' help with my finances or I would still be in that situation. However, a grown woman of fifty years old should not have to rely on elderly parents for money. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic I felt that the Board of Education was actually moving in the right direction with supporting it's teachers. I felt as if things were looking up. I was hopeful that with the next contract bargaining Hawaii teachers may no longer be one of the lowest paid. I would no longer have to rely on my parents for help, but could financially stand on my own two feet and could focus all my energy and effort into teaching my students.

Then came Covid-19 and the pandemic that has not only wrecked Hawaii's economy but our Nation. I know something has to be done to balance the budget, however, I do not believe it should be put on the backs of the employees. The state needs to look at other ways of raising revenue. One way in which many other states do this is through taxes to not only support the state but public education. Let the many help support the state and public education, not the few. Everytime there is some sort of shortcoming in the state budget the state enforces furloughs or pay cuts on it's employees. Enough is enough! The state needs to come up with a way to fund itself other

than tourism. You cannot base all our revenue on tourism as we have so tragically seen. You must find another way to support public education.

I do not want to be forced to move back to the mainland, but this very well may be my last year here. On the mainland teaching jobs pay more and the cost of living is less. The entire nation has seen how valuable teachers are to the success of our nation. Teachers are not only educators for our youth, but counselors, psychological support, behavior managers, and the ones who raise upstanding citizens for the future. Some districts have realized this and even gave teachers a pay increase. They have also gotten pay bonuses throughout the pandemic because their governor saw how hard their teachers were working to support distance learning. Yet, here in Hawaii we are faced with pay cuts, furloughs and discontinuation of the differentials. I urge you to stand by teachers and support them as the valuable society makers they are and say no to pay cuts, furloughs and the discontinuation of the differentials.

Cindy Martin

Special Education Teacher





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**TESTIMONY**

1 message

Robin Naope <rnaope@kes.k12.hi.us>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 4:32

I am testifying on **BOE General Business Meeting action item V. B:** Board Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

As a teacher of special needs children, this extra monetary compensation goes a long way in helping to compensate for the numerous hours and time we spend maintaining our special education programs to meet the needs of our special needs population, above and beyond the time allotted in a school day. The reality is there are not enough hours in the school day to truly plan, develop and maintain a special education program. I have been a special education teacher for 10 years now and I can tell you first hand we are always scrimping with what little the department of education gives us. We are constantly making sure we are IDEA compliant, and always on guard because our IEP's are federally mandated, to provide specially designed instruction to each IDEA certified student. This means we need to develop, fulfill, monitor and adjust each student's IEP to make sure they are progressing towards their goals and objectives that are aligned with the state benchmarks and standards. We need to be able to understand the curriculum/benchmarks and standards for multiple grade levels and then be able to teach it to students with a wide range of disabilities (ASD, SLD, ODD, OHD, VI, etc.) at their level. We also need to work with providers, general education teachers and support staff in making sure they are aware of the students' disability and able to work with them. In addition we are scheduling and running IEP meetings with parents annually to review, revise and discuss changes to each child's IEP, this is a painstaking task. We are mandated by IDEA to have all participants present whenever making any changes to a student's IEP. This means meetings are virtually impossible to schedule during the instructional school day and needs to be done after school hours when all team members can attend. IEP meetings run anywhere from 45 min. to an hour +. This means we are running outside of our scheduled work hours. This is just a glimpse of what we as special education teachers deal with daily.

Over the past years the department of education has placed mandate after mandate after mandate on special education teachers particularly in the midst of this pandemic with very little guidance and direction and we have met the challenge each time going above and beyond our work day. This extra monetary compensation showed us that you not only valued what we do but you are compensating our time and work. I went to school to become a special education teacher, my passion is working with this particular student population, but I have never worked so hard in my life with so little appreciation. I urge you to continue to fund the extra compensation for special education teachers as we are worth every penny and then some.

The closure and reopening of schools has intensified the challenges special education teachers face. We are balancing blended learning for special needs students with little to no help. Special education teachers are now having to look at creative ways to support our special needs students in this type of learning environment with less support staff and higher case loads. It has also changed the way we teach, instruct, motivate our students, communicate with our staff and parents. It is important to remember that **"nothing replaces good teaching" "good teaching is good teaching"**. By supporting teachers and support staff it sends a clear message that you support and value our Keiki (children) and their future. I URGE you to appropriate funds and invest in TEACHERS NOT TUTORING PROGRAMS. REMEMBER Teachers shape, inspire and motivate students to face an ever changing world with hope for something better. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,  
Ms. Robin Naope  
Special Education Teacher  
Kahala Elementary



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

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**Testimony**

1 message

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**Kristen Faford** <kris10faford@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 4:32 PM

I am testifying on the **BOE General Business Meeting Action Item V, B**: Board Action on Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

Having these potential budget and position cuts will devastate our education, bring a negative connotation to potential teachers, new teachers, and greatly impact the overall morale of teaching in Hawai'i. These cuts will greatly impact the keiki in Hawai'i as the class sizes will be too large for students to make any personal growth.

Hiring tutors and funding other programs instead of retaining teachers will deeply hurt all stakeholders in our communities. We need to keep our teachers teaching! I know that there are many schools losing positions and quality of education will diminish if this is not rectified. Use federal funds to support education! We have had to cut many programs in school over the years and students are not getting what they deserve, a well-rounded education! Teachers are what help to guide students and build relationships with them to be successful in school and in life. Having a tutor may or may not be effective, and students don't want to be alone in a class with a tutor all day or for several hours. It is not the least restrictive environment for them and this is a violation of their rights!

We cannot have people in our 'ohana move away to the mainland to teach when we know our keiki the best! WE need your support in caring for the wellbeing of our keiki and their future!

Please reconsider all actions to restore the funding for teachers in Hawai'i and retain us here where the keiki need us the most, especially in a time like this with so many uncertainties, the keiki and their families need us!

Mahalo for your time to read my testimony!

Sincerely,  
Kristen Faford



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

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**Action Item V. B. Plan for use of Federal Funds**

1 message

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**Jacquelyn Hubert** <jalohu5@gmail.com>  
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 2:04 PM

**Action Item V. B. Plan for use of Federal Funds****Budget Cuts, Differentials, and Furloughs, Oh My!**

It is vitally important for the BOE to provide funds to retain our qualified teachers. So many students have had their learning negatively impacted during covid, so I understand the knee jerk reaction to put the budget towards tutors/mentors. However, tutors will not be the glue that holds students learning in place.

At MY school, our staff will be gutted because of the proposed cuts. We will be losing a teacher from third, forth, fifth, and sixth grades, plus a special education teacher. All of these grade level teams will be restaffed - with rifted teachers who don't know our kids, staff or school culture.

At My school we have already cut our specials to the bone. While we do have a garden funded by food corp., a library that is off campus, and Kumu services. We've sacrificed 'specials' in order to have tutors, RTI, and targeted support, because our students need intensive help. As a result, we go without art, physical education, STEM, music, etc.

At My school the saddest fact is that over a hundred students will not be physical next year. Currently with distance learning, our gap students are not frequent attenders of meets with their current tutors. Whom they know, respect, and miss. Not only will I miss my fellow teachers, but the students who do return will find a staff they don't recognize.

At My school class sizes will be larger (In my room - 25 or 26 compared to 19 and 20). As it is, virtually engaging these students in whole groups, small groups, office hours, breakout sessions, with guest speakers, brain breaks, online resources, etc. has been a challenge. These proposals will be adding another ten students to the mix. How exactly would tutors help this scenario?

Personally, I returned to HDOE last year after a break in service, to care for my parents during their end of life transitions. I'd hoped to post an increased high three for retirement. I have six years to go. The differential raised my position on the pay schedule to a place I would never have reached at the rate our step raises are negotiated, Instead I am looking at four years with no gains and now losses? Expected to wait until next SY to learn of my actual financial future.

I had earned a Masters of Informations Science degree for my return to teaching last year. That education has been crucial during covid! I'm looking at my student loan, the nation's highest cost of living, my goals to save big for retirement, but seeing that the powers that be are willing to turn a blind eye to it's teachers. Despite having received federal funds to avoid all of this.

Teachers are facing iimpaired work environments, our family's ongoing struggles, and students who deserve more. Imagine how shocking it is to learn that I, as Teacher, am not valued, in the final analysis.

Sincerely,

2/19/2021

Dell Marketing LP Mail - Action Item V. B. Plan for use of Federal Funds

Jacquelyn L Hubert

**Action Item V. B. Plan for use of Federal Funds  
Budget Cuts, Differentials, and Furloughs, Oh My!**

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Teachers are facing iimpaired work environments, our family's ongoing struggles, and students who deserve more. Imagine how shocking it is to learn that I, as Teacher, am not valued, in the final analysis.

Sincerely,

Jacquelyn L Hubert





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

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**Testimony for: B. Board 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

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**Melissa Turner** <melissa.hsta@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 2:02 PM

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

**Testimony for:**[B. Board 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 Board of Education:

I am testifying regarding the furloughs, pay cuts, and discontinuing the differentials for special education, hard to staff locations, and Hawaiian immersion schools. I have been teaching here on the Big Island of Hawaii for five years now. I moved here from the mainland and have had to struggle paying my bills ever since. I normally work two or three jobs to make ends meet. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic I felt that the Board of Education was actually moving in the right direction with supporting it's teachers. I felt as if things were looking up. I was hopeful that with the next contract bargaining Hawaii teachers may no longer be one of the lowest paid. I would no longer have to work multiple jobs and could focus all my energy and effort into teaching my students.

Then came Covid-19 and the pandemic that has not only wrecked Hawaii's economy but our Nation. I know something has to be done to balance the budget, however, I do not believe it should be put on the backs of the employees. The state needs to look at other ways of raising revenue. One way in which many other states do this is through taxes to not only support the state but public education. Let the many help support the state and public education, not the few. Everytime there is some sort of shortcoming in the state budget the state enforces furloughs or pay cuts on it's employees. Enough is enough! The state needs to come up with a way to fund itself other than tourism. You cannot base all our revenue on tourism as we have so tragically seen. You must find another way to support public education.

I do not want to be forced to move back to the mainland, but this very well may be my last year here. On the mainland teaching jobs pay more and the cost of living is less. The entire nation has seen how valuable teachers are to the success of our nation. Teachers are not only educators for our youth, but counselors, psychological support, behavior managers, and the ones who raise up standing citizens for the future. Some districts have realized this (North Carolina) and even gave teachers a pay increase during this pandemic. They have also gotten pay bonuses throughout the pandemic because their governor saw how hard their teachers were working to support distance learning. Yet, here in Hawaii we are faced with pay cuts, furloughs and discontinuation of the differentials. I urge you to stand by teachers and support them as the valuable society makers they are and say no to pay cuts, furloughs and discontinuation of the differentials.

Unprecedented Stress,  
Melissa Turner  
Special Education Teacher





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

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## Testimony

1 message

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**Sherry Rose** <roses@hawaiiantel.net>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 1:49 PM

I am testifying on the BOE General Business Meeting Action Item V, B: Board 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 Sherry Rose, currently a General Education ELA teacher at Farrington High School. I have been a teacher with Hawai'i DOE for 50 years. I am a Highly Qualified Teacher in ELA, Social Studies, and School Librarian and have taught grades PK-12. Out of over 140 teachers at Farrington High School, I have the most seniority so my position for the next school year is not in jeopardy. This is not the case for many of my colleagues and the casualties of the proposed cuts in positions and personnel will adversely affect not only our teachers and other staff members, but ultimately have the most dire negative consequences for our students.

These cuts will increase class sizes, decrease opportunities for student choice in selecting electives, add to already increased work loads for teachers, and create the loss of essential services such as special education supports. More and more teachers are planning to leave our profession as these changes move our profession backwards and students are left with unqualified substitutes delivering canned lessons that put them further and further behind in their educational journey.

Yes, to quote a famous song lyric, "Wouldn't it be lovely," to have a dedicated, permanent source of educational funding, but that is not a current reality. Instead, we have a lifeline, a substantial influx of federal stimulus funding that the superintendent proposes to use to hire TUTORS, instead of endeavoring to save the positions of qualified teachers. What is the rationale behind this interesting concept? Provide summer school and tutors to help make up for educational losses during this time? Sorry, but my **50 years of classroom experience** tells me that this is NOT the answer. Who will these tutors be? Where will they come from and what is their expertise?

Qualified teachers are the ones who will help students continue to learn. We are the ones who know how to do this and I want to tell you that MY STUDENTS are not "behind"—they are learning a great deal, though not in the ways that they did before this pandemic. They are all becoming better writers and thinkers. They are learning to separate fact from fiction. They are reading excellent stories, poems and other significant literature and they are prepared to move forward in their educational journey.

I urge the board to listen to those of us who have actually **been in the classroom** teaching students every day to be lifelong learners and critical thinkers. Please do not allow anyone to make decisions that will devastate our ability to make positive differences in the lives of our most precious resource, our students.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sherry Rose



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

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## Hawaii Afterschool Alliance Testimony

1 message

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**Hawaii Afterschool Alliance** <hawaii afterschool@gmail.com>  
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 1:41 PM

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*Paula Adams*  
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance*  
*Curriculum Research and Development Group*  
*1776 University Avenue, WA1-102*  
*Honolulu, HI 96822*  
*[www.hawaii afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.hawaii afterschoolalliance.org)*



**2.18.21 BOE Testimony.pdf**  
71K



February 18, 2021

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance would like to comment on the following action item:

V. B. Board 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 support. 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 an important 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. The extensive research base on effective summer learning programs is clear on this point - summer camps and enrichment programs have been shown to have positive academic effects—including improvements in math, reading skills, and social and emotional skills—even when academic content is not the focus of the program.

Regarding the \$48.5M set aside for intensive tutoring, we urge the DOE to keep the following in mind as well:

- Partner with and leverage 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. The A+ Afterschool Program can also provide tutoring, as that is not considered an educational activity under TANF. Instead of losing valuable teaching positions, strategically leverage existing federal funding for afterschool, summer learning and other youth development program providers to provide students with both opportunities for both enrichment and tutoring this summer. Parents and students should have the option to choose comprehensive summer learning programs that go beyond just academic tutoring.

- 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, we urge you to consider embedding that tutoring component in a comprehensive program, like those offered by 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC, A+, UPLINK and others so that students receive the well rounded supports that they need to emerge from this crisis strong, resilient, hopeful, and ready to learn.

Mahalo,

Paula Adams  
Executive Director  
Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance  
[www.hawaiiafterschoolalliance.org](http://www.hawaiiafterschoolalliance.org)



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

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## Testimony for General Business Meeting February 18

1 message

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**Rebecca Hadley-Schlosser** <beccasuehi@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 1:36 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha,

Attached is my written testimony regarding the Board 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.

Rebecca Hadley-Schlosser



**BOE general meeting written testimony February 18.docx**

16K

February 17, 2021

Testimony in regards to Action Item V, B: Board 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 Chairperson Payne and members of the Board of Education,

I'm writing today in regards to Action Item V, B as it relates to the Department of Education's plan for the use of the federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

My biggest concern with the Department of Education's plan in spending the money relates to the fifth category identified by the Department for potential assignment of the funds: Learning loss mitigation strategies.

As a special education teacher who has taught in Hawaii for 24 years with all but one year being spent teaching students with special needs on the Waianae Coast, I take issue with the Superintendent intending to spend around one-third of the funds on tutoring to address learning loss. Special education teachers have been required by the state to determine learning loss and develop specific plans to address that learning loss in our students. We've been working extremely hard to address the learning loss and move our students forward this year. It bothers me that so much is being set aside for outside tutoring when teachers are ready and willing to work with our students either after school or during school breaks rather than having someone who may not be familiar with our students and/or the culture of Hawaii.

Given the issues we've heard in relation to the Acellus program, I am extremely concerned that the state is looking at using another online program, the Accelerated Personal Learning Program. Has this program been thoroughly vetted? What is the history of this program? Is it being used elsewhere? What are the impacts of this program? These are the hard questions that needed to be answered about Acellus and should be answered about the APLP. The documentation provided states that the APLP is a new statewide "intervention program for students who have lost ground in college and career readiness as verified by student achievement data." Who is developing this program? Have teachers been asked about providing input into this program? If we're going to develop a program for students, it needs to have teacher input prior to being used with students. We are the boots on the ground people who have been working with our students since the first day of school this year to address learning loss and develop further skills.

Attachment C of the documents for this item, states that the Department of Education has "identified more than 20,000 students in grades 5-8 who are two or more years behind in either reading/English language arts or math who need intensive support that goes beyond the school day." The most vulnerable of these students are currently receiving either special education services and/or English Language Learner services at the school level. Some of these student's parents have chosen to keep their child home and participate via distance learning. However, I

have some students who are struggling with distance learning to the point of not even attempting to log in. If we can't get the student to come to school during the regular school day, I wonder if they will be motivated to attend tutoring after school or during the summer break. We also must take into consideration each student's individual needs to determine if they are going to benefit from attending any sort of additional learning opportunities.

A better use of the money would be to focus on paying teachers and asking for our input on ways to address possible learning loss that extend beyond the school day or school year. It is extremely disheartening to hear that the Superintendent wants to spend this money a specific way, yet we don't get all the information on the program she is proposing. Additionally, to know that the state is getting these funds and that the law/act states that payroll shouldn't be cut, it would be a better use of the funds to pay teachers and not give us pay cuts or discontinue the shortage differentials.

It is hard for me to understand how I'm being told I'm an essential worker, but I'm going to have my pay cut while the state is going to pay for this APLP program. Why must it always come down to teachers and other public employees taking pay cuts or pay freezes to balance the state's budget?

I understand the need to address learning loss for our students. It's an everyday aspect of being a Special Education teacher. I've been addressing learning loss since the first day I had students in my class this year. However, maybe Superintendent Kishimoto needs to start listening to teachers and involving us in decisions rather than proposing another program that we haven't heard about and know nothing about. It feels like a slap in the face to be told we aren't doing our jobs effectively based on universal screeners that are not 100% accurate and scores aren't valid for most students. I had students whose parents helped them with their iReady reading and math diagnostic at the beginning of the school year. A couple of my students scored at grade level in areas they receive special education services. There is no way they could have scored as well on their iReady assessments when I look at their needs. I have students who struggle to read CVC words, yet they scored at a grade level that is impossible for them to read words at. I had the same results with math. We need to look at what is happening at each individual school and ask the staff at the schools how we can best meet the needs of our students before we bring in something that may or may not have been properly vetted by the Department.

I was able to observe students in our summer extended learning program that my principal implemented last summer. The students who came were all students with special needs who didn't have sufficient regression and recoupment issues requiring extended school year services. All of the students who attended this program (16 students) were able to make progress. I had a fourth grade student with Autism turn to me during one of my observations and say, "I am determined to win." in relation to a game they were playing. This is the result of the teachers he has had who encouraged his language development so that he was able to

appropriate express his desire. Program like this are much better suited to the needs of our most vulnerable students rather than an unknown program.

Please consider a more appropriate use of these funds rather than applying them to this unknown APLP. Our most vulnerable students need your support and preventing the Department from using these funds on an unknown versus keeping teacher's salaries and shortage differentials in place will be in the best interests of all. All teachers have been working hard to address learning loss throughout the school year. I don't know that spending money on an unknown will be in the best interests of our students. Let us do our jobs and address learning loss in our classrooms before we consider extended learning opportunities beyond the school day and year.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Hadley-Schlosser