

Testimony BOE

From: Kat Muranaka <katmuranaka272@gmail.com> on behalf of Kat Muranaka
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 6:33 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony: Action Item A

Testimony: Action Item A

(Discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in SpEd, hard-to-fill geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs)

I am writing in opposition to Action Item A, the discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in Special Education, hard-to-fill geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I have been a classroom teacher in the Nanakuli-Waianae Complex for almost 30 years. The extra compensation awarded to classroom teachers in my complex made a huge difference to our teaching ranks. We had qualified, tenured teachers who had left our complex, returning to positions they had reluctantly left. Classroom position openings were filled primarily with experienced, licensed teachers. Our students benefited directly from the quality of instruction and professional knowledge that these colleagues brought with them, particularly during the current pandemic challenges.

The realities of the DOE's current financial restrictions in the state budget is understandable. However, removing this financial compensation from classroom teachers does not reflect the department's core value of a commitment to "equity and excellence." "Equity" is achieved by differentiating services to meet individual needs. The identified teacher groups that receive compensation face challenges and student populations that struggle to meet "norm standards." Taking away the financial compensation will remove any gains that were made by its implementation.

These funds were designated for CLASSROOM TEACHERS. Aside from family members, these individuals are directly involved with and responsible for the education, health and well-being of students on a daily basis. Classroom teachers are the backbone, frontline, critical component to accomplishing the Department of Education's mission. The reality is, under the current conditions, the daily workload for some other DOE stakeholder groups has been reduced. However, it is classroom teachers who have had to continually update instructional, management and health and safety plans in order to adapt to the changing pandemic guidelines and data.

To target budgetary cuts on pay for the employees who have the most direct impact with the truly vulnerable of our student population is a short-term solution that will create negative consequences for generations of students and communities.

Kathleen "Kat" Muranaka
Waianae High School teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Andrea <lexia99@aol.com> on behalf of Andrea
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 6:34 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Dear Honorable Board Members:

There are numerous reasons to keep the shortage differentials.

Special Education positions are hard to staff because students with special needs not only require specialized attention and more curriculum planning, but often come with an assortment of behavior problems. Their parents are also typically more difficult to deal with. Additionally, special Education teachers need an additional two years of education to become licensed in special education.

Why would teachers be motivated to work with children with special needs and all the attendant challenges in working with these children and their families if they can get the same pay working in general education? As a special education teacher, I personally know of several general education teachers leaving their positions for special education positions specifically for the pay differential. Remove the differential and these teachers will go straight back to teaching general education and we will see a shortage of special education teachers by next school year.

By removing the differentials, you will also be courting lawsuits because the instruction of special needs students in their IEP goals will suffer, instruction they are entitled to by law. Before the differential, I knew of one teacher who had to teach multiple grade levels, not to mention the fact that science, music and physical education were also being neglected. Additionally, I am aware of at least two teachers who are planning to move to the mainland for better paying jobs in areas that have a lower cost of living.

Please keep the pay differentials.

Sincerely,

Andrea Baer
Lihikai Elementary School

Testimony BOE

From: Johnson Koo <kapaakoo@gmail.com> on behalf of Johnson Koo
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 6:34 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Differential

Hello,

My name is Johnson Koo and I have been a teacher in Hawai'i for over 20 years. Please do not eliminate pay differentials for hard-to-fill positions like sped. I have seen general Ed teachers return to the sped classroom this year filling vacancies and helping so many students and general Ed teachers. Please use covid relief money to stop proposed budget cuts at schools. Mahalo

Testimony BOE

From: Kat Muranaka <katmuranaka272@gmail.com> on behalf of Kat Muranaka
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 6:35 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony: Action Item V, B

Testimony: Action Item V, B (DOE's plan for use of COVID-19 Federal Funds)

I am writing in opposition to the Department of Education's plan for use of federal funds in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill, specifically for the planned use of those funds to hire private tutors, rather than maintain current payroll.

As a classroom teacher in the Nanakuli-Waianae Complex, I am witnessing the direct impact the DOE's proposed budget cuts are taking on student learning and services. As a result of the current budgetary restrictions, we may lose classroom and counselor positions that service some of our most vulnerable students.

Using funding to provide private tutors to support student learning and growth does not provide a long-term solution to a challenging situation. The DOE should focus these federal funds to retain and support the professionals who have committed themselves to the students and communities that they work in. It is these individuals who have created a "sense of belonging" within their classrooms, both virtual and face-to-face, so that a sense of "normalcy" can exist for students, despite the disruption to what "used to be."

In these challenging financial times, efforts need to be made to invest in creating sustainable systems of support, not "pilot programs" with limited, undetermined impact. Classroom teachers are essential workers. The priority of the Department of Education needs to reflect that sense of importance when budgeting the needs of teaching and learning.

Kathleen "Kat" Muranaka
Waianae High School teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Laddie Roy <ladislausroy@gmail.com> on behalf of Laddie Roy
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 6:39 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: Laddie Roy
Subject: Concerned parent

Aloha Board of Education,

I am writing to voice my extreme concern for the proposed pay cut to the Special Education teachers at Kaneohe Elementary School. Having qualified teachers preparing our most vulnerable students is of utmost importance and making sure these teachers survive these difficult times and can afford to stay in place to provide these services has to happen. Because of this I reject the proposal with extreme prejudice and consider this a direct attack on our children with special needs.

Sincerely,
Laddie Roy

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: Harmony Roy <harmonyhawaii@hotmail.com> on behalf of Harmony Roy
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 6:49 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Parent Testimony- Windward District SPED Parent

Aloha,

We have 2 sons, both are in SPED for:

Kaneohe Elementary and
Castle High School

There is little to nothing my family could do without qualified SPED teachers in these schools.

I would like to list just a few of the many things that the teachers at these schools do to assist our sons:

- 1) Safeguard our sons' futures by providing skills that will help them beyond their school years
- 2) Ensure they are in classes with friends to benefit their social growth as well as their educational needs
- 3) Assist in self care teaching; simple tasks on cleaning up after themselves and making sure they know how to look good and present themselves well
- 4) Self-advocation, this goes into the "safeguarding" our son's futures. Both boys' are very limited in their speech, but continue to get bolder because of teachers who go the extra mile to ensure they can speak up for themselves when they need to.
- 5) Protect. Our sons are both exposed to new things that help their growth while also being protected 100% while in these teachers care.

As a long term special needs, special education parent in the State of Hawaii, the thought that you would cut the salaries of the SPED teachers who are already not paid enough for what they do for us, is lacking in foresight. Doing this will cause a ripple effect, we will "lose" the amazing SPED teachers we do have and ultimately begin to lose Hawaii SPED families who will seek better education outside of Hawaii.

Please feel free to contact me directly at this email or by phone (808) 347-5119.

Mahalo for your reconsideration on this topic,

Harmony Roy

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: Janelle Koo <jkoo3@hotmail.com> on behalf of Janelle Koo
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:04 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A.

I am writing in support of the continuation of shortage differentials and respectfully ask that Superintendent Kishimoto retract her recent memo and decision to end the shortage differential.

My name is Janelle Koo and I am a Special Education teacher at Kilauea Elementary on Kauai. I am a recipient of the shortage differential which helps me to support my family. The differential helps to make it less necessary to have a second job, so my time outside of the school hours can still be used to focus on addressing my student's needs.

The shortage differential to me is not just financial compensation. It is a representation of the state's commitment to the students in Hawaii. It is a commitment to provide and support qualified teachers in typically hard to fill areas. The state's efforts have been successful. However, to remove the shortage differential now, indicates the Department of Education's unwillingness to stay the course during difficult times and demonstrates its wavering commitment to the students and teachers in Hawaii. I believe that if this differential is eliminated now, not only will it create a financial hardship for current teachers, it will have long standing negative effects on the state's future efforts to recruit and maintain qualified teachers, especially in traditional shortage areas. Hawaii's student and teachers deserve unwavering support.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Testimony BOE

From: Jason Jestice <jason.jestice@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Jason Jestice
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:08 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony :Teacher Shortage Differentials
Attachments: Testimony-TSD.docx

Hawaii Board of Education,

My name is Jason Jestice, I have been a special education teacher on Oahu for 10 years and currently teach special education resource and inclusion English Language Arts classes at Waipahu High School.

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am writing to ask you to please not allow the discontinuance of the extra compensation for SPED, Hard-to Staff, and HLIP teachers. These positions deal with some of our most vulnerable students. These teachers are routinely asked to provide services and supports that are not required of other educators and often do so under extremely difficult circumstances. Often this work takes place outside of our school day hours and greatly impacts the lives of our families and ourselves.

As a special education teacher of 10 years with the Hawaii Department of Education, I can attest to the growing hardships I have faced over that time. More and more demands have been placed on all teachers' time and this has greatly impacted SPED teachers. Teachers have been increasingly asked to spend many more hours a week on professional learning communities, WASC accreditation, and learning academies, to name a few. At my school, these demands take up to 6 hours a week of my school day. That means that time spent on creating and monitoring SPED students' Individual Educational Program (IEP) goals and objectives, planning, leading, and attending IEP meetings, monitoring and creating quarterly IEP progress reports, and communicating with and supporting SPED students and parents must be found outside of our school day. SPED teachers often work 10-20 hours a week outside of our school day to meet the demands of our position.

Our position supports some of our most vulnerable students and their parents. We are expected to be the main conduit between the DOE and these families. We are expected to be familiar with all current laws, procedures, and supports pertaining to special education. We create legal documents and facilitate meetings that have major

impacts on students and their families. No other teachers have this kind of responsibility.

The extra compensation has several positive impacts on teachers and schools. First, it makes special education teachers feel appreciated and fairly compensated for the jobs we do. Many of us would do this regardless, but I have to tell you that the feeling of support and appreciation makes us feel we are valued for what we do. The second thing the compensation does is keep experienced SPED teachers in their positions. Every year, at my school, and many more, we lose SPED teachers. There has been a constant shortage of qualified SPED teachers. This means many special education students have a long-term sub or beginning (un-certificated) teacher.

According to the department's data, the salary differentials have rapidly reduced shortages. For instance, the number of teachers transferring into special education positions for the 2020–2021, school year increased by 29 percent over the previous school year, while the number of teachers who left SPED positions decreased by 57 percent!

Finally, for me, the extra compensation has allowed me to start a savings account, something I had never been able to do before the differentials, as bills and student loan payments took all of my paychecks each month. What a wonderful feeling it has been to know that I can actually put some money away as a hedge against the rising cost of living and housing in our state, for retirement or unforeseen hardships. I also know first-hand that the salary differential has kept SPED colleagues from leaving their positions and moving out of state.

According to the Department of Education's own data, it seems clear that the salary differentials have been a great success. I have personally seen how differentials have increased teacher morale and help keep experienced SPED teachers in their positions while attracting more college students to consider a career in special education.

It would be a shame to see such a successful program with clear, tangible results shut down as it is just starting to make a real difference in our teacher shortage. **It would be devastating for teachers to lose these differentials that allow them to stay and teach in Hawaii or to finally afford a place of their own. These differentials make a huge difference in teachers' lives.**

Make no mistake, if salary differentials are eliminated we are sure to experience a return to chronic teacher shortages that affect our most vulnerable students.

I respectfully ask that you do not discontinue the salary differentials for classroom teachers in spEcial education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

--

Jason Jestice
SPED/ELA Resource/Inclusion
Waipahu High School
808-307-9419

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Testimony BOE

From: Chris Mione <cmione79@gmail.com> on behalf of Chris Mione
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:15 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Submitting testimony for the BOE special meeting action item A.

I am a special education teacher at Honokaa High and Intermediate School. In the past twelve years I have seen countless teachers come and go but I have stayed. Now with budget cuts and being a small school I am being asked to teach six different preps for next year. How can a school keep or fill positions with these types of lines? The differential has kept strong teachers at the school and brought in others to Honokaa. I fear the loss of the differential along with other budget cuts and demands being placed on teachers will lead to another major teacher exit. Please keep the differential for the benefit of the students and teachers of Hawaii.

Thank you,
Christopher Mione

Testimony BOE

From: stibbardg75@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:18 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Appropriate compensation is greatly needed:

- 1) Already approved BOE Policy 105-8 which states Hawaiian immersion will be compensated for the extra skill set that is required.
- 2) 2020 differential has helped to decrease the amount of vacancies in kaiapuni schools which allow schools to survive.
- 3) The amount of money needed to comply with this BOE Policy is not a lot and affordable.

Mahalo,

Proud grandparent of all three grandchildren who attended Hawaiian immersion schools.

George J Stibbard
808-342-3796

Testimony BOE

From: Eileen Carr <eileentea@gmail.com> on behalf of Eileen Carr
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:27 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To Esteemed Chair Payne and the Honorable Members of our Hawai'i Board of Education,

I am submitting testimony for the [BOE Special Meeting Action Item A](#): Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am a full time, face-to-face 4th grade teacher at Kualapu'u Public Conversion Charter School on Moloka'i. Previously, I taught 4th grade at Manoa Elementary School on O'ahu where I had the enormous privilege and honor of hosting Chair Payne in my classroom. This is my 5th year teaching with the HIDOE, and my 21st year teaching in total. I am passionate about our profession, and a firm supporter of public schools and public education.

I am writing to ask for your support as we strive to make the best of a very difficult and uncertain time. Please do not discontinue pay differentials for teachers doing some of the hardest jobs (in a very hard profession!). Cuts would devastate our already critical teaching shortage. Public school teachers in Hawai'i are already nationally acknowledged for their shamefully low pay. We consistently vie for last place when it comes to teacher pay adjusted for cost of living (see WalletHub's explanation [here](#) and further explanation [here](#)).

I currently receive a pay differential for teaching in a Tier 4 hard-to-staff geographical location. My school is chronically understaffed, with the principal frequently filling in as a sub and unexpected vacancies arising throughout the year. Our students are thoughtful, knowledgeable, and full of potential, but have also faced inordinate rates of trauma and transition in their short lives. Teaching here is not easy. My students' behavioral and academic needs can feel overwhelming, on top of the demanding workload on days when there are no subs and we must cover 7 straight hours of meal, recreational, and instructional coverage (7 hours straight, with no breaks). Not to mention, our gas costs around \$5 a gallon, we must pay shipping costs for any items not available on island (i.e. children's books, bookshelves, art supplies, etc.) and our groceries are both far more limited and substantially more expensive than anywhere else in Hawai'i.

We need you to stand by our teachers, and we need you to urge the superintendent to rethink her plan to discontinue shortage differentials. I am absolutely not in this profession for the money, but I will not be able to survive in the expensive state of Hawai'i if my pay is further reduced. I accepted a \$20,000 pay cut when I relocated to the HIDOE from the NYCDOE, and it isn't fair to keep asking some of the hardest-working, *essential* professionals in our society to accept the lowest pay.

Honorable Board Members, we are all here because we know that the future of Hawai'i depends on a strong public education system. This means that we must build and sustain a strong and devoted teaching force. Teacher pay differentials have been proven to make a powerful impact in recruiting and retaining qualified educators for our keiki.

In the time of Covid-19, teachers are working harder than ever for our students and the community at large. I beseech you: please stand up for the incredibly hard-working teachers in our state's public schools, and do not allow shortage differentials to be discontinued. Public school teachers have proven themselves to be invaluable during this pandemic. Please show us that you value our efforts, you recognize our contributions to society, and you will advocate for improvements (not reductions) to our pay.

Testimony BOE

From: Margaret Primacio <stibbardm003@icloud.com> on behalf of Margaret Primacio
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:33 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Hawaiian Immersion Teacher Compensation - Support

Good Evening Board of Education Chair & Members,

I support the policy & budget to continue the compensation for Hawaiian Immersion Teachers due to the special skills required to effect quality learning in the classroom. The evidence of fewer vacancies at kaiapuni schools further resolves Hawaii's kuleana to effect the State of Hawaii's official language which is in the constitution. And therefore funding for these compensations should be enacted.

MAhalo for your affirmation of this measure.

Margaret Primacio
Kupuna
P.O. Box 92
Kahuku, Oahu, HI 96731

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: elizabeth sharrock <elizrocks@yahoo.com> on behalf of elizabeth sharrock
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:35 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha Board of Education,

I'm writing to ask that you use stimulus funds to retain qualified teachers for our keiki. It's so important right now that you support teachers by sending a message that you want to prevent school layoffs and pay cuts. Speaking as a 7th grade English teacher, who is also a head union rep at my school, I am in the loop of the conversations that go on around my school. One teacher reports wanting to retire months ago but since so many teachers are wanting this also, she couldn't even get the necessary paperwork sent to her on time. Another source told me that the retirement division is seeing 20% more retirements than usual. Teachers are leaving the profession.

This is on top of an already existing teacher shortage! We didn't have enough qualified bodies to fill the position BEFORE we heard that all of our incentives were being taken away AND we were facing a pay cut AND 700 to 1,000 teachers would be laid off. Who do we think is going to be in the classroom with the students? Surely the Board is educated enough to realize the lasting impact this message is sending. The message is that teachers are disposable, and we may as well give up on public education. I, too, have already begun searching other career options that aren't such a slap in the face.

Personally, I was told by my principal that instead of having two seventh grade teams at my school next year, they would be getting rid of half of the 7th grade teachers and we would be forced to absorb the other half of the student population. I already have 90 students to take care of. What do you think this will mean to the students, their families, my colleagues and myself, when that population doubles? This will directly result in larger class sizes, more misbehavior, greater risk for virus spread, and ultimately less learning on behalf of students who are already struggling. So not only does this send the message that teachers are disposable, but that students are too.

Hearing the DOE's proposals to make cuts and get rid of things like hard to staff incentives tells me that my school is going to be suffering greatly from here on out. So I also want to say that we teachers, are in support of Action Item A. We have unqualified staff and long term subs filling classrooms on a yearly basis and that was without the threat of these incentives being stripped from us. This burden of budget cuts should not fall on the backs of those already suffering the brunt of things - the teachers. It's insult to injury. We work overtime for free, get paid lower than teachers in any other state, and WE are the ones that need to foot the bill? It makes no sense.

I am so close to quitting, homeschooling my son, and educating him on what a broken system our leaders are perpetuating. Shame on the decision makers who have put teachers and students in this impoverished position. What good could possibly come from making the poor even more poor? What are we saying to society when we say, "You know what we need less of? Educators. We don't need people who spread knowledge. It's an expendable resource." What are we thinking when we mean to value the growth of intellect *less*? Are we so short-sighted that we can't see how this will cost us exponentially more in the long-run in terms of society's resources? What are we doing? What kind of a society are we? Get the knee off the necks of those who are powerless. Do your job please. Support educators. Now and always.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Sharrock
Kea'au Middle School
Hawaii Island

Testimony BOE

From: Tiffany Edwards Hunt <newswoman@me.com> on behalf of Tiffany Edwards Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:47 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Re: Testimony: Figure out some other way

Please refer back to previous testimony I have submitted. If any of you want to experience teaching in this current state of affairs, you are most welcome to be a guest for any of my classes. If you want to cut our pay, jeopardize our jobs, come see what we are doing to serve our keiki, still, with everything happening with Covid-19. We are dedicated. We are the G R I T of community. Come watch us teach before you try and hack our pay! Respond to this email and I will host you in my class. Be our advocate!

\m/m/
aloha

Pronouns: she, her, hers (See: mypronouns.org to learn more)

On Dec 16, 2020, at 2:01 PM, Tiffany Edwards Hunt <newswoman@me.com> wrote:

To the Board of Education and the Hawaii State Legislature and anyone else deciding the fate of us teachers:

I'm writing to you as a 7th-grade teacher here on Hawaii Island, and also as a parent of two school-aged children. I am, quite honestly, appalled that we have this suggestion of furloughs equating to a 9 percent pay cut for teachers. First of all, have any of you sat in on one of these virtual classes that we have been holding? We are doing everything we can to ensure that our children learn as much as possible this school year. I personally have spent my fall break, my afternoons, and my weekends trying to help students who are struggling in this current learning environment and trying to cope with this pandemic. To suggest that we now be furloughed is just adding insult to injury.

I suggest that, before you decide to balance the DOE budget on the backs of the teachers who have the boots on the ground, why don't you look at all the consulting contracts and all the spending that occurs at the administrative level? There are way too many millions of dollars being spent on these consultants. For what, honestly? I mean, a lot of what these consultants have been paid to do is moot now. Times have definitely changed! Cutting out consultants and frivolous administrative spending would be a great start for cost savings.

We need to be thinking about the long-term impacts of a decision like this, cutting the days we teachers have to work with children and moving us teachers further toward the poverty line. Weren't we just making headlines, detailing how critical the shortage of teachers is and how we need to increase teacher pay in order to ensure we have quality teachers for our children? My, how quickly the rhetoric has shifted. Let's get back to the mentality that our children and their quality education matter. Find some other way to balance out the budget that doesn't jeopardize the future of Hawaii's children.

Mahalo.

Testimony BOE

From: Dustan Drexil <pedag0gical1@yahoo.com> on behalf of Dustan Drexil
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:49 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha

My name is David Higa and I am a special education teacher at Waikele Elementary School.

It is very important to retain highly qualified special education teachers, and by cutting funding for these positions is not the answer; relinquishing funds only impacts the students.

The funding's are important to retain qualified special education teachers, in turn these highly qualified teachers can provide the best learning environment rather than hiring some long-term substitute.

Budget cuts directly impact students; Sure the budget cuts impact teachers however the teachers that are impacted by the budget cuts cannot give their 100% all because they need to support their family and seek secondary job just to make ends meet those short changing the students. If you want quality education you have to invest in quality by funding these highly qualified teachers.

Budget cuts for special education teacher also increase class size and case loads. Increasing class size and caseloads are not the way to improve the quality of a child's education.

Cutting back on the special education funding and losing special education teachers will also affect the educational assistant positions; Educational assistance will have to take a larger role as a trained teachers and facilitate more learning. This is not fair for the students. If you really want to target the learning goals and IEP goals of the special education students then you need to increase support and funding for the special education teachers that attend multiple IEP meetings in addition to the general curriculum meetings, faculty meetings, etc...

In conclusion it is far more detrimental to the students and their needs by taking away funding from the special education teacher positions and supplementary funding from their paychecks it only trickles down and affects the students directly. Our students are the future And if you want a brighter future and a good indicator of what to come you can predict the future by saving the funding and support of the supplemental funds for the special education positions. The best way to predict the future is to create it.

Please excuse any typos or grammatical errors I'm using a speech to text app from a mobile device.

Testimony BOE

From: Andrew Distad <andrewdistad@gmail.com> on behalf of Andrew Distad
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:49 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: Andrew Distad
Subject: Testimony for BOE Special Meeting Action Item A
Attachments: Gunther 2019.pdf; Fuller Waite and Irribarra 2016.pdf; Ford Urick 2018.pdf

Aloha to whom it may concern,

I am writing submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. You are welcome to use my name, teaching location, and position for identification if you wish. I would also be happy to attend and read my testimony. You can reach me at 808-724-0084.

The following is my testimony:

“Aloha Dr. Kishimoto and/or whom it may concern,

I first want to thank you for the opportunity to be heard and for the compensation for being a special education teacher. It was when I received this compensation that I was able to quit attempting to be a real estate agent because I felt that I finally had enough room to breathe. I could finally focus on just being a super teacher, a super husband and a super Dad. At the same time over the last two years I also pursued my doctorate in education in order to re-classify, which helped some but also stopped the bleeding of student loan payments because my loans were deferred while I was in school again. It also provided much-needed cash flow with the money left over after tuition was paid. When my school closed after 115 years and I was faced with the option of restarting my EDD somewhere else, I was reluctant because of our new baby and all the attention she needed, and I realized I didn't need to frantically look for more income because, as a special educator does more than a general educator, I was finally paid more.

This peace gave me hope as I asked myself and realized: “Can I finally just be a teacher? Yes, yes, I think I can, yes, I can.” It was this peace that helped me walk away from my second job as a struggling real estate agent and allowed me to put down the extra degree so that I could just teach and spend evenings with my family.

Coincidentally, as I pursued my doctorate, my course of research was on the abnormally high turnover rate for special education teachers. By the way, I'd like to thank your office for cooperating with me as I inquired as to whether the high turnover data would be available, to which they obliged. I chose this line of research because I shook my head as I saw my colleagues leave year after year. I have since gained seniority rather fast for having only taught 5 years. As I built my case for research, not only did I discover that half a million teachers across America leave their teaching assignments each year and that half of those leave the profession all together (Fuller, Waite, Torres & Ibarra 2016), but I also discovered that one of the methods of acquiring staff in both difficult teaching jobs and difficult Schools, was to offer a financial incentive of between \$10,000 \$16,000 in areas of schools with high poverty serving students facing economic hardship and academic difficulties (Gunther, 2019). Researchers found that there is considerable evidence that higher salaries for special education teachers and total teachers are associated with higher rates of retention and conversely lower salaries with greater attrition (Ford & Urick, 2018). Salary was the greatest cause for teacher attrition followed by more negligible reasons like assignment, class-size, curricular autonomy, school achievement, principal support, and organizational fit (Gunther, 2019). In all these instances salary was double, triple, and in some cases quadruple

the standard deviation in the level of importance of these other values teachers attributed as their reason for leaving. All other reasons simply paled in comparison.

Therefore, as you can imagine, I was so excited to see that our very own Hawaii DOE was intelligently participating in an evidence based practice and I'm sure the retention numbers you experienced speak for themselves.

Now with this proven great idea on the chopping block I am fearful for many reasons:

- Cuts could mean a mass exodus of qualified teachers. Putting in under qualified teachers to fulfill special education service minutes when IEPs state special education services but the student is not being taught by a special educator is a violation of the IEP. As a care coordinator, this is very concerning because it is a liability. This could mean due process hearings and lawsuits in an already overextended work week. The IEP is a legal document and we are promising a service and would be breaking that promise by filling positions with those not qualified when teachers leave after pay cuts. This would encourage the violation of many, many IEPs and could leave us wide open for lawsuits.
- I am also concerned that these proposed cuts will result in vacant positions and increase the care coordinator caseload. When new untrained teachers or long term subs come in, it puts an unfair burden on the rest of the special Ed teachers/care coordinators who have been trained to meet these responsibilities and newcomers will not be given these responsibilities until properly trained which can sometimes take a whole semester under regular circumstances without a pandemic.
- This increased caseload on the qualified teachers will reduce class preparation and teaching quality, and thus lower goal achievement which is again another liability because we are under an obligation to show how we made good faith efforts to demonstrate opportunities to teach, practice and possibly achieve each of the goals within a student's IEP. Having increased obligations in the same size of workday opens us up for both liability and burnout of the teachers who stayed which could cause a compounding effect of special education teacher attrition.

In such a critical time we cannot afford to be penny wise and pound foolish; It could cost us dearly. In light of all this my wife and I are considering moving to New Jersey in the suburbs where we are confident we will be better paid in an already more economically welcoming environment -which I know you experienced firsthand.

I urgently implore you, for the good of our keiki and preserving resources for them, to reconsider in light of the impending liabilities we would otherwise face.

Sincerely,
Andrew Distad M.S. SpEd
Special Education Teacher
McKinley High School

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Quantifying the Value Teachers Place on Non-Monetary Factors When Evaluating Job Opportunities

Jeffrey Gunther

Utah State University

United States

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Abstract: How working conditions, personal characteristics, and school factors influence teacher recruitment and retention is an oft-studied topic in the field of education finance and policy. Through decades of research, it has become increasingly clear that teachers respond to a set of monetary and non-monetary factors when making decisions in the teacher labor market. What is less clear is the relative or absolute value teachers place on factors such as salary, student demographic factors, school conditions, and other working conditions such as class size, curricular autonomy, and principal support, to name a few. This project introduces the use of a novel survey methodology, Adaptive Choice-Based Conjoint (ACBC) analysis, to quantify the relative importance of various monetary and non-monetary job factors to practicing teachers as they consider the desirability of various hypothetical schools. The use of ACBC estimates the value placed on various working condition factors by secondary teachers in Utah and how those valuations vary with personal and demographic factors. This research provide practical recommendations for administrators and policymakers that aim to make schools more desirable for teachers and demonstrates the use of ABC to answer outstanding questions in the field of teacher recruitment and retention.

Keywords: Teacher Recruitment; Teacher Retention; Teacher Working Conditions; Compensating Differentials

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Cuantificación del valor que tienen los profesores atribuidos a los más importantes no monetarios como las oportunidades de trabajo

Resumen: Como condiciones de trabajo, como características pessoais e os fatores escolares influenciam o recrutamento e a retenção de professores, é um tópico muito estudado no campo da educação financeira e política. Los resultados de la investigación pesquera, cada vez más veces que los profesores responden a un conjunto de factores monetarios y no monetarios, no son decisivos en el mercado de trabajo del profesor. O que es menos claro es o valor relativo o absoluto que a los profesores se les atribuye un papel como el amor, los datos demográficos del estudio, las condiciones de la escuela y las condiciones del trabajo, el estilo del trabajo, la autonomía del plan de estudios y la mayoría de las personas. Este es el propósito del uso de una nueva metodología de investigación para el campo, con el objetivo de responder a las preguntas. Este es un análisis de uso basado en la elección adaptativa (ACBC) para cuantificar una importancia relativa de los papeles de los fondos monetarios y los de los profesores en el ejercicio, tal vez una vez que se considere una conveniencia de dinero. El uso de ACBC se estima o el valor se colocará dentro de los plazos de trabajo del profesorado por los profesores de apoyo en el estado de Utah y como es el caso de los cambios en la información y los datos demográficos. Esta pesquisa fornece recomendaciones prácticas para los administradores y formuladores de políticas que el visado se torna como las escuelas más importantes para los profesores y la demostración del uso de ACBC para responder a las preguntas pendientes en el campo del trabajo y la retención de los profesores.

Palavras-chave: Recrutamento de Professores; Retenção de Professores; Condições de trabalho do professor

Quantificação do valor que os professores atribuem aos fatores não monetários ao avaliar as oportunidades de trabalho

Resumo: Como as condições de trabalho, as características pessoais e os fatores escolares influenciam o recrutamento e a retenção de professores, é um tópico muito estudado no campo da educação financeira e política. Através de décadas de pesquisa, tornou-se cada vez mais claro que os professores respondem a um conjunto de fatores monetários e não monetários ao tomar decisões no mercado de trabalho do professor. O que é menos claro é o valor relativo ou absoluto que os professores atribuem a fatores como salário, fatores demográficos do estudante, condições da escola e outras condições de trabalho, como tamanho da turma, autonomia curricular e apoio principal, para citar alguns. Este projeto introduz o uso de uma nova metodologia de pesquisa para o campo, com o objetivo de responder a essas questões. Este estudo utiliza a análise do *Adaptive Choice-Based Conjoint* (ACBC) para quantificar a importância relativa de vários fatores de trabalho monetários e não monetários para os professores em exercício, uma vez que consideram a conveniência de várias escolas hipotéticas. O uso de ACBC estima o valor colocado em vários fatores de condição de trabalho por professores secundários em Utah e como essas avaliações variam com fatores pessoais e demográficos. Esta pesquisa fornece recomendações práticas para administradores e formuladores de políticas que visam tornar as escolas mais desejáveis para os professores e demonstra o uso do ACBC para responder questões pendentes no campo de recrutamento e retenção de professores.

Palavras-chave: Recrutamento de Professores; Retenção de Professores; Condições de trabalho do professor

Introduction

Teachers are regularly cited as the most important school-level factor influencing student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Ferguson, 1991; Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004a; Rockoff, 2004; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Sanders, Wright, & Horn, 1997). It is also well known that many teachers tend to have short careers, with five-year attrition rates cited as being as high as 50% (Ingersoll, 2001). Additionally, teacher quality and the rate of turnover of teachers is inequitably distributed, with poorer and Black and Hispanic students typically being taught by less qualified teachers who are more likely to turnover (Auguste, Kihn, & Miller, 2010; Betts, Reuben, & Danenberg, 2000; Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2004, 2010; Holzman, 2012; Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002). This inequitable distribution of teachers may contribute to the persistent achievement gaps among students of different racial and socioeconomic backgrounds (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Lankford, et al., 2002). A conclusion of the existing research is that improving teacher recruitment and retention can act as a key lever for both improving overall educational attainment and reducing achievement gaps among students of different racial and socioeconomic backgrounds (Adamson & Darling-Hammond, 2012; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013).

Given the effect teachers have on student achievement, the potential for teachers to reduce the achievement gap, and the high rate of teacher attrition, a great deal of research has been conducted on teacher recruitment and retention. Unfortunately, this body of research, while substantial, falls short of answering key practical questions needed to transform research into policy. In particular, the current literature does not adequately address how teachers value different job-related factors when evaluating potential employment opportunities. This is a result of two key weaknesses in the existing literature: a limited focus on how teachers choose between competing school options and a lack of studies that aim to meaningfully quantify the relative value of different working conditions.

This study aims to address these gaps in the existing literature by allowing teachers to choose between hypothetical sets of schools using an Adaptive Choice-Based Conjoint Analysis (Johnson & Orme, 2007) survey. This method systematically varies conditions among the choices offered and estimates the value placed by individual teachers on individual job-related factors. This process allows for an answer to the question: What value, if any, do teachers place on select job-related factors? Additionally, through the collection of relevant demographic information, further investigation can determine whether valuations vary systematically across teacher contexts or backgrounds.

This study aims to advance the existing teacher recruitment and retention literature by directly measuring how teachers utilize their preferences when they evaluate potential employment opportunities. The results of this study provide relevant and easy to understand measures of relative importance of the various factors studied. This study extends the existing research into teacher preferences in a way that can be effectively utilized by administrators and policymakers. Administrators and policymakers can use the outcomes of this research to inform changes in school desirability relative to other schools and to predict teachers' responses to changes in policies by, for example, informing cost-benefit analyses related to working conditions or salary structure changes within their locus of control. Additionally, administrators can use these results to develop efficient incentives for recruiting and retaining the best teachers for their schools. By understanding how teachers value incentives, schools serving disadvantaged student populations can optimize their work environments to compensate teachers for more challenging teaching assignments. Undertaking this effort can assist administrators in retaining highly skilled teachers and potentially increasing the

achievement of their students. Moreover, this study aims to quantify the amount of money needed to properly compensate a teacher for working in what is perceived to be a more challenging environment. This outcome can guide policymakers to the determination of an appropriate compensation level for teaching in these hard-to-staff schools. As a result, this research has the potential to make a meaningful impact on student achievement in hard-to-staff schools and reduce the component of the educational achievement gap attributable to staffing inequities.

Specifically, this study addresses two key research questions. First, I identify the value placed by teachers in this sample on salary and 13 non-monetary factors both in relative terms and, for the non-monetary factors, in dollar-equivalent terms. Second, I explore the extent to which these valuations vary across the entire sample as well as with respect to teacher demographic and context factors. This study finds that while salary is the most important factor, there are meaningful values placed on non-monetary factors, allowing policymakers and administrators to manipulate the desirability of schools through levers other than salary. Additionally, this study finds that values placed on these factors vary based on respondent demographic and contextual factors, resulting in different policy recommendations for administrators operating within different contexts.

Review of the Literature

It is well accepted that the teacher is the school factor with the greatest potential influence on student achievement. This contention has been a part of the canon of educational research for so long that it is no longer challenged. Examples of prominent researchers describing this relationship include Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin (1998), Darling-Hammond (2003), Kane and Staiger (2008), Sanders and Rivers (1996), Sanders et al. (1997), and Ferguson (1991). In addition to studies showing links between student achievement and general teacher effects, many studies show the connection between specific teacher quality characteristics and student outcomes (e.g., Ballou & Podgursky, 1997; Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2009; Ferguson & Brown, 2000; Goldhaber, 2002; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001). Much of the debate today resides not with whether or not teachers impact student achievement, but whether or not schools can compensate for out-of-school factors associated with student performance, such as income inequality issues (Berliner, 2013). Because schools may not be positioned to directly influence their broader socio-cultural context in a transformative way, focusing on recruiting and retaining the highest-quality teaching candidates is of great importance to schools.

The existing teacher recruitment and retention literature is primarily focused on identifying factors that increase teacher retention. A key finding of this body of literature is that monetary factors impact teacher recruitment and retention. This finding is cited in reviews of the existing literature (Kelley & Finnegan, 2004; Lynch, 2012) as well as most individual studies in this field. There are some studies that have found no impact of compensation on retention (e.g., Cowen & Winters, 2013; Hancock & Scherff, 2010), but salary is generally considered to be an important factor influencing teacher recruitment and retention. In addition, a large number of non-monetary factors have been found to influence teacher recruitment and retention, such as professional development (e.g., Elfers, Plecki, & Knapp, 2006; Ingersoll & May, 2012), administrator support (e.g., Ado, 2013; Cannata, 2010), class size (e.g., Horng, 2009; Lankford et al., 2002), student demographic factors (e.g., Feng, 2010; Guarino, Brown, & Wyse, 2011), organizational fit (e.g., Cannata, 2010; Player, Youngs, Perrone, & Grogan, 2017), curricular autonomy (e.g., Bunn & Wake, 2015; Ingersoll & May, 2012), and others.

Despite a great deal of literature that identifies factors influencing teacher recruitment and retention, it is much more challenging to find research that evaluates the relative importance of

those factors. The existing literature suffers from two primary limitations that make it challenging to understand how teachers evaluate potential schools. The first is that many studies do not attempt to rank the importance of factors and those that do generate ranks typically use methods that can be challenging to derive action from or that do not get at the nuanced choices teachers are making. For example, studies that report the percentage of participants citing a particular factor as important are useful, but do not replicate the real-world experience of choosing between a fixed number of options nor do they provide insight into how important the factors are. The second limitation is that the vast majority of studies either focus on factors influencing retention or job satisfaction in the abstract or look at survey responses associated with certain movements, rather than understanding how teachers choose between competing employment opportunities. For example, many studies utilizing the School and Staffing Survey and Teacher Follow-up Survey (such as Jackson, 2012) look for how answers on a survey are different between teachers who indicate staying in their teaching role as opposed to changing schools or exiting the profession. These studies can capture the impact of factors unrelated to teacher preferences, such as movements due to retirement and family relocations and choices to remain in an undesirable school for reasons unrelated to school quality. In these cases, it is impossible to know how conditions described on the survey contributed or not to the decisions teachers made about staying at their schools, moving between schools/district, or leaving the career. While these studies provide a great deal of information on what matters to teachers, it is more challenging to know how much these factors matter. These gaps justify the need for studies that focus on how teachers evaluate the desirability of schools and studies that result in easy-to-understand and actionable measures of factor importance and valuation. A few studies tried to fill this gap, but they suffer from their own limitations, discussed below.

There are a few studies in the literature that have attempted to quantify trade-offs that teachers are making when choosing among employment options. One is Hanushek, Kain, O'Brien, and Rivkin (2005), which uses statistics from the Texas Schools Project to attempt to estimate the amount of "Combat Pay" needed to overcome differences between schools based on non-monetary differences. The primary limitation of this approach is that it typically involves predicting movements based on regression outcomes of variables such as school demographics and average salaries, rather than observing individual teacher behavior. However, the attempt is promising because it allows for comparison of factors in a well-understood metric, that of salary dollars.

Two more promising studies are those done by Horng (2009) and Robinson (2012). Each of these studies used Adaptive Conjoint Analysis to attempt to find the relative importance of different factors when teachers made trade-offs between hypothetical schools. These studies each resulted in importance values of each factor analyzed, allowing for the direct comparison of the impact of each factor in the teacher's (hypothetical) labor market decision. Unfortunately, each of these studies is limited in its sample. Robinson (2012) only evaluated the preferences of pre-service music teachers, while Horng (2009) looked only at elementary school teachers within a single district. Additionally, while Horng noted some differences in importance scores based on demographic characteristics, there was not a robust analysis of these differences. Despite their limitations, these two studies provide useful guides for future research into the question of how much teachers value non-monetary factors and influence the design of the present study.

Study Methodology and Analytic Approach

This study makes use of an Adaptive Choice-Based Conjoint analysis. This method is an adaptive survey tool used to determine the value that individual teachers place on different school characteristics. The use of this tool adds a unique contribution to the important and well-established

field of teacher recruitment and retention. Specifically, this study allows for a better understanding of how teachers choose between competing school options and how they value different working conditions and school characteristics. This unique tool and the intuitive results it produces can advance the field of teacher recruitment and retention by delivering meaningful and actionable results to researchers, policymakers, and administrators.

Study Design

This study used an Embedded Mixed Method design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) utilizing Adaptive Choice-Based Conjoint Analysis (ACBC). This is similar to the procedure used by Horng (2009) and Robinson (2012), described above. One key difference between the ACBC methodology used in this study and the Adaptive Conjoint Analysis (ACA) methodology used in the prior studies is the introduction of a forced choice between competing options, rather than a ranking of a single option (Johnson, Huber, & Bacon, 2003), which more closely mimics the choice teachers face in the labor market.

The survey instrument utilized consists of three key components: an initial demographic survey, the Adaptive Choice-Based Conjoint Analysis, and an embedded qualitative component.

Demographic survey. The initial demographic survey collected personal characteristics that may be important covariates with the preference data collected in the ACBC survey. This section was also used to screen out respondents who were not a part of the target population and to evaluate the similarity of the survey sample to the broader population of interest. The demographic questions address the most commonly cited personal and qualification/contextual factors that were found to be associated with teacher preferences or movements in the literature review. Five personal factors were included in this study: age, teaching experience, race, gender, and marital status as well as six professional characteristics: preparation pathway; highest degree earned; current subject area; and whether the current school is a middle vs. high school; is urban, suburban, or rural; and is a charter or district school.

ACBC survey. The second component of the survey instrument is the Adaptive Choice-Based Conjoint Analysis (ACBC) (Johnson & Orme, 2007). This consists of an adaptive survey with four stages, which will be described below in the order in which they are encountered by a respondent. The survey aims to evaluate the relative importance of different factors to each respondent by determining the utility placed on different levels of those factors.

ACBC surveys require a focus on a limited number of factors, limited to 14 factors for this study. The factors investigated in this study are: (1) Salary; (2) Job Security; (3) School Grade; (4) Student SES; (5) Student Race; (6) Planning Time; (7) Class Size; (8) Curricular Autonomy; (9) Principal Support; (10) Influence over Policies; (11) Opportunities for Collaboration; (12) Professional Development and Mentoring; (13) Mission and Vision Alignment (“Organizational Fit”); and (14) Teaching Assignment. These factors chosen by the researcher to be investigated in this study were informed by the results of the literature review and a pilot study conducted in 2016. This pilot study was conducted with a larger set of potential factors commonly cited in the literature and was used to reduce the number of factors down to a more manageable size by removing those that were found to be of relatively low importance by the pilot group and to adjust levels of the factors according to participant feedback. A limitation of any ACBC study is that not all possibly relevant factors can be considered, however, the specific factors investigated in this study are ones that have strong theoretical support, strong support in the literature, and/or strong support from the pilot study. An additional limitation is that respondents may use certain conditions as proxies for others that are not measured; for example, if Student SES is inferred by respondents to be a proxy

for resources, the inclusion or exclusion of resources as a factor in the study will influence the importance of Student SES.

Build Your Own. In the first stage of the ACBC survey, respondents build their ideal school and working conditions by selecting the preferred level of each factor. For example, the survey asks a respondent to choose his/her preferred level of the factor of Job Security from the following options: “Tenure is available and likely”; “Tenure is available, but unlikely”; and “Tenure is unavailable”. A complete list of factors and the level of each factor available to respondents can be found in the Appendix. The only factor where participants do not select a preferred level is the salary factor. The factors that are obviously ordinal, including class size, student SES, student race, and school achievement, are displayed in order from lowest numeric value to highest numeric value or, in the case of School Achievement, from A to F. Levels of the other factors were fixed for all participants, but randomized when generating the survey. This decision regarding ordinality of a factor was also reflected in the settings of the survey to improve its estimates of utility by, for example, allowing a respondent to indicate that a school letter grade less than a C was unacceptable (Sawtooth Software, 2018).

Screening. Next, the survey develops a series of hypothetical schools and displays them five at a time. For each, respondents are asked whether they would consider choosing to work in one of these schools. This task is repeated a total of 10 times, so that, in aggregate, a respondent has considered 50 potential schools. Throughout, in order to refine the options presented, the respondent is permitted to select a level of a factor as a “must have” or “unacceptable”; for ordinal and continuous factors (salary), greater than and less than logic is employed. For example, a respondent may have the opportunity to say that a class size greater than 30 students is unacceptable. The survey tool uses the responses to which schools are potentially viable to generate the set of hypothetical schools to consider for this particular individual.

Choice tasks. Using the responses from the screening task described above, the survey adaptively generates sets of three hypothetical schools with combinations of desirable and undesirable factors. For each set, the survey asks the respondent to choose the most desirable of the three. Each choice task varies a subset of the factors, making any two choices in the task more similar than not. By displaying the “constants”, the task forces an individual to consider the totality of the school environments that they are considering while directing attention to the key differences. Forcing a choice mimics the reality teachers face with finite opportunities. This task is repeated up to 12 times.

Calibration stage. The final stage of the ACBC survey is a calibration stage that presents respondents with a single hypothetical school and asks how likely they would be to take a position at that hypothetical school. Respondents respond using a Likert scale with the following options: “Definitely Would”; “Probably Would”; “Might or Might Not”; “Probably Would Not”; “Definitely Would Not”. This task is repeated up to six times per survey. The survey uses this stage to refine and calibrate the utility values calculated through the prior portions of the survey.

Embedded Qualitative Strand. Throughout the screening and choice tasks process, open-ended response prompts are intermittently included that ask respondents to reflect on the reason for their decisions. The results of this qualitative data are not addressed in this paper.

Population

The population surveyed included secondary teachers in public schools within the state of Utah who were a teacher of record during the 2016-17 school year. The focus is necessarily limited to a subset of teachers due to mixed methods nature of the broader study. When choosing a subset of teachers to investigate, the secondary level was chosen because research that shows that

secondary school teachers exhibit higher degrees of attrition than elementary school teachers (Keigher, 2010), as well as the belief that secondary and elementary school teachers make up two distinct labor markets. With different preparation programs and alternative career opportunities, it is reasonable to predict that these sets of teachers would have different sets of values. In particular, the subject area expertise of secondary teachers generates different alternative career opportunities for secondary teachers that may influence responses. Additionally, the context of a middle school and high school is different from that of an elementary school and the job expectations for the teachers are often different.

Utah teachers are targeted in part because it is a convenience sample, as it is the state where the researcher is located. Utah is an under-studied state, as compared to states such as Texas and North Carolina, for example. This is likely due to its lack of large data sets available. Increasing the geographic diversity of studies investigating teacher recruitment and retention is of value to the field.

The population includes teachers in certified areas, including special education, but excludes paraprofessionals, teachers' aides, media specialists, and similar positions. This population, as of the 2015-2016 school year, consisted of 14,941 individuals. Due to the use of Bayesian analysis (described below), a power analysis is not appropriate for the primary means of analysis. However, Sawtooth Software, the makers of the adaptive survey software, recommend using samples on the order of approximately 1,000 respondents at a minimum for studies of this type, with all subgroups at a minimum level of 200 individuals (Orme, 2010).

Participant Recruitment

Participants were recruited using publicly available email addresses from school websites of secondary schools in the state of Utah¹. An attempt was made to only collect email addresses of those in the target population, excluding non-instructional staff and teachers of elementary classes. All email addresses were collected during the fall of the 2016-17 school year (October to January). In total, 14,425 email addresses were collected. There were a minority of schools that did not have emails publicly available or did not have complete and active websites, causing them to be excluded from the set of possible participants. Participants were invited to participate in the survey over the course of a five-week period beginning in late April 2017. Of 14,425 emails collected, 629 were returned as invalid, leaving 13,769 possible respondents. Reminder emails were sent approximately every week, with participants having the option of unsubscribing from reminder emails. In total, participants were contacted up to four times over the course of the 5-week period. Participants were invited to participate in a drawing for one of three \$50 e-gift cards.

Survey Respondents

The survey was successfully distributed to 13,769 possible participants and received 2,228 complete responses for a response rate of 16.1%; those that did not complete the survey were dropped from the sample. The median response time was approximately 37 minutes, indicating that the respondents took the survey seriously, although at that length, survey fatigue must be considered a possible limitation. Of the 2,228 respondents, 16 were identified as being not a part of the target audience and were excluded. For example, some individuals who indicated their subject area as "elementary" or "guidance counselor" were removed from the study results before conducting any analyses. This results in a final sample of 2,212 individuals, which makes up approximately 14.8% of the target population. Complete demographic information was received from 2,167 individuals, allowing for an analysis of key demographic differences in the importance of different factors.

¹ IRB approval was solicited and received from the author's institution at the time of the research.

Unfortunately, other key demographics were not sampled in enough abundance to meaningfully analyze, such as teacher race.

In order to understand how the study sample compares with the target population, a summary of the demographic information of the 2,212 participants is shown in Table 1. While the state of Utah does not publish teacher demographics, salary and teaching context (charter vs. district) are available. Approximately 11.7% of secondary teachers in the state of Utah teach in charter schools, indicating that this sample over-weighted with charter school teachers at 16.2%. The average salary among all teachers in Utah in the 2016-17 school year was approximately \$47,000 (Utah State Office of Education, 2017). If the respondents are averaged according to the center of the \$5,000 salary range they chose as their current salary, the average salary in this sample was \$48,184, approximately 2.5% higher than the average salary in the state.

Table 1

Demographic breakdown of study sample (N=2167)

Demographic	Response	Percentage in sample
Gender	Male	34%
	Female	66%
Type of School	District	83.2%
	Charter	16.2%
	Other	0.6%
Level	Middle School	47.6%
	High School	52.4%
Race	American Indian or Alaska Native	1.1%
	Asian	1.1%
	Black or African American	0.5%
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.6%
	White	97.6%
Ethnicity	Hispanic or Latino	2.4%
	Not Hispanic or Latino	97.6%
Age	Median	42
Years' Experience	Median	10
Highest Education	Associates	0.3%
	Bachelor's Degree	45.7%
	Masters	49.5%
	PhD/EdD	1.6%
	Other Graduate	0.5%
	Other	2.4%
Salary	Less than \$30,000	3.6%
	\$30,000-\$34,999	10.0%
	\$35,000-\$39,999	16.0%
	\$40,000-\$44,999	16.4%
	\$45,000-\$49,999	12.0%
	\$50,000-\$54,999	12.6%
	\$55,000-\$59,999	10.5%
	\$60,000-\$64,999	9.7%
	\$65,000-\$69,999	4.6%
	\$70,000-\$74,999	2.5%
	\$75,000-\$79,999	1.0%
	\$80,000-\$84,999	0.5%
	\$85,000 or more	0.6%

Table 1 cont.

Demographic breakdown of study sample (N=2167)

Demographic	Response	Percentage in sample
Married	Yes	77.2%
	No	22.8%
Location	Urban	19.7%
	Suburban	57.9%
	Rural	22.4%
Subject Area	English	17.1%
	Social Science	10.5%
	Mathematics	16.7%
	Science	13.9%
	PE/Health	0.4%
	Fine Arts	0.8%
	CTE	10.6%
	Special Education	9.5%
	Other	9.3%

Analyses

The ACBC tool generates individual parameter estimates of utility values for each level of each factor for every individual who completes the survey. This utility value is a unit-less measure, where positive utility values indicate added value and where the range between the best and the worst-rated level of a given factor indicates the relative importance of that factor. Assuming that value is fungible, a dollar value for each “utility point” can be calculated based on the utility estimates of different levels of salary. Consequently, that the utility value of money is constant across salary ranges is an assumption worthy of future investigation. Making this assumption allows for the calculation of the monetary value placed by every respondent on each level of the different factors.

The software utilizes Hierarchical Bayesian (HB) analysis to estimate the mean utility value of each level of a factor both for individuals and across the entire sample (Sawtooth Software, 2016, 2018). To do this, the software estimates part worths that represent the value placed on a particular level of each factor for each individual as well as an estimate of a single coefficient for a linear salary function. These estimates are generated using a HB model. At the higher level, an assumption is made that individual part worths and the salary coefficient are best fit to a multivariate normal distribution. At the lower level, the probability of choosing a particular alternative given an individual’s part worths and salary coefficient are fit to a multinomial logit model (Sawtooth Software, 2016). The Metropolis Hastings algorithm is used to update priors and was run for 10,000 iterations after a burn-in of 10,000 iterations. The use of HB provides a conclusion that has significantly more value to a policymaker or an administrator than the conclusions derived using frequentist statistics by making parameter estimates. Additionally, the HB analysis has the practical benefit of “borrowing” information from other individuals to improve individual utility estimates (Orme, 2000). The HB analysis allows for parameter estimates of relative value, relative importance, and, using the calculation described above, dollar value. Simple and multiple regression were used to determine relationships among individual utility values and covariates from the demographic survey.

Importance of Salary and Non-Monetary Factors

This study supports the findings in the existing literature that, while salary matters, other factors matter as well. Figure 1 shows the utility value placed on each level of non-monetary factors

investigated in this study. Because all factors have levels with differential utility, it is clear that these non-monetary factors are influencing the choices made by respondents. It is clear from Figure 1 that salary has a large impact on respondents' choices due to the high utility difference between the two different options displayed. The factor with the next most extreme difference in utility between its least and most desirable factor is teaching assignment, although the utility value difference is less than half that that is seen with salary.

Relative Importance of Monetary and Non-Monetary Job Factors

A measure of importance was calculated for each individual participant for each factor. This importance value is a measure of the difference in utility value between the most and least desirable level of a particular factor. The importance value is positive and linear; a factor with an importance level of 4.0 is interpreted as being twice as important as a factor with an importance level of 2.0. Table 2 shows the average importance value across the full sample of 2,212 respondents of each factor investigated. Those factors with a different Importance Rank had average importances that were statistically significantly different from the prior most highly ranked factor (one-tailed *t*-test; $\alpha=0.05$). These results indicate that while salary is by far the most important factor, there is value placed on the non-monetary factors as well, with job assignment and class size being most important. The most important non-monetary factor, assignment, was approximately three times as important as the least important factor and all non-monetary factors were less than half the importance of salary. The least important factors were those related to student demographics, with student race and SES being identified as the two least important factors. School achievement, on the other hand, is tied (with curricular autonomy) for the third most-important non-monetary factor, despite the fact that it is often perceived to be related to student demographic factors. This is discussed further below.

Table 2

Mean and standard deviation of importance measures for each of the 14 investigated factors

Importance Rank	Factor	Mean Importance	Standard Deviation of Importance Values
1	Salary	19.53	11.78
2	Assignment	9.56	5.28
3	Class Size	8.83	5.02
4	Curricular Autonomy	7.86	4.31
4	School Achievement	7.83	4.38
6	Principal Support	7.41	3.69
7	Organizational Fit	6.59	3.25
8	Professional Development and Mentoring	5.69	2.39
8	Planning Time	5.62	3.09
10	Opportunities for Collaboration	4.93	2.52
11	Influence over Policies	4.48	2.40
11	Job Security	4.39	3.23
13	Student SES	3.89	1.79
14	Student Race	3.40	1.56

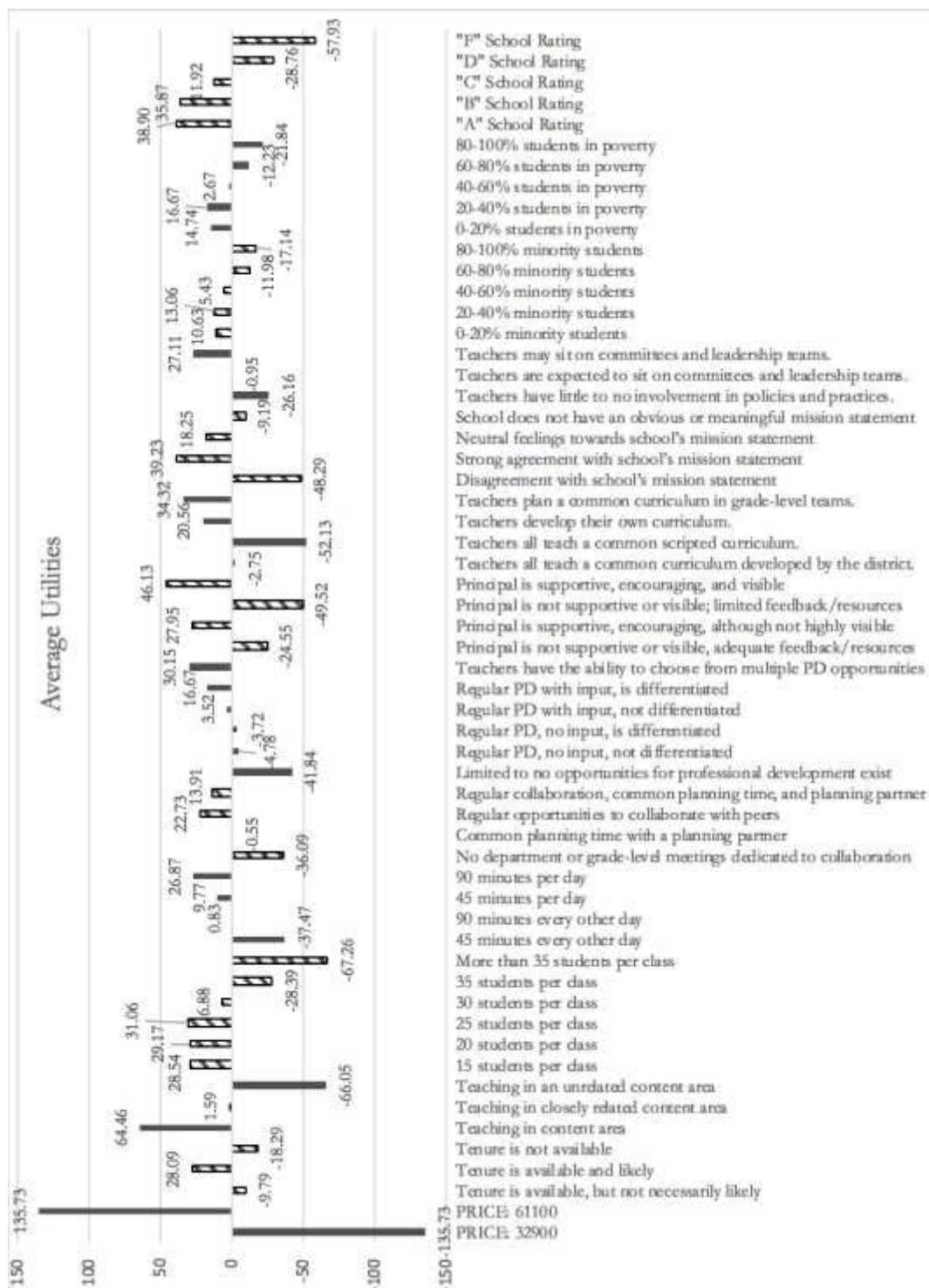


Figure 1. Average utility value for each level of each factor of the 2212 respondents.
Note: Full factor level descriptions can be found in Appendix A.

Another way of understanding importance in this study is how many individuals had a given factor as the factor with the greatest importance. Table 3 displays the number of individuals for whom each factor was the most important. Nearly 60% of respondents had salary as the factor with the highest level of performance, with each of the other factors determined to be the most important by less than 13% of the study participants. Half of the factors were found to be the most important to less than 1% of study participants. Despite these factors rarely, if ever, being found to be the most important factor, they do have non-zero importance values, indicating that teachers in this study are using these factors to make decisions. This result indicates that studies that focus on only the most important factors for teachers are likely to miss many relevant factors that are still weighed by teachers.

Table 3

Frequency of each factor being the factor with the highest importance for an individual

Factor	Respondents for whom it is the most important factor	Percentage of sample for whom it is the most important factor
Salary	1288	58.2%
Assignment	286	12.9%
Class Size	207	9.4%
Curricular Autonomy	138	6.2%
School Achievement	114	5.2%
Principal Support	89	4.0%
Organizational Fit	44	2.0%
Planning Time	18	0.8%
Job Security	14	0.6%
Opportunities for Collaboration	6	0.3%
Professional Development	4	0.2%
Influence over Policies	4	0.2%
Student SES	0	0.0%
Student Race	0	0.0%

Monetary Value Placed on Non-Monetary Factors

In addition to generating the relative importance of each factor, utility values can be used to estimate a monetary value placed on the change between any two levels of a factor. These values represent an estimate of the amount of money it would take to compensate a teacher for moving from a more desirable to a less desirable level of a factor, or vice versa. Estimates of these values were derived for each individual by comparing the utility value difference between levels of a single factor with the utility value assigned to differences in salary. The values were then shifted so that the most commonly preferred level of each factor was associated with a monetary value of \$0 for each individual and then a median value for the sample was found. Table 4 provides select results of this analysis.

Table 4

Median monetary value estimated for a change in level of select factors

Level	Preferred Level of Same Factor	Difference in value from preferred level to given level of a factor
Tenure is unavailable	Tenure is available and likely	\$3,919
Tenure is available, but unlikely	Tenure is available and likely	\$3,177
Teaching outside content area	Teaching in content area	\$12,608
Teaching in closely-related content area	Teaching in content area	\$5,902
15 students per class	25 students per class	\$561
20 students per class	25 students per class	\$250
30 students per class	25 students per class	\$2,281
35 students per class	25 students per class	\$5,717
>35 students per class	25 students per class	\$9,896
45 minutes of daily planning time	90 minutes of daily planning time	\$1,630
45 minutes of planning time every other day	90 minutes of daily planning time	\$6,227
No department or grade-level meetings dedicated to collaboration	Regular opportunities to collaborate with peers in grade-level and department meetings	\$5,551
Teachers all teach a common scripted curriculum purchased by the district	Teachers plan a common curriculum in grade-level teams	\$8,082
School does not have an obvious or meaningful mission statement	Strong agreement with school's mission statement	\$4,551
Disagreement with school's mission statement	Strong agreement with school's mission statement	\$8,448
80-100% students in poverty	20-40% students in poverty	\$3,822
"B" School Rating	"A" School Rating	\$259
"C" School Rating	"A" School Rating	\$2,505
"D" School Rating	"A" School Rating	\$6,291
"F" School Rating	"A" School Rating	\$9,307

In Table 4, the preferred level is the level with the highest average utility value among all respondents. For example, serving in a school that had 20-40% of its students in poverty is preferable to serving in a school where less than 20% of the students are in poverty. Also, classes of 25 students were preferable to classes of 15 or 20 students. The salary drag represents the salary amount equivalent to the decrease in utility of moving from the preferred level of a factor to the level under consideration. Alternatively, it can be thought of as the equivalent salary premium for changing from a given level to the preferred level. Within a given factor, the difference between the salary drag for two different levels of a factor is equal to the salary drag or premium of moving between those two factors. For example, decreasing from 20 students per class to 15 is equivalent to a salary drag of \$311 (\$561-\$250). These values represent the amount of salary needed to make a median teacher indifferent as to a change from one condition to another.

As would be expected from the result that assignment was the most important non-monetary factor, the difference between teaching in content area and teaching out of content area is equivalent to a change in salary of \$12,608, the highest value in the table. Similarly, the high

importance of curricular autonomy is reflected in the high salary drag associated with teaching a scripted curriculum; compared to the preferred condition of developing curriculum in grade-level teams, being forced to teach a scripted curriculum is equivalent to a loss of \$8,082 in salary. These salary drags can also be thought of as a salary premium for shifting to a preferred level of a factor. For example, providing regular opportunities for collaboration is equivalent to increasing salaries by \$5,551, and having a mission statement teachers agree with is worth \$4,551 over having no mission statement. However, adding a mission statement that teachers disagree with is equivalent to a salary drag of \$3,889; this is calculated as the difference between the drag associated with no mission statement and with a mission statement the respondent disagrees with.

Looking at multiple levels within the same factor is revealing. Class size is a particularly interesting example. While 25 students is the preferred level, the salary drag associated with increasing class sizes gets increasingly severe as the class size is increased beyond 30 students. Moving from 25 to 30 students is equivalent to a salary drag of \$2,281 but adding 5 more to move from 30 to 35 is equivalent to a salary drag of \$3,436 and any increases beyond that are equivalent to a salary drag of \$4,179. Similarly, while going from an “A”-rated school to a “B”-rated school only represents a salary drag of \$259, going from an “A”- to a “D”- or “F”-rated school represent a salary drag of \$6,291 and \$9,307, respectively. Two other examples of cases where shifts between different levels of a factor are particularly informative are for the job security and planning time factors. Having tenure be available and likely is worth \$3,919 over having it be unavailable; however, having it available, but unlikely to be received is only worth \$742 over not having it at all. With planning time, doubling planning time from 45 minutes per day to 90 minutes per day is only equivalent to a salary premium of \$1,630, but decreasing it to 45 minutes every other day from 45 minutes every day is equivalent to a drag of \$4,593. The fact that the importance of a factor depends on what possible levels of that factor are under consideration is an important finding and demonstrates the importance of investigating the details of the conditions teachers cite as influencing their labor market decisions.

The values Table 4 compare favorably to the limited existing literature, lending support to the validity of these results. Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin (2004b) found a salary incentive of 9-43% needed to incentivize moving from a suburban school to a high-minority, low-performing urban school. Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2003) found average incentives of \$10,000 to \$16,000 needed to equalize the desirability of suburban and urban schools in New York metropolitan areas. Holding student race constant, moving from an A-rated school with 20-40% low-income students to an F-rated school with 80-100% low-income students would be equivalent to a salary loss of \$13,129 or 28% of an average teacher’s salary according to the results of this study. This indicates that the results described above are in line with those found in prior studies and lends support to the valuations of other factors that are estimated for the first time in this study.

Variation in Results

As would be expected, there is substantial variation in the importance individual teachers place on each of the factors investigated. Table 2 displays the standard deviation of the importances for the set of teachers surveyed. As can be seen in this table, the values of greatest average importance also saw the largest variation in importance values. For example, salary was both the most important factor and the factor with the greatest variation in importance values. The results in Table 2 also show that some factors have particularly high or low variation relative to their average importance. While there is a definite trend between average importance and variation, the variation in importance of the factor of job security is very high relative to its average importance, while the

variation within professional development and mentoring and, to a lesser extent, principal support, is relatively low.

In addition to investigating variance across the sample, examining the correlations between individual importance values is revealing. Table 5 shows a correlation table between importance values for the 2,212 participants. From the table, it is striking the extent to which a high importance on salary has a negative association with all other factors, particularly those related to school supports such as collaboration, professional development, and principal support. This would seem to indicate that there are sets of individuals who are more and less responsive to non-monetary factors as a whole. It is also notable that importances for student race and SES and school achievement are highly correlated.

Demographic Correlations

For all demographic analyses, a few modifications were made to the data set for ease of analysis and to obey recommendations regarding sample sizes. In order to meet the minimum subset size of 200 recommended by Sawtooth (Orme, 2010), no analyses by race or ethnicity were possible. Additionally, some categories needed to be condensed, such as turning different levels of educational achievement into a dichotomous graduate school vs. no graduate school variable. Additionally, there was a reduction in the number of subject areas analyzed, with less frequently cited categories condensed to an “other” representing non-core, non-special education teachers. Those teachers citing many subjects that crossed into multiple of the reduced categories were excluded as there were not enough “multiple subject areas” respondents to constitute a new category.

The current salary demographic question was also modified to ease the interpretation of results. The salary categories were reduced by condensing less than \$30,000 and \$30,000-\$34,999 to less than \$35,000 and upper levels of salary into a greater than \$65,000 bin. Separately, the salary measure was converted to a continuous measure. This modification allows for more intuitive interpretation of results seen than treating salary as a categorical as it was collected. The conversion from categorical to continuous variable was accomplished by assigning each member of a salary range bin an approximate salary at the center of the bin (ex. All respondents who reported a salary of \$40,000-\$44,999 were assigned a salary of \$42,500). On the extremes, all less than 30,000 respondents were assigned a salary of \$27,500 and those over \$85,000 were assigned a salary of \$87,500. Finally, preparation pathway, such as whether a teacher received a Bachelor’s degree in education or was in an alternative route to licensure program, was not analyzed due to confusion over the options provided that was communicated by a number of respondents in their open-ended responses or in emails to the researcher.

Demographic analyses were only conducted on those with complete demographic responses. This reduced the sample to 2,166 individuals. This more-limited sample is only utilized for the results in this particular section.

Table 6 displays the results of running simple regressions ($\alpha=0.05$) of the demographic characteristics on the utility value of each factor. It should be noted that some of the demographic factors were highly correlated. In particular, age and experience ($r=0.74$), age and current salary ($r=0.55$), and experience and current salary ($r=0.70$). Unsurprisingly, age and experience are also correlated with educational attainment, with those with graduate degrees being on average years older with 6.4 more years’ experience and making on average nearly \$12,000 more per year.

Table 6
Statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) relationships between teacher demographics and factor importance values as determined by simple regression

Demographic Factor	Comparison Group	Salary	Tenure	Assignment	Class Size	Planning Time	Collaboration	Professional Development	Principal Support	Autonomy	Org. Fit	Influence Over Policy	Student Race	Student SES	School Grade
Subject (Math Reference Group)	English			-.34***	-.21***					.57***		.16*			
	Science			-.15*			-.23*		-.17*	.27***					
	Social Science	.22**		-.28***	-.37***		-.29***		-.16*	.31***	-.19*	.18*			
	Other		.13*		-.33***		-.31***			.20**		.15*			.19***
MS (vs HS)	Special Ed		.20*	-.45***	.47***	-.21*		.18*		-.18*			-.22*		
		-.12**		-.10*	.13**	-.24***	.15***	.10*	.13**		.10*				.15***
District (vs Charter)		.28**	.46***		.51***								.15*		
Location (Suburban reference group)	Rural		.15*	-.19***	.33***			.13*	.14*	-.13*					
	Urban		.17*		.20***						-.54***		-.18**		-.27***
Years' Experience		.21***	.12***	-.07***	-.14***	-.05*	-.13***	-.10***	-.07**	-.09***	-.17***			.26***	
Graduate Degree (vs. Non)		.47***	.10*	-.10*	-.21***	-.11**	-.23***	-.23***	-.17***	-.10*	-.26***	-.10*			-.11*
Age		.14***	.09***	-.10***	-.05*	-.09***	-.10***	-.06**		-.08***	-.09***		.05*		
Male (vs. Female)		.55***		-.17***	-.13**		-.33***	-.29***	-.31***	-.16***	-.32***	-.23***	.13**		
Married (vs. unmarried)		.11*				-.10*				-.17***				.14*	.12*
Current Salary (1000s of dollars)		.30***	.12***	-.08***	-.18***	-.05*	-.16***	-.15***	-.12***	-.08***	-.19***				

Note: All numeric values are standardized. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Table 6 cont.
Statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) relationships between teacher demographics and factor importance values as determined by simple regression

Factor	Salary	Job Security	Assignment	Class Size	Planning Time	Collaboration	Professional Development	Principal Support	Autonomy	Organizational Fit	Influence over Policy	Student Race	Student SES	School Achievement
Salary	1.00													
Job Security	-.08	1.00												
Assignment	-.30	-.08	1.00											
Class Size	-.22	-.06	-.09	1.00										
Planning Time	-.09	-.04	.05	.04	1.00									
Collaboration	-.47	-.08	.03	-.05	-.05	1.00								
Professional Development	-.53	.01	-.02	-.02	-.14	.47	1.00							
Principal Support	-.45	-.04	.06	.00	-.13	.37	.39	1.00						
Autonomy	-.30	-.10	.09	-.12	-.03	.09	.10	.02	1.00					
Organizational Fit	-.46	-.16	-.06	.04	-.06	.33	.38	.27	.07	1.00				
Influence over Policy	-.38	-.01	-.09	-.09	-.07	.36	.41	.29	.12	.22	1.00			
Student Race	-.05	.01	-.08	-.15	-.10	-.18	-.16	-.13	-.13	-.11	-.14	1.00		
Student SES	-.08	-.04	-.07	-.11	-.07	-.15	-.15	-.18	-.14	-.13	-.13	.64	1.00	
School Achievement	-.13	-.01	-.18	-.16	-.13	-.16	-.08	-.12	-.17	-.05	-.12	.44	.48	1.00

Key findings from this portion of the study include: (1) more-experienced, higher-paid teachers care substantially more about salary and substantially less about nearly all non-monetary factors than less-experienced and lower-paid teachers and (2) teacher preferences are context-dependent, with large differences in preferences among teachers who teach in different types of schools and teaching different subject areas.

Salary and Experience. As noted above, experience and current salary are correlated, so it is not surprising to see similar relationships between each of these demographic factors and the importance of each monetary and non-monetary job factor. Increases in salary and experience are associated with an increase in the importance of salary and job security, and a decrease in the importance of every non-monetary factor except for influence over policies, school achievement, student race, and student SES. Thus, once teachers reach a certain level of experience or salary, additional salary and job security are substantially more important than other factors. This is possibly an artifact of the range of salary utilized in this study, which varied from 70% to 130% of the state average salary; for teachers whose current salaries are at or above that upper bound, it is possible that these results overstate their salary sensitivity. There are two additional possible explanations that may explain this phenomenon, which are explored below.

First, it could be hypothesized from these results that teachers are more willing to exchange salary for non-monetary benefits only to the extent that the final salary does not represent a decrease from their current salary. In other words, teachers may be exhibiting loss aversion with regards to salary; they may be unwilling to give up a salary level that has already been attained. Secondly, it is also possible that inexperienced teachers feel as though their success depends on additional supports such as professional development and principal support or easier conditions such as smaller classes or teaching in content area.

In order to determine the relative impact of these related characteristics, multiple regressions were conducted with experience and the linear salary measure predicting the importance of Salary and select non-monetary factors². In the model with the importance of salary as the dependent variable, current salary was predictive of the importance of salary ($p < 0.001$), while experience was not, indicating that the trend towards preferring salary over non-monetary factors at high levels of experience and salary is likely more driven by a loss aversion to salary than by the experience level. A similar result is found with a sample non-monetary factor such as professional development. The importance of professional development is negatively correlated with increases in experience and current salary individually, but when both experience and current salary are used as predictors, current salary remains predictive of the importance of professional development ($p < 0.001$), but experience does not. The same trend held for all non-monetary factors tested, including principal support, opportunities for collaboration, and organizational fit (agreement with the school's mission statement).

Context Factors. A teacher's current context had a large influence on his/her preferences in some cases. Middle school and high school teachers had substantially different preferences in some cases, as did rural, urban, and suburban teachers, charter versus district teachers, and teachers of different subject areas.

Middle-school teachers showed a substantially lower sensitivity to salary than high-school teachers, as well as less concern about teaching assignment or planning time. However, middle school teachers were more concerned with class size, school achievement, and principal support

² Due to the high correlation between these two characteristics, the variance inflation factor (VIF) was measured. The VIF is equal to only 2.0, indicating that there is not a major collinearity concern (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003, pp. 423-424).

than high-school teachers, and somewhat more concerned about collaboration time, organizational fit, and professional development.

The location of the school in which a teacher is currently employed also influenced preferences. As seen in Table 6, compared to teachers in suburban schools, teachers in both urban and rural schools placed a higher importance on job security and a substantially higher importance on class size. Teachers in urban schools were less concerned with student demographics or school achievement and those in rural schools placed a substantially lower importance on teaching assignment, possibly because rural school teachers may sometimes be expected to teach multiple areas in small schools.

District and charter school teachers demonstrated many substantially different preferences. District teachers were substantially more concerned with salary and tenure and substantially less with class size and organizational fit than charter school teachers. Additionally, district teachers placed a somewhat higher importance on student demographic factors than charter school teachers, although there was no significant difference in the importance placed on overall school achievement. All of these findings hold true when controlling for the fact that district school teachers also tend to be more experienced, with the exception of the greater preference for salary which is no longer statistically significant when experience is controlled for.

Teachers of different subject areas were found to have different preferences, particularly with regards to teaching assignment, class size, and curricular autonomy. Math teachers were significantly more concerned with their teaching assignment than all other core subject area teachers. Class size mattered the most to special education teachers, then math teachers, with all other subject areas placing a significantly lower importance on class size than those two groups. Social studies teachers placed the lowest importance on class size of all subject areas. Curricular autonomy was valued less by special education teachers and more by all other teachers compared to math teachers. English teachers in particular placed an especially high importance on curricular autonomy. Social studies teachers placed a substantially higher importance on salary than math teachers, with no other subject areas showing a significant difference.

Discussion

This study is motivated by the challenge that schools, particularly hard-to-staff schools, face in recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers. This challenge not only affects student achievement overall (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Ferguson, 1991; Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004a; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Sanders et al., 1997), but also likely contributes to achievement gaps between different student populations (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Lankford et al., 2002). Therefore, a key aim of this study was to generate actionable outcomes for policymakers and school administrators. Many of the factors studied are ones that are either actionable by school or district administrators or are ones that can be easily identified for use in public policy. The specific results of this study are likely limited in application to secondary teachers and may be limited geographically due to the single state population used; however, it is possible that the general trends hold for teachers in other areas as well. The results of this study provide insight into the critical policy issue of compensating differentials, prescribe different approaches to recruiting different types of teachers, and provide recommendations for developing efficient and/or low-cost school structures that maximize a school's desirability. Additionally, by describing the way in which demographic and contextual factors are related to the importance teachers place on various factors, this study allows for the development of targeted strategies aimed at increasing the recruitment and retention of teachers in particular stages of their careers, in specific content areas, or in different school contexts.

The Need for Supplementing Salaries in Hard to Staff Schools

The concept of compensating differentials, commonly called “combat pay”, has been around for some time in the literature (e.g., Boyd et al., 2003; Hanushek et al., 2004b; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2007), but has been difficult to quantify. The idea that one must compensate teachers additional amounts of money to work in “harder” schools with more low-income or minority students is one of the key arguments for ensuring that these schools have additional funding relative to their whiter and more affluent peers (as contended in Arroyo, 2008). Although this study found that student race and SES were the least important factors, it did find that school achievement was very important. These results would seem to indicate that the primary factor making hard-to-staff schools less desirable is their achievement, rather than student makeup; however, it is very possible that this result demonstrates a social desirability bias in the data. It is also notable that there is a moderately large correlation between the importance placed on school achievement and student demographic figures.

Regardless of whether student or school factors are driving the need for additional salary to compensate teachers for conditions perceived as “more challenging”, it is clear from this study that there is a need for this additional compensation to staff such schools. While the salary difference between an “A”- and a “B”-rated school are minimal (approximately \$250), the salary drag becomes substantial by the time a school is “D”-rated. The median salary drag associated with exchanging an “A”-rated school with an otherwise identical “F”-rated school was approximately \$9,300. The results of this study indicate that the lowest performing schools need funds to be able to compensate their teachers with an additional \$5,000-10,000 each in order to remain competitive with higher-performing schools. Changes in student demographic factors associated with a change in school performance would add to the compensating salary needed, as there were more minor, but still negative, impacts on school desirability based on student demographics independent of school achievement.

Balancing Monetary and Support Factors

One key conclusion from this research is that while teachers broadly exchange monetary and non-monetary benefits, the extent to which they are willing to do so shows high variability among individuals. It is notable that while salary had the highest average importance, it also has by far the highest standard deviation of importance values in this study sample. Importance of salary was moderately negatively correlated with the importance of opportunities for collaboration, professional development, and principal support. These findings indicate that there may be sets of individuals who are more or less likely to be open to exchanging salary for additional supports. This conclusion has implications for administrators in resource-scarce environments who are likely to need to recruit staff who place a high value on these support elements.

Recruiting and retaining experienced vs inexperienced teachers. The dichotomy described above is clearly seen in a dichotomy between inexperienced, lower-paid teachers and their more experienced, higher-paid peers. While inexperienced and lower-paid teachers still place a high value on salary, they also place a substantially higher value on factors that increase teacher capacity and the ease of the job such as class size, opportunities for collaboration, professional development, and principal support. Schools typically aim to increase the average years of experience of their teaching staffs, but, in the face of teacher shortages and limited resources, it is important to understand that the ability to compensate teachers for less competitive salaries with improved working conditions may be most effective with lower paid and inexperienced teachers. Recruiting and retaining the most experienced teachers is likely to require increases in salary and is less likely to be made up for by improving working conditions or other non-monetary job factors. One exception

to this is that the most experienced teachers do place a relatively higher importance on job security than mid-or early-career teachers. For administrators in resource-scarce environments, it may be necessary to emphasize non-monetary benefits with early-career, lower-income teachers and reserve limited monetary resources for incentives for later-career, higher-paid teachers. Additionally, the evidence of loss aversion regarding salary for higher-paid teachers is important for administrators to consider as they aim to recruit and retain highly-paid teachers.

Efficient use of resources. As shown above, the results of this study can inform school leaders on strategic decisions regarding school administration in an effort to ensure that their staffing efficiently utilizes limited resources. The monetary values placed on various levels of many of the factors have implications for administrators seeking to develop a high-quality staff with limited resources.

When considering the structure of the teachers' work day, the value placed on planning time and on opportunities for collaboration are particularly informative. It is clear from these results that providing additional time for teachers to prepare beyond 45 minutes a day is likely not an economical use of a school's resources because doubling the amount of time is worth a median value of \$1,630, likely less than the cost of the additional staffing that increasing prep time would require. However, halving the prep time to 45 minutes every other day is also likely not a good use of the school's resources, as it is equivalent to a salary drag of approximately \$4,600. Administrators can be intentional with that 45 minutes per day by providing opportunities for collaboration at the grade and department level in order to have a positive impact on recruitment and retention.

Similarly, there are limits to the extent to which schools should increase class size in order to maximize teacher recruitment and retention. Based on these results, it is unlikely that a Utah secondary school will be severely penalized for increasing class sizes to 30 students. It is also possible that even the increase from 30-35 students is economical for a school due to the reduction in labor force required. It is possible that savings from this reduction in labor force are larger than increases in the average salary needed to compensate teachers for the larger class sizes. However, due to the exponential increase in salary needed to compensate for increased class sizes beyond 25 students, there are limits to how large a school can make its classes without negatively affecting recruitment and retention. It is also notable that average class sizes of 15 were less desirable than average class sizes of 25. This counterintuitive result may be unique to Utah due to its high average class sizes where such small class sizes are rare, but is worthy of further investigation in other contexts.

Other salient results found in this study suggest that hiring outside of an individual's content area is unlikely to result in stable employment for those with alternative opportunities, even if that content area is closely related. Moreover, the findings indicate that while there is a penalty for not offering tenure, it is less than 9% of the average salary in the state. Interestingly, offering tenure but making it less available is only slightly better to teachers, on average, than not having it available at all, indicating that schools desiring to take advantage of the recruitment and retention benefit of tenure need to make it widely available.

Finally, there are some opportunities to prioritize certain school factors in recruitment of new staff for benefits at very little cost. The results point to the benefit of having a strong mission statement and utilizing it as a key teacher recruitment tool; teachers are likely to self-select out if they do not support the mission statement and it may be a relatively low-cost way of providing something of value to teachers. Schools that provide for some curricular autonomy are likely to be more attractive to prospective teachers if this is clearly marketed. Finally, the high value placed on academic achievement indicates that marketing school achievement should be a key recruitment strategy for administrators of successful schools.

It should be noted that this study cannot account for the extent to which these changes affect other conditions. For example, it is possible that increasing class sizes or offering curricular autonomy results in impacts on school achievement that mitigate or exacerbate the effect of those factors on school desirability. It is also possible that some decisions such as hiring for mission-alignment increases student achievement, increasing the impact of this intervention over that seen in this study.

The importance of context. The demographic trends reveal important implications for administrators and policymakers attempting to improve recruitment and retention among certain sets of teachers or in certain types of schools. For example, the high importance that English teachers place on curricular autonomy relative to other subject areas is likely to be important in recruiting and retaining teachers in that subject area. Similarly, knowing that class size is of a different importance to teachers in different subject areas and in middle school versus high school should change the way in which administrators recruit and retain those teachers and staff their schools.

One of the key takeaways for administrators and policymakers is the differences seen between charter and district employees. Mission/vision alignment and average class sizes are substantially more important to charter school teachers, while district school teachers place a substantially higher value on salary and tenure. This means that district school administrators should be more willing than charter school administrators to utilize instructional staffing dollars to increase average salaries rather than reduce class sizes. Additionally, charter school administrators are more likely to be successful selling a compelling school mission in the absence of competitive salaries than a district school.

Recommendations for Staffing Low-Performing Schools

Taken together, the results of this study provide practical implications for helping low-performing schools with limited resources to overcome the barriers they typically face in recruiting and retaining high quality teachers (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005; Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Feng, 2010; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2007; Ingersoll & May, 2012; Opfer, 2011; Stotko, Ingram, & Beaty-O’Ferrall, 2007). The first, and possibly most important, factor is to provide additional funding on the order of at least \$5,000 to \$10,000 per teacher to low-performing schools in order to increase teacher salaries to compensate for the lower school performance and any student demographic characteristics that are less preferred by the average teacher. Although this may be politically challenging, this study shows the extent of the disadvantage low-performing schools are at when it comes to recruiting and retaining talent without additional funds to allocate to salaries.

It is also important to be aware of factors that mitigate or exacerbate the salary drag associated with working in high-needs schools. For example, having a strong mission statement that teachers agree with as opposed to a non-existent mission statement is worth a salary premium equal to approximately half of the drag of moving from an “A”- to an “F”-rated school. Similarly, strong leadership, professional development, and meaningful collaboration may be able to mitigate some of the impact of low school performance in the absence of additional funding. One factor that requires some caution is the salary drag associated with teaching a scripted curriculum. Compared to the preferred level of the factor presented, requiring a scripted curriculum had a salary drag nearly as large as that of exchanging an “A” school for an “F” school. Given the extent to which failing urban schools tend to utilize scripted curricula (Milner, 2013), they are likely exacerbating their teacher recruitment and retention challenges.

There are many things that administrators of these hard-to-staff schools can do to make the most effective use of their limited resources when recruiting and retaining teachers. Providing 45 minutes of preparation time every day and using that time for grade-level and departmental collaboration, having locally developed curricular materials, and ensuring that teachers are only teaching within their certification areas are likely to make the schools more desirable, while effectively using limited resources. Additionally, having a strong mission statement that is made clear to teachers in the hiring process may limit the pool of possible candidates, but will act as a strong incentive to those hired, particularly in charter schools. Offering tenure and increasing salaries by increasing class sizes up to 30 or 35 students could make a school more desirable, particularly in district contexts. Finally, these non-monetary factors should be strategically used as a key selling point to early-career, lower-salaried teachers, with salary incentives targeted to more experienced teachers and those unresponsive to the benefits of non-monetary support factors.

Conclusion

The field of teacher recruitment and retention is of great importance to policymakers and practitioners, and so, as a result, has been heavily researched over the past decades. While this significant body of research has resulted in many very important findings, there are some questions that have remained challenging to answer, particularly regarding identifying the relative importance of non-monetary job factors and the monetary value placed on these factors.

This study, by utilizing Adaptive Choice-Based Conjoint analysis, has demonstrated that these questions can be answered if a new methodology is embraced. While this study is limited in scope to a subset of teachers within a single state, the results of this study provide practical recommendations that administrators and policymakers can apply within this limited context and that, with caution, may be extended to additional teacher populations. Additionally, the results provide additional support for conclusions in the existing literature regarding the importance of non-monetary job and working conditions factors. Finally, these results demonstrate the promise this methodology has for additional applications beyond the limited population investigated in this particular study. The introduction of a novel methodology may allow for pursuit of questions that will better guide policymakers and practitioners attempting to understand and influence the complex trade-offs teachers are making in the labor market. The results from this study and future replications and extensions may allow policymakers and school administrators to more effectively recruit and retain high quality teachers, especially in low-performing, hard-to-staff schools, improving overall student achievement and reducing achievement gaps.

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Appendix

Factors and Levels in ACBC Survey

Salary:

- Continuous from \$32,900 to \$61,100
- Represents a range of 70% to 130% of the state average salary of \$46,500 in the year the survey was given

Job Security

- Tenure is available, but not necessarily likely
- Tenure is available and likely
- Tenure is not available

Teaching Assignment

- Teaching in content area
- Teaching in closely related content area
- Teaching in an unrelated content area

Class Size

- 15 students per class
- 20 students per class
- 25 students per class
- 30 students per class
- 35 students per class
- More than 35 students per class

Planning Time

- 45 minutes every other day
- 90 minutes every other day
- 45 minutes per day
- 90 minutes per day

Collaboration

- No department or grade-level meetings dedicated to collaboration
- Common planning time with a planning partner
- Regular opportunities to collaborate with peers in grade-level and department meetings
- Regular grade-level and department meetings for collaboration, plus common planning time with a planning partner

Professional Development

- Limited to no opportunities for professional development exist
- Regular professional development opportunities that are selected by the administration without input from teachers and that are not differentiated
- Regular professional development opportunities that are selected by the administration without input from teachers and that are differentiated
- Regular professional development opportunities that are selected with input from the teachers and are not differentiated
- Regular professional development opportunities that are selected with input from the teachers and are differentiated
- Teachers have the ability to choose from multiple professional development opportunities

Principal Support

- Principal is not particularly supportive or visible. Principal provides adequate feedback and resources for teachers.
- Principal is supportive, encouraging, although not highly visible. Principal provides adequate feedback and resources for teachers while working behind the scenes.
- Principal is not particularly supportive or visible. Principal is largely absent from efforts to ensure adequate feedback and resources for teachers.
- Principal is supportive, encouraging, and visible. Principal provides adequate feedback and resources for teachers.

Curricular Autonomy

- Teachers all teach a common curriculum developed by the district.
- Teachers all teach a common scripted curriculum purchased by the district.
- Teachers develop their own curriculum.
- Teachers plan a common curriculum in grade-level teams.

Organizational Fit

- Disagreement with school's mission statement
- Strong agreement with school's mission statement
- Neutral feelings towards school's mission statement
- School does not have an obvious or meaningful mission statement

Influence over Policy

- Teachers have little to no involvement in the development of school/district policies and practices.
- Teachers are expected to sit on committees and leadership teams to develop school/district policies and practices.
- Teachers have the opportunity to sit on committees and leadership teams to develop school/district policies and practices.

Student Race

- 0-20% minority students
- 20-40% minority students
- 40-60% minority students
- 60-80% minority students
- 80-100% minority students

Student Socioeconomic Status

- 0-20% students in poverty
- 20-40% students in poverty
- 40-60% students in poverty
- 60-80% students in poverty
- 80-100% students in poverty

School Achievement

- "A" School Rating
- "B" School Rating
- "C" School Rating
- "D" School Rating
- "F" School Rating

About the Author

Jeffrey Gunther

Utah State University

jeffreymgunther@gmail.com

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0084-7861>

Jeffrey Gunther is a recently graduated PhD student from Utah State University. The results described in this paper are derived from his doctoral dissertation. His interests include education finance and policy, teacher recruitment and retention, and school choice.

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Explaining Teacher Turnover: School Cohesion and Intrinsic Motivation in Los Angeles

BRUCE FULLER

University of California, Berkeley

ANISAH WAITE

University of Virginia

DAVID TORRES IRRIBARRA

MIDE, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

Lifting achievement in many schools depends on reducing the exit of effective teachers. We examine the extent to which teacher perceptions of school cohesion and intrinsic motivators stemming from two theoretical traditions contribute to the intent to leave one's school. We find that elementary teachers report higher levels of organizational cohesion within their schools along with stronger intrinsic motivation compared with peers teaching at the high school level, drawing on data from 548 teachers in Los Angeles schools. Teacher perceptions of school cohesion are moderately correlated with intrinsic motivators. However, views of strong leadership and teacher cohesion, not one's own intrinsic motivation, more strongly predict the likelihood of remaining at one's school, based on structural equation estimation with IRT-adjusted measurement models. We discuss implications for shaping interventions to strengthen the social cohesion of schools rather than simply rewarding individual teachers.

Retaining effective teachers is one necessary strategy for lifting the quality of urban schools. About half a million teachers exit their schools each year nationwide. Half of these leavers move to other schools; the other half leave teaching altogether (Alliance for Excellent Education 2008; National Center for Education Statistics 2012). This annual rate of turnover continues to climb. The share of teachers leaving the profession after just 1 year of teaching rose from 9.8% to 13.1% between 1988 and 2008 (Ingersoll and Merrill 2012).

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Explaining Teacher Turnover

In turn, districts face high costs to replace staff, and pupils forgo sustained relationships (Barnes et al. 2007; Gordon and Crabtree 2006).

Most worrisome for equity advocates is that turnover remains severe in urban schools. In New York City, 39% of teachers considered leaving their current schools or the profession entirely in the coming year (Pallas and Buckley 2012). More than 5,000 teachers did leave their schools in 2008, and half of these departed from the profession (Boyd et al. 2010). More than half left each year from several central city schools in Los Angeles during our fieldwork; these were a mix of novice teachers hit by layoffs and experienced teachers migrating to suburban schools.

Schools with low-performing and minority students experience higher rates of turnover (Boyd et al. 2005; Hanushek et al. 2004). Ronfeldt et al. (2013) found that the negative impact of teacher turnover on student achievement was greater in schools with higher proportions of low-achieving and black students. Additionally, exit rates can be higher for well-prepared teachers in these settings. Among teachers scoring in the top quartile of New York's certification test, Boyd et al. (2005) found that one-third left city schools serving mostly low-achieving students after just 1 year.

Despite the severity of the turnover problem, disagreement persists over its underlying causes, complicating the search for effective remedies. Earlier research focused on the attributes of teachers and schools associated with the incidence of turnover, including how student characteristics shape working conditions (e.g., Hanushek et al. 2004) and how features of teachers mesh with neighboring labor markets. Teachers' ages, prior university training, verbal proficiencies, and family plans—along with labor market alternatives, given one's skill set—help to explain who stays and who leaves teaching (Boyd et al. 2005; Murnane et al. 1991). But less is known about the sources of teacher motivation and engagement that influence teachers' decisions to stay or leave their schools.

BRUCE FULLER, a sociologist at the University of California, Berkeley, focuses on organizational behavior and how local firms interact with diverse families and children. His recent book is *Organizing Locally: How the New Decentralists Improve Education, Health, and Trade* (University of Chicago Press). ANISAH WAITE is a postdoctoral research associate in the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. Her work centers on education reform in urban districts, school organizations, and social network analysis. DAVID TORRES IRRIBARRA is a researcher at the MIDE UC measurement center of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. His research interests focus on the use of latent-variable modeling for measurement and the theoretical foundations of assessment in the social sciences.

The focus on which teachers choose to stay or leave lends itself to efforts that attempt to alter the lone teacher's behavior (in Los Angeles; McGlone 2013). One such approach emphasizes the intrinsic motivators experienced by the individual teacher, including one's sense of efficacy resulting from classroom practice and recognition for one's schoolwide efforts, collaborating with fellow teachers (Fuller et al. 1982; Rosenholtz 1989). An emphasis on intrinsic motivation, while promising in its ability to drive teacher engagement, also disregards the dynamics of the surrounding school context, distracting attention from the social-relational nature of work and membership within a school organization.

Social theorists, in contrast, emphasize the teacher's role and motivated participation within an organization: a collectivity that affords the material tools, unifying norms, and tacit expectations that lend meaning to social action (Lortie 1975; Waller 1932). Work on school climate and culture, first emerging in the 1970s, continues to advance theory and empirical study of how features of the school's social organization help to account for between-school variability in job satisfaction, turnover rates, and student learning (Argyris 1958; Rutter et al. 1979; Van Houtte and Van Maele 2011).

Several facets of social organization continue to be associated with stronger teacher engagement and commitment. Recent work returns to site-level leadership as an "essential support," emphasizing how principals can be "catalytic agents" for school improvement (Bryk et al. 2010, 45). The Chicago Consortium's long-term study shows that supportive school leadership and other organizational features—especially a shared responsibility for achievement and trusting social relations within the school—can be predictive of learning gains (Bryk et al. 2010). But although these features offer promising supports for school improvement, we don't well understand the extent to which leadership and other features of the school organization relate to a teacher's intrinsic motivation or the likelihood of leaving one's school.

Our study of teacher turnover, conducted in historically hard-to-staff schools in Los Angeles, advances this line of research in two ways. First, we ask whether teachers' individual-level perceptions of their school organizations covary with reported levels of intrinsic motivation. Are perceptions of the school's leadership, social trust, and collectively held commitment to student learning, for example, tied to the degree of intrinsic motivation experienced by the individual teacher? Second, if these two sources of teacher motivation and engagement can be distinguished empirically, do they contribute independently to the likelihood of teacher turnover?

We begin by reviewing the early work on school climate and culture, including parallel interest in the intrinsic motivators perceived by professionals, such as teachers. This line has sparked not only individual-level but also firm-level theory and features of the school organizations that manifest cohe-

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sive social relations. We then describe the problem of teacher turnover in central city schools as found in LA and explore how a stronger grasp of underlying causes could inform alternative interventions. Our analytic strategy, measures, and findings are detailed, drawing largely on survey data pertaining to how 548 individual teachers in 13 schools perceive their social organizations.

What Motivates Teacher Turnover?

Intrinsic Motivators within Organizations

Two theoretical lines have long informed how we think about the motivated engagement of teachers and the features of their organizations that nurture such cohesion. Research in the human relations tradition goes back to the 1930s and early observational studies of intrinsically motivating experiences that predicted individuals' engagement within formal organizations. The first studies in manufacturing plants led scholars to the social structuring of everyday tasks and individuals' feeling of membership with and recognition from fellow workers as two sources of intrinsic rewards (Mayo 1949; Roethlisberger and Dickson 1939/2005; Scott 1981). Social recognition became more salient as a key component of intrinsic motivation in formal organizations as this research continued.

By the 1970s social psychologists were measuring task structures inside firms—variably prompting individuals' perceptions of competence, novelty, and social recognition—that empirically predicted levels of commitment to the organization (Deci 1975; Hackman and Oldham 1980). Parallel work also showed that strict controls, reliance on external sanctions or rewards, and routinized tasks all tended to displace individuals' experiences of intrinsic motivation (Lepper et al. 1973; Ryan and Deci 2000).

The study of intrinsic motivators inside workplaces came to include teacher reports of enjoying positive feedback and acknowledgment of their work by their principals or fellow teachers. The experience of social recognition is coupled with motivating feelings of competence and efficacy, along with tighter social ties within an organization (Lin 2001; Little and McLaughlin 1993). The expression of social recognition assumes that one's work is demonstrated to colleagues and normatively legitimate and that teachers are encouraged to share and contribute to classroom practices and schoolwide tasks (Bryk et al. 2010).

A related line of work emerged in the 1970s that began to illuminate another source of intrinsic motivation within schools: teachers' perceptions of efficacious action, or the sense that one's efforts in the organization made a

difference. Teachers may enjoy a feeling of efficacy from their own craft inside their classrooms or by engaging colleagues in schoolwide tasks (Fuller et al. 1982). And teacher reports of efficacy predict a variety of teacher and student outcomes (Raudenbush et al. 1992; Tschannen-Moran and Johnson 2011). A recent study of turnover in Chicago found lower rates among teachers reporting greater influence over school or classroom practices (Allensworth et al. 2009).

The teacher's perception of efficacy is likely related to social recognition, openness, and trust expressed by school leaders and colleagues. Recent turnover studies ask, for example, whether anyone ever "recognized my accomplishments publicly" or "encouraged me to keep teaching at my school" (Jacob 2012). Allensworth and colleagues (2009) found that trustful working relationships were strongly predictive of turnover probabilities, a finding replicated in other urban districts (Johnson et al. 2012; Marinell and Coca 2013). That said, how the actions of school leaders and colleagues, situated in variably cohesive schools and normative expectations, operate through such intrinsic motivators at the individual level remains undertheorized and not well understood empirically.

How Teachers Perceive the Social Organization of Schools

School-climate and effective-schools literature offers a second lens for understanding how work gets done and how social integration is advanced inside firms (Argyris 1958; Brookover 1979; Lee et al. 1993; Rutter et al. 1979; Teddlie and Reynolds 2001). Rather than focusing on the teacher's intrinsic rewards (or felt alienation) this approach centers on how the individual is animated by organization-wide norms or expectations and perceptions of trust and belonging, along with tacit or cultural understanding for how work gets done. These constructs adhere to the organization because they are embedded within social relations among individuals. Still, less is known about how individual-level perceptions of organizational properties may vary within a firm (Van Houtte and Van Maele 2011), along with implications for the individual's desire to remain or leave.

Leadership and Collegial Relations

The effective-school literature and contemporary work on climate have come to highlight the social and organization-level dynamics that operate above the individual, structuring a context a priori into which various individuals enter and often leave. This includes the role of supportive leadership as one key

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feature of the social organization (e.g., Leithwood et al. 2004). Principals and other school leaders provide the material tools necessary for classroom practice, select high-quality staff, and provide social recognition for good work. These leadership processes have been empirically tied to teachers' reported propensity to stay or exit their schools in the case of New York City (Pallas and Buckley 2012). Similarly, Boyd et al. (2011) detail how administrative support—"the extent to which principals and other school leaders make teachers' work easier and help them to improve their teaching" (307)—was the strongest driver of teachers' reported likelihood of exit, after taking into account personal attributes and a variety of other covariates (for similar results in North Carolina, see Clotfelter et al. 2008; Ladd 2011).

Scholars continue to find that aspects of collegial relations are predictive of teachers' loyalty to or propensity to leave their schools. Closer social relations have been operationalized in various ways across studies, including trust among colleagues, a shared responsibility for lifting student learning, distributed leadership, more time for collaboration, denser social networks, and greater transparency and discussion of teaching practices (Bryk et al. 2010; Hoy and Tschannen-Moran 2003; Ingersoll 2001; Little and McLaughlin 1993; Spillane and Kim 2012).

We focus on teacher reports of trust and collective responsibility for lifting achievement and school effects overall—focusing on individual-level perceptions of organization-wide properties—in part influenced by the efforts of Bryk's team to associate these constructs to growth in student achievement. Still, we know little about how these facets of social-organizational cohesion contribute to teacher turnover or whether possible effects may be conditioned by individual-level intrinsic motivators in shaping loyalty to a school. The principal or teacher may create collegial structures, but do these social forms operate through or independent of the individual teacher's intrinsic motivation? That is, we start with the basic question of how the individual teacher perceives organizational properties and intrinsic motivators inside a school and then ask how these two sets of factors might affect turnover.

Social Processes and Intrinsic Motivators

After finding uneven achievement effects from schools' material facets or from drivers trumpeted by school-effects theorists, organizational scholars began to inquire about wider conceptions of school climate and culture, encompassing a set of complementary features built through social interaction. Hoy and Woolfolk (1990, 152) define organizational climate as "the relatively enduring quality of the school environment that is experienced by participants, affects their behavior, and is based on their collective perceptions of behavior in

schools.” Climate is typically operationalized and measured by pooling reports of individual teachers from scales that includes items such as, “Teachers spend time after school with students who have individual problems” and “students respect others who get good grades.” What’s not well understood is whether the behavioral effects on teachers are direct, as postulated, or mediated through intrinsic motivators experienced by the teacher.

Social-Organizational Architecture

Recent work also returns to dynamics operating at the organization level, that is, to perceptions of schoolwide norms that are shaped through teacher collaboration, shared expectations, and coherent social networks. This line emphasizes the durable social architecture of the organization and resources that derive from stronger cohesion. So, reported norms of collective responsibility for lifting student learning and of leaders who express recognition for good work or build trust among cooperating teachers are conceptualized as social-organizational properties (Bryk et al. 2010; Daly 2010; Ingersoll 2001). Contemporary work on networks shares this focus—on teacher ties that are variably rich in social capital and manifest varying levels of trust, reciprocity, closure, and the legitimate capacity to sanction members if they diverge from shared social norms (Coleman 1988; Daly 2010; Lin 2001).

Early evidence does show how these organization-level dynamics operate within teachers’ networks and host the movement of resources, ideas, and expressive camaraderie, which travel among collaborating teachers (see Moo-lenaar et al. 2010). But neither the social capital nor social network lines of research clarify how individual teachers may experience intrinsic motivation from these ties or how this social architecture contributes to the likelihood of staying or exiting one’s school.

The Interplay of School Cohesion and Individual Motivation

We are not arguing that intrinsic motivators are necessarily divorced from social cohesion across the school organization. Stronger ties and collaborative action may sustain the individual teacher’s perception of intrinsic motivation. We test, for example, whether the individual teacher’s perception of efficacy and reported levels of recognition for one’s work help to predict the desire to exit one’s school. These constructs, traditionally defined as individually experienced, are logically tied to the resourceful and responsive character of school leaders and fellow teachers—core constructs that have evolved within the school-climate field.

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Still, interventions aimed at the individual teacher's skills, professional status, or internal motivation differ from efforts that focus on the school's cohesion, including the interwoven ties and normative commitments formed among collaborating teachers. We assess the extent to which social-organizational constructs behave independently of intrinsic motivators and whether they separately help to predict teachers' intentions to stay with or exit their schools.

Research Questions and Analytic Strategy

Our work—focusing on individual-level determinants of teacher turnover—is informed by this evolving work on school climate and culture. We examine how the individual's perceptions of the organization, along with intrinsic motivators, may contribute independently to the likelihood of his or her staying or leaving urban schools in Los Angeles. We focus on the teacher's perception of three organizational facets of the school: resourceful and responsive school leaders, shared trust among colleagues, and commonly held responsibility to lift student learning. The latter two factors have received ample theoretical attention in recent years but have yet to be empirically tied to the propensity of teachers to stay or leave their schools (Bryk and Schneider 2002; Bryk et al. 2010). We also include a generalized perception of job satisfaction within each teacher's current school.

We specifically ask whether these individual-level perceptions of one's organization covary with felt levels of intrinsic motivation. We also examine whether two intrinsic motivators—recognition for one's work and efficacy—contribute to the likelihood of exit, after taking into account the perceived features of one's school organization and several covariates related to the teacher's background. Alternative model specifications also test for mediational pathways, for instance, whether generalized job satisfaction or intrinsic motivators mediate the effects on turnover stemming from how the individual perceives favorable organizational properties.

To examine the relation among these constructs, we moved from the basic model shown in figure 1. We rely on observed responses to a survey items to estimate job satisfaction (JS), supportive leadership (SL), trust (TR), collective responsibility (CR), efficacy (EF), and social recognition (SR). These six variables were used to estimate two higher-order latent variables, social organization (SO) and intrinsic motivators (IM). The final part of the model relates these latent variables to the reported likelihood of leaving one's current school (in 1 and 5 years) by regressing the latter on SO and IM while controlling for teacher background factors, including gender, ethnic membership, years working at one's current school, and level of graduate study.

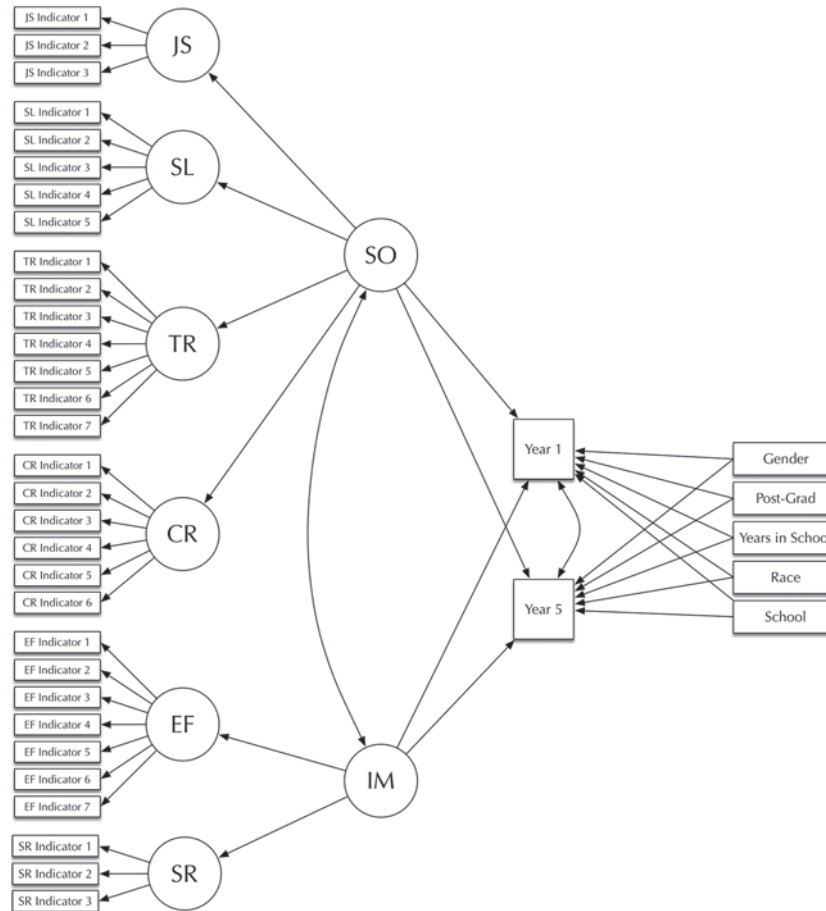


FIG. 1.—General structural equation model (SEM) of how social organization and intrinsic motivators may account for variance in the likelihood of teacher exit.

These alternative pathways to the likelihood of leaving one's school can be framed as testable hypotheses:

H1: Higher levels of the individual teacher's perception of organizational cohesion—operationalized as reports of supportive school leadership, collective responsibility for student learning, and trust among colleagues—are associated with higher levels of teacher intrinsic motivation, including measures of social recognition and efficacy.

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H2: The association between perceived organizational features and the intention to stay at or leave one's school is mediated by variable levels of job satisfaction.

H3: Individual teacher reports of intrinsic motivation are further associated with the likelihood of staying at or leaving one's school, after taking into account perceived features of the school organization.

H4: The association between the individual teacher's perception of the organization's features and the intention to stay at or leave one's school is mediated by the individual's reported intrinsic motivation.

Overall, we argue that how teachers perceive facets of their school organizations operate independently of their intrinsic motivation and that both sets of factors account for the likelihood of intending to stay at or leave one's school. Then, we test whether job satisfaction, as a more general construct, mediates the effects of perceived organizational features or whether the latter set of factors is mediated by intrinsic motivators to shape the teacher's intent to leave. In this way, we explore the relative force of how individual teachers view their school organizations vis-à-vis their direct experiences of internal motivation stemming from their own work.

Teacher Turnover in Los Angeles

Central-city schools in Los Angeles long suffered from high rates of teacher turnover, and the post-2008 recession made matters worse. As the state budget deteriorated in California, the count of layoff notices received by untenured teachers escalated, worsening the instability of school staff. In spring 2010, fully two-thirds of all teachers received pink slips in three of LA's low-performing schools (Song et al. 2010). This worsening situation prompted a lawsuit, led by the American Civil Liberties Union, which aimed to protect 45 historically hard-to-staff schools from seniority-based layoffs, aiming to stem the exit of mostly novice teachers.

The courts initially sided with the ACLU in *Reed v. State of California*, after winning the support of the incoming superintendent, John Deasy (Superior Court 2010). This prompted the present study and LAUSD's efforts to identify organizational and motivational factors that drive teacher turnover. The district eventually settled with the plaintiffs and the United Teachers of Los Angeles in 2014 on a set of interventions aimed to reduce turnover and strengthen the social cohesion of these schools. The district began to spend about \$7 million annually on teacher development and school management efforts in the "Reed schools" in 2014–15.

District leaders invited our research group to conduct teacher interviews and surveys, along with qualitative work, inside 13 of the 45 Reed schools in 2011–12, as the case was moving through the courts. One driving question pressed by district officials was whether teachers would view individual teacher incentives (e.g., salary incentives to remain at one’s school) as more important than social relationships, cohesion, and the quality of school leadership. Equally important was the question of how teacher views of their organizations, along with intrinsic motivators, varied among and within schools. Should district interventions be aimed at schoolwide improvements or individually focused incentives? These questions informed our theoretical frameworks and design for the teacher inquiry.

At the same time, this policy context may narrow the external validity of our findings because the sample drew from schools that served low-performing students and experienced high rates of teacher turnover. District leaders purposefully selected 13 of the 45 schools tied to the judicial action, given the necessity of achieving high response rates and internal validity. District leaders preferred to avoid any claims that our results were not representative of teaching staffs at each school.

Table 1 compares basic student and teacher attributes at the 13 participating schools relative to all other regular LAUSD schools by grade level (excluding charter and specialized schools). The 13 study schools were selected

TABLE 1

Characteristics of the 13 Participating Reed Schools and All Other LAUSD Schools by Grade Level (Means Values or Percentages)

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS		HIGH SCHOOLS	
	Reed	All other LAUSD	Reed	All other LAUSD
Student characteristics:				
Enrollment count	912	587	3,834	2,417
Ethnicity:				
Enrollment, black (%)	6	10	13	11
Enrollment, Latino (%)	87	71	80	79
Designations:				
English learners (%)	60	33	28	24
Free and reduced-price lunch eligible (%)	91	79	80	78
Teacher characteristics:				
Count of teachers employed	33	26	89	42
Age (years)	40	45	40	45
Ethnicity:				
Teaching staff, black (%)	5	8	14	6
Teaching staff, Latino (%)	53	35	33	17

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based on three criteria: drawing from the 45 schools across grade levels, geographic dispersion, and ethnic composition of the attendance zone in which sampled schools were located.

We see that Reed schools tend to enroll more students than other LAUSD schools, especially at the high school level (3,834 and 2,417 students, respectively). Participating Reed elementary schools are concentrated more heavily in low-income Latino communities, relative to all other schools: 87% Latino enrollment at the time of our survey, compared with 71% Latino in all other elementary schools. Just over 90% of students were eligible for lunch subsidies, relative to 79% in other LAUSD schools.

Teaching staffs tend to be larger in participating Reed schools, especially at the high school level: 89 teachers employed, relative to 42 teachers in all other high schools, on average. Teachers are 5 years younger in participating Reed schools at both the elementary and high school level. And teaching staff tend to be more Latino as well: 53% Latino in Reed schools versus 35% Latino in other elementary schools; 33% Latino in Reed high schools, compared with 17% in all other high schools.

Method

Data

To inform the research questions, we conducted a survey of 602 teachers ($N = 548$ after removing cases with missing data) in the fall of 2011, working in 13 schools originally protected under *Reed*. This sample count represents a 78% response rate among the population of teachers working in these schools. The survey consisted of four components: (1) background characteristics, including ethnicity, preservice training and advanced degrees, subject(s) taught, service on the school's leadership team, years of teaching experience, and tenure at the current school; (2) the intention to remain at the current school, move to another school, or leave the education field in the coming school year and 5 years out; (3) individual perceptions of the school organization, including support from and respect for the school's leadership (principal and leadership team), trust among colleagues, collective responsibility for student learning, and general job satisfaction; and (4) intrinsic motivators, including perceptions of efficacy and the degree to which colleagues expressed recognition for one's pedagogical or schoolwide efforts.

Two local realities bound the study's scope conditions: participating teachers labored within urban schools that historically displayed high staff turnover, and this prior condition was made worse during the recession. That said,

our analysis revealed that exit rates of veteran teachers—not only young, untenured staff—exceeded district averages. Thus we argue that our findings hold external validity for how teacher perceptions of organizational features and intrinsic motivation account for individual-level variation in the likelihood of leaving urban schools.

Measurement and Estimation Strategy

We first examined how the reported likelihood of exit and possible predictors varied among schools, across grade levels, and among teachers within schools. Then, we modeled individual-level variation in the reported propensity to leave using a generalized linear latent-variable model (Bartholomew and Knott 1999; Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2004). This modeling framework encompasses both the structural part of the model (SEM; Bollen 1989; Muthén 2002) and the measurement component, which relied on item response theory (IRT; Lord et al. 1968; Rasch 1980). The analysis was conducted using Mplus version 6.11 (Muthén and Muthén 2011). This technique is most appropriate, given our empirical interest in (a) how teacher-level views of their organizations and measures of intrinsic motivation form distinct latent constructs, (b) whether they are correlated with one another, and (c) whether the effects stemming from perceived features of the organization are mediated by generalized job satisfaction or the intrinsic motivators.

This basic model (fig. 1) relies on observed responses to a series of survey items to estimate job satisfaction (JS), supportive leadership (SL), trust (TR), collective responsibility (CR), efficacy (EF), and social recognition (SR). The measurement component of these six variables corresponds to a graded response model (Samejima 1997). Constraining the first observed predictor to a loading of 1 set the scale for each one of these six latent variables. Similarly, the scale for the two higher-order latent variables was set by constraining the first subscale of each of the following to a loading of 1: the job satisfaction subscale for social organization (SO) and the efficacy subscale for intrinsic motivators (IMs).

In turn, SO and IM may account for variation in a teacher's likelihood of leaving the current school, after taking into account the individual attributes specified on the right-hand side of the model (i.e., gender, ethnic membership, advanced degree beyond the bachelor's degree, years serving in present school). We adjusted the final SEM model for the clustering of teachers within the 13 schools to correctly calculate the standard errors.

We tested three alternative specifications, in part after observing the strength of the global job satisfaction measure in predicting reported likelihoods of leaving one's school. First, we specified job satisfaction as a mediator operating be-

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tween SO or IM and the teacher's intent to leave (put forward in hypothesis 2). But job satisfaction proved insignificant as a predictor and highly correlated with the SO indicators when included in the measurement model.

Second, given the direct strength of job satisfaction, we decomposed the basic model to test for the direct effects of each of the four SO measures (now including job satisfaction)—detailing their intercorrelations and checking if one or more of these components were driving the relationship with intent to leave one's school next year or 5 years out. These results are reported in figure 5.

Third, we tested a multinomial SEM model where more than two destinations were reported by teachers, including exiting one's school, exiting teaching but staying in education, and leaving the education field entirely. But this did not improve model fit and served only to exhaust degrees of freedom.

We also tested the basic model after adding a fixed school effect, modeling mean likelihoods of intending to leave among the 13 schools. Again, the present article focuses on accounting for individual-level variability in teachers' intent to leave their schools. So, this alternative specification—testing school-level effects—is beyond the current scope. That said, the analysis revealed significant school fixed effects in between-school differences in trust, collective responsibility, and job satisfaction—three elements of SO. Future work might build larger samples of schools to formally test for such effects from organization-level features and schoolwide norms.

Measures

Outcome measure: Staying at current school.—We asked teachers about the focal outcome, the likelihood of staying at their current schools, with two parallel questions that asked whether they intended to continue teaching at their current schools in the next school year and in 5 years. This option was posed along with alternatives: continue teaching but at another school, pursue promotion to an administrative post or other role outside of classroom teaching, or leave education entirely. For the final analyses we dichotomized these responses to indicate a preference for staying (intending to continue teaching at the current school) or leaving (all other options) for (a) the next school year or (b) in 5 years.

Predictors 1: Teacher perceptions of the school organization.—Our first set of predictors captures how individual teachers perceive positive features of their school organizations, including measures of three constructs that stem from the effective-schools and climate literature. For the first construct, support from school leadership, we selected items from the worker-motivation literature, which parallels earlier work in school effectiveness and stems from measurement work inside schools and private firms (Gordon and Crabtree 2006).

The support from school leadership scale contained five items, including “I know what is expected of me at work” and “I have the materials I need to do my job well” ($\alpha = .84$). The items were scored on a 4-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree).

To measure levels of trust in fellow teachers, we used items from the relational trust scale designed by Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2003). Relational trust indicates teachers’ perceptions that their colleagues are candid, reliable, competent, and caring about each other. The 7 items were scored on a 6-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree). Teachers were asked the extent to which they agreed with statements such as “Even in difficult situations, teachers in this school can depend on each other” ($\alpha = .95$). This scale can predict desired teacher or pupil outcomes, including growth in achievement, where high levels of teacher trust are sustained (e.g., Bryk et al. 2010).

We measured the perception that one’s colleagues share collective responsibility for lifting the achievement of students with a scale developed by the Consortium for Chicago School Research (Bryk et al. 2010). The scale measures the degree to which each teacher perceives a shared understanding that, as a group, teachers agree on the goal of boosting student learning. Teachers responded to six items, including “How many teachers in this school feel responsible to help each other do their best?” and “How many teachers in this school take responsibility for improving the school,” and they could respond none, some, about half, most, or nearly all ($\alpha = .93$). This scale holds predictive validity when estimating between-school achievement growth rates, at least in the Chicago research.¹

Job satisfaction.—We adapted three items to measure the teacher’s overall level of job satisfaction from Gordon and Crabtree’s (2006) measurement research inside schools and private firms. This scale includes items such as “I am proud of this school” and “I enjoy teaching at this school,” each scored on a 4-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree). Interitem reliability across these 3 items was moderate ($\alpha = .76$).

Predictors 2: Intrinsic motivators.—The second set of predictors represents intrinsic motivators experienced by individual teachers. We measured the teacher’s perception of efficacy, the sense that one’s efforts in the classroom pay off. Efficacy was measured using items adapted from the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran and Hoy 2001). Teachers were asked questions such as “How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork?” and “To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?” The 7 items ($\alpha = .89$) appear on a 6-point scale (1 = not at all, 6 = a great deal).

Strong teacher efficacy has been linked not only to positive student achievement but also to teachers’ openness to new ideas and their enthusiasm for

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teaching (see Louis et al. 2010). Our measurement items focus on the teacher's perceived efficacy tied to his or her own practices. This differs from earlier measures of collective efficacy, pertaining to a teacher's or principal's perceptions that he or she can move colleagues to accomplish valued tasks or build shared norms.²

We also asked teachers about their experiences of social recognition, the frequency with which their work was recognized by school leaders or fellow teachers. Little work has identified the forms of social recognition most relevant to teachers that may shape loyalty to the organization or the propensity to leave. We devised items that focus on the principal's or fellow teachers' noticing contributions or offering positive feedback. This 3-item scale included the items "Someone at work recognized me or praised me for my work" and "Someone at work spoke to me about my progress" ($\alpha = .80$). Each item could be answered on a scale with four options: not at all, once or twice, every week, and two or more times a week.

Teacher attributes as covariate controls.—We aimed to estimate the relationship between the substantive predictors and likelihood of leaving or staying at one's school after taking into account teacher background, included as covariate controls. Teachers reported their gender, ethnic membership, years teaching at their present school and within LAUSD, and whether they had completed a master's degree or higher level of formal training.

Findings

We first describe the teachers who participated in the study from the 13 schools experiencing high rates of teacher turnover, along with how each perceived her or his respective school organization and the intrinsic rewards of their work. We then describe results from differing SEM specifications for all teachers and by level (elementary, middle, and high schools), tracking against our four hypotheses, asking how individual-level perception of one's organization and intrinsic motivators may operate independently, how each set may be predictive of the likelihood of exit, and whether job satisfaction or intrinsic motivators act to mediate the influence of how teachers perceive positive features of their school organizations.

Teacher Attributes, Predictors, and Likelihood of Exit

Table 2 reports basic demographic and background characteristics for the 548 teachers that provided complete data, supplementing the information reported in table 1. Teachers in participating schools are relatively inexpe-

TABLE 2

Basic Teacher Characteristics

	Percentage
Gender (female)	60
Ethnicity:	
Latino	44
African American	12
White	21
Other	23
Teaching experience:	
Years teaching at current school:	
1–4 years	53
4–12 years	30
12 or more years	16
Masters degree or higher	55
Reported likelihood of leaving:	
Prefer to exit school 5 years out	57
Prefer to exit school next year	32

NOTE.— $N = 548$.

rienced: more than 50% have been teaching for 4 years or fewer; 55% have completed a master's degree. About one-third reported that they prefer to move to another school next year, and 57% intend to move within the coming 5 years.

Table 3 details mean scale scores (prior to calculating IRT scores) for the predictors, sorted between the two theoretically derived latent constructs: individual-level teacher perceptions of the social-organizational (SO) features of one's school and the intrinsic motivators (IM). Mean levels on predictors tend to be higher—one-third to one-half a standard deviation higher—for teachers in elementary schools, compared with those working in middle or high schools. For instance, the mean trust scores for elementary teachers equaled 4.5, compared with 4.1 for high school teachers (a difference of 0.36 SD, $p < .001$). Similarly, the mean efficacy score is 5.2 for elementary teachers versus 4.9 for high school teachers (0.46 SD, $p < .001$). No significant differences in the reported likelihood of leaving were observed between elementary and middle school teachers (29% and 28%, respectively) compared with high school teachers (35%) on average.

The predictors are clearly associated with teachers' preferences for leaving their present schools when described in bivariate fashion. Figure 2 displays mean levels of the predictors, expressed as standardized t -scores (mean = 50, SD = 10), split between teachers reporting that they intend to leave in the coming year versus those preferring to stay. These mean differences are moderate to large across the predictors and for the two latent constructs es-

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TABLE 3

Descriptive Statistics for Predictors and Teacher Likelihood of Exit by School Grade Level

	Total Teacher Sample (<i>N</i> = 548)	Elementary (<i>n</i> = 108)	Middle School (<i>n</i> = 153)	High School (<i>n</i> = 287)
Predictors by latent construct:				
SO: Supportive leadership (1–4)	3.0 (.7)	3.2 (.6)	3.1 (.6)	2.9 (.7)
SO: Relational trust (1–6)	4.2 (1.1)	4.5 (1.1)	4.2 (1.1)	4.1 (1.1)
SO: Collective responsibility (1–4)	2.7 (.8)	2.9 (.9)	2.6 (.8)	2.6 (.8)
SO: Job satisfaction	3.3 (.7)	3.3 (.7)	3.2 (.8)	3.3 (.8)
IM: Self-efficacy (1–6)	4.9 (.7)	5.2 (.6)	4.8 (.7)	4.9 (.7)
IM: Social recognition (1–4)	2.1 (.8)	2.1 (.8)	2.1 (.8)	2.0 (.8)
Outcome:				
Prefer to leave present school next year, teacher report (%)	32	29	28	35
Prefer to leave present school by 5 years out, teacher report (%)	57	50	57	60

NOTE.—Raw score means and SDs (in parentheses) reported. Count of teachers varies slightly by variable, based on complete data.

timated by the SEM measurement model: individual perceptions of one's school organization and the intrinsic motivators.

The mean difference in job satisfaction scores exceeds 1 SD between likely leavers and stayers, foreshadowing the predictive validity of this generalized perception in shaping one's intent to leave. This gap equals 0.80 SD for the latent intrinsic-motivation (IM) construct estimated from the efficacy and social recognition measures. Both latent constructs sharpen mean differences between likely leavers and stayers.

Accounting for the Likelihood of Teacher Exit

Basic model results.—Findings for the full SEM model appear in figure 3, including results for the measurement model and the paths of association between latent constructs and the likelihood of teacher exit. The analysis was conducted with Mplus version 6.11 using the robust weighted least squares estimator (WLSMV), an option that would account for potential distortion if the homoscedasticity assumption is violated. The estimation did not yield any convergence errors, and no discernible identification issues were found. The overall fit of the model was satisfactory, indicated by the root mean square



FIG. 2.—Mean differences in predictors and latent constructs, split by teachers preferring to stay or leave (standardized t -scores, $N = 548$ teachers).

error of approximation (RMSEA = 0.045), the comparative fit index (CFI = 0.98), and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI = 0.98).

The measurement model first shows the relationships between job satisfaction, supportive leadership, collective responsibility, and trust with the identified latent construct, teacher reports of social-organizational cohesion (SO). The coefficient adjacent to the supportive leadership scale (converted to IRT scores) indicates that it is slightly less correlated with the latent construct (0.98) than the anchoring scale, job satisfaction (1.00). The trust scale is most strongly associated with the latent SO construct (1.13). We also see that the two latent constructs are moderately correlated with each other for the entire teacher sample.

The path coefficients, converted to odds ratios for ease of interpretation, show that teacher perceptions of stronger social-organizational cohesion are

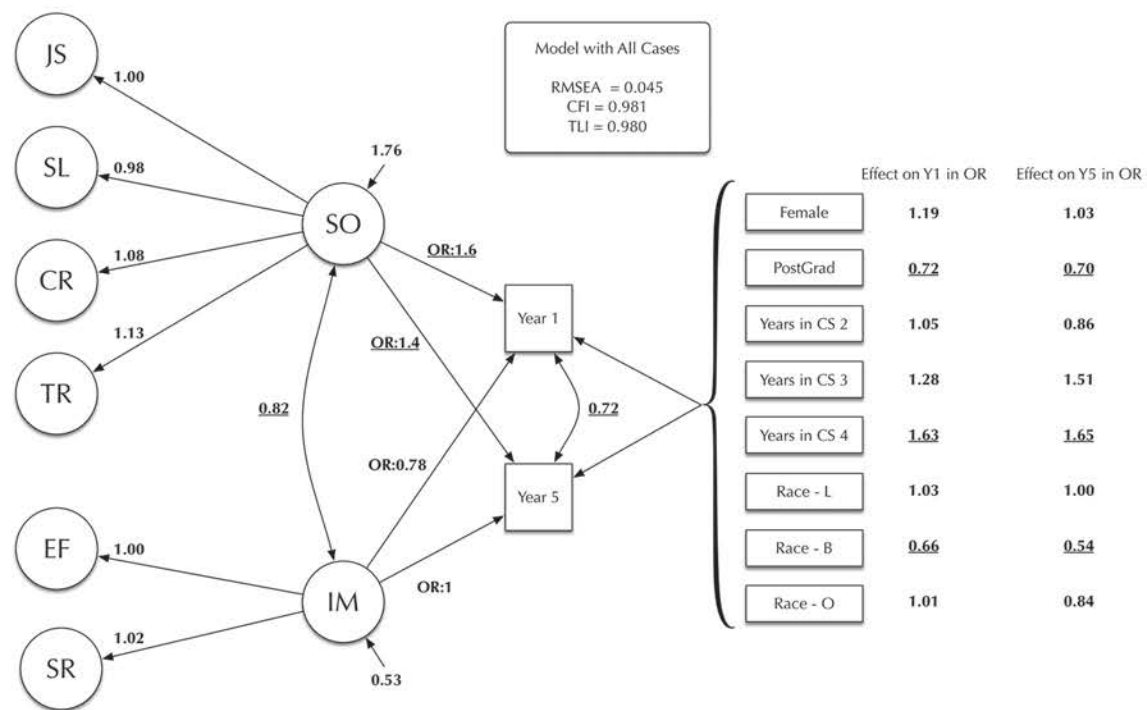


FIG. 3.—Basic structural equation model (SEM) regressing likelihood of staying in present school on latent constructs (full sample, $N = 548$ teachers).

more highly predictive of teachers' likelihood of staying at their present schools, compared with teachers' experiences of intrinsic motivation. For each unit increase in the social-organizational construct, teachers are 1.6 times more likely to stay at their present schools next year and 1.4 times more likely to remain 5 years out. The intrinsic-motivation construct is associated with lower odds of staying in the coming year and holds no significant relationship with staying 5 years out. We underline significant coefficients (at $p < .05$ or better). Overall fit statistics for this basic model are significant.

We tested to see whether the strong relationship between teacher perceptions of social-organizational cohesion and the likelihood of staying was mediated through overall job satisfaction (H2) or the intrinsic motivators (H4), but neither specification helped to improve the model nor revealed significant mediational paths.

We do see that the SO and IM latent constructs are strongly associated (0.82). So, for the total teacher sample, individual-level perceptions of a more coherent school organization are tied to the intrinsic motivators felt by teachers. This may be because of the likelihood of experiencing greater social recognition and feeling efficacious in an organization that manifests close social ties and ample collaboration.

Associations between teacher background characteristics and the likelihood of remaining in one's school (next year and 5 years out) appear on the right-hand side of figure 3, again expressed as odds ratios. Teachers with master's degrees or higher reported lower likelihoods of staying at their present schools. But teachers who had worked at their present schools for 12 years or more were almost two-thirds more likely to intend to stay, compared with teachers with fewer than 4 years experience at their present schools (reference group). Anticipation of future seniority-based layoffs for young teachers may help to explain this association. We also see that black teachers are less likely to stay next year or 5 years out, compared with white teachers (reference group) with all covariates entered into the model.

Differing results by school grade level.—Next we attempted to fit the basic model separately for elementary, middle, and high school teachers. This exercise revealed differing relationships for elementary teachers (fig. 4). These results should be interpreted cautiously because this SEM is estimated from 108 teachers with complete data (compared with 548 teachers in the full sample), the fit statistics for the elementary-only model are marginally significant.

We see that the IM construct is shaped more heavily by the social recognition scale for elementary teachers, perhaps linked to their higher mean IM scores, compared with middle and high school teachers. In turn, intrinsic motivation is now weakly and insignificantly related to the SO latent construct, while being strongly related to staying at one's school 5 years out. And female elementary teachers are 1.79 times more likely to stay than their male peers.

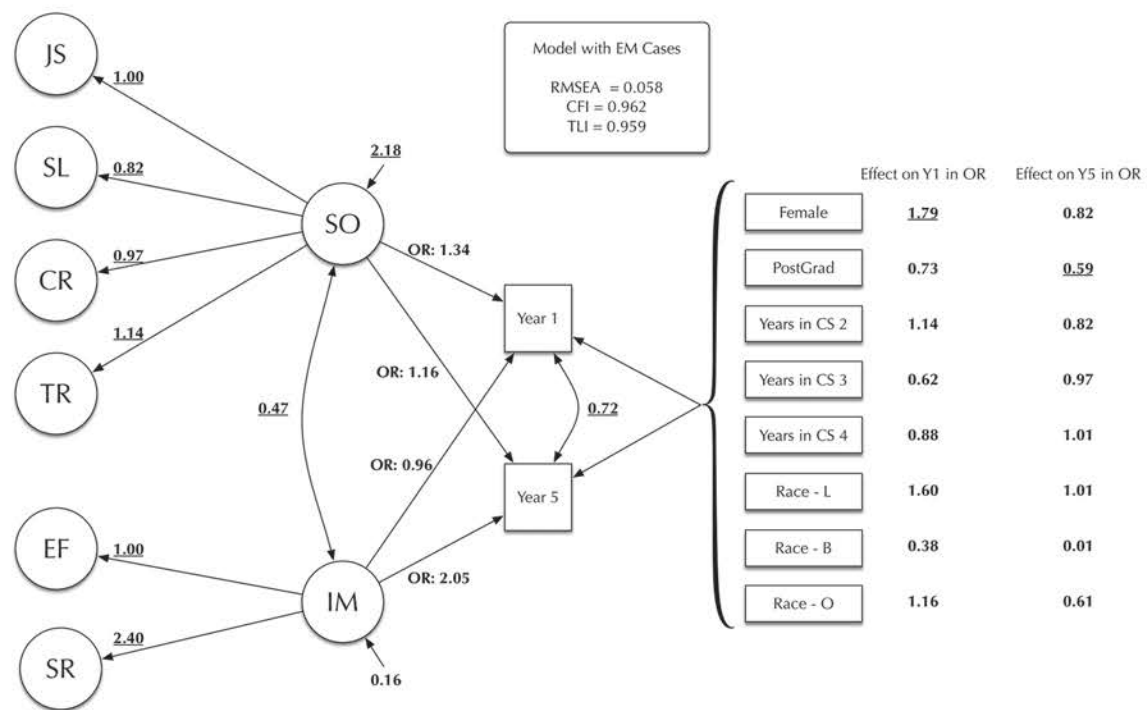


FIG. 4.—Basic structural equation model (SEM) for elementary school teachers regressing likelihood of staying in present school on latent constructs (full sample, $n = 108$ teachers).

Overall, these findings suggest that how teacher perceptions of organizational cohesion and intrinsic motivators operate on turnover may vary across grade levels.

Role played by job satisfaction: Unpacking the measurement model.—Looking inside the measurement model for the entire teacher sample, we found that JS was strongly correlated with the other indicators of perceived organizational coherence (i.e., school leadership, collective responsibility, and trust). This generalized perception of JS appears to co-occur with higher levels of these indicators of perceived organizational tightness among individual teachers, as seen in figure 5. Remember that we could not identify a model where JS mediated the effects of leadership, collective responsibility, or trust. Instead, JS appears to be a leading indicator of the SO latent construct.

We then see that JS significantly predicts teachers' likelihood of staying at or leaving their present schools, both for next year and 5 years out. Note that JS is moderately to highly correlated with the other indicators of the SO latent construct. Background covariates remain significant: teachers with master's degrees are less likely to stay in their present schools, whereas longer-serving teachers are more likely to intend to stay. Black teachers remain less likely to stay in their present schools.

Discussion: Implications for Teacher Retention Initiatives

Three findings stand out from this analysis. First, how individual teachers perceive the social cohesion of their schools—their views of organizational leadership, trust among colleagues, and a shared commitment to raising achievement—varies somewhat independently of their intrinsic motivation. The correspondence or independence of these latent constructs appears to differ across grade levels. But overall, how teachers see the material and social support offered by school leaders and colleagues appears to shape their desire to stay or leave, separate from the intrinsic rewards they experience, perhaps tied to their own classroom craft. We need to learn more about how a teacher's efficacy may stem from everyday labor with students or result from rewarding collaboration with fellow teachers. That is, one's own efficacy is not necessarily divorced from the social cohesiveness of the school (Fuller et al. 1982). Still, how a teacher views the entire organization varies somewhat independently of the internal motivation stemming from one's own work.

Second, how teachers perceive the social-organizational cohesion of their schools is more strongly related to the likelihood of staying or leaving, compared with the weaker or insignificant association of the intrinsic motivators with the likelihood of staying or leaving. The policy discourse around raising teacher quality often arrives at the goal of professionalizing teaching or

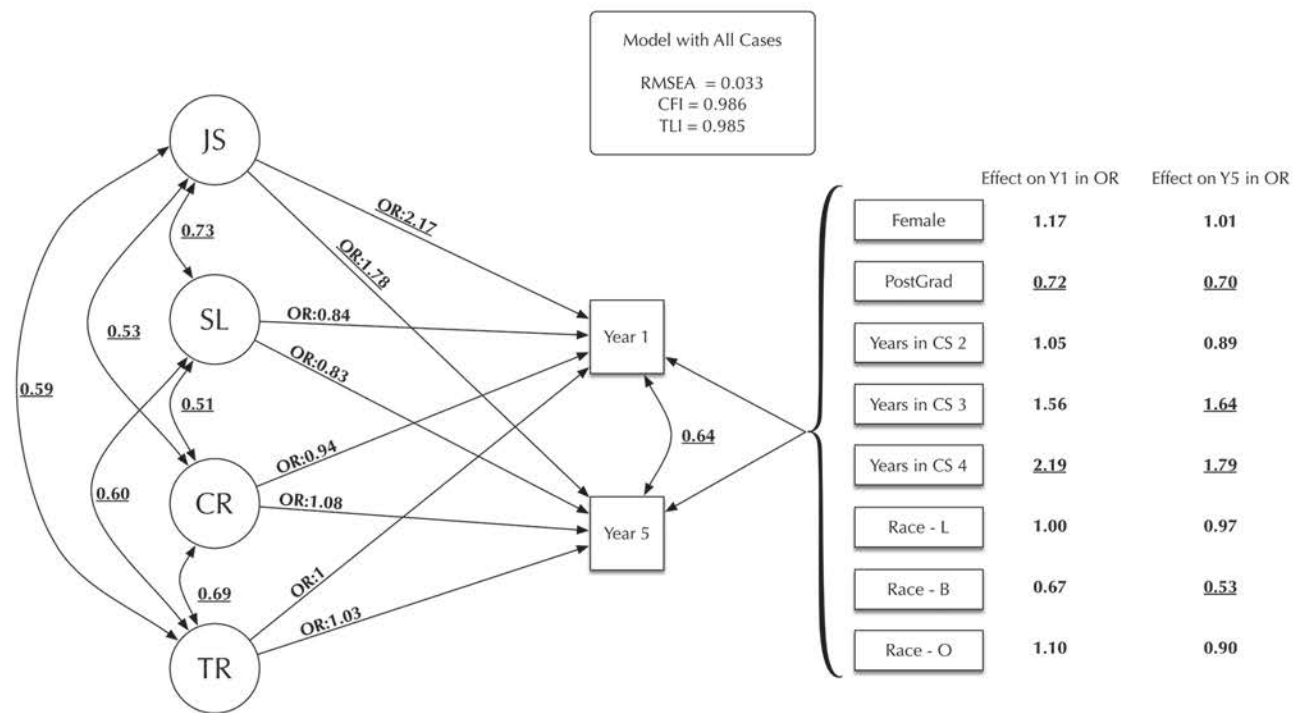


FIG. 5.—Basic structural equation model (SEM) regressing likelihood of staying in present school on latent constructs (full sample, $N = 548$ teachers).

allocating incentives to the lone teacher who raises pupil test scores. At the same time, many reform activists and union leaders argue that turnover is driven by the loss of autonomy and professional discretion, along with the routinization of and pressure for didactic pedagogy. Our findings suggest that intrinsic motivators do indeed play a role. But how teachers view coherent features of their schools—the leadership team, trusting relations among colleagues, and pulling together to lift achievement—was more strongly associated with the desire to stay at or leave these challenging schools.

Third, we observed wide variability among individual teachers within schools in how they perceive social coherence and intrinsic motivation, relative to the share of variance attributable to between-school differences. The inclusion of a fixed school effect did reduce the predictive power of the SO and IM latent constructs when modeled at the individual teacher level. But over four-fifths of the total variance in the SO measures was attributable to between-teacher differences (results available from the authors). This underscores the point made by Van Houtte and Van Maele (2011) that we must be careful not to infer organization-level properties of schools based simply on aggregating reports from individual teachers.

This also suggests that future research should look at the co-occurring effects of organization-level structures and social norms alongside individual teacher perceptions of coherence—together shaping the intent to leave one's school. It's likely that, say, enrollment size or student characteristics, curricular mission, and facets of principal leadership—operating at the organization level—shape teacher turnover. At the same time, we must disaggregate mechanisms and effects between school and individual levels of analysis. This requires designs that include a sufficient number of schools to estimate multilevel effects with ample statistical power.

Longitudinal research could advance this line of work by examining the stability of teacher perceptions of school organizations given the turnover of principals and leadership teams. Organizational cohesion may vary markedly year to year when leadership is unstable. Teachers' own efforts to tighten social ties and distribute leadership across actors may take some time before a shared sense of purpose and trust and responsive students come to enrich social cohesion and reduce staff turnover. We also cannot approach causal claims in the absence of longer-term designs and data.

We saw how differing institutional traditions, especially distinguishing between elementary and high schools, seem to condition the extent to which teacher reports of organizational cohesion and intrinsic motivation operate on the likelihood of staff turnover. This may bring into play the more specialized knowledge and sources of intrinsic motivation held by secondary teachers vis-à-vis peers working in elementary schools. The gender mix of staff between grade levels may further condition the dynamics of social ties

inside schools and the individual rewards stemming from one's own work inside the classroom.

Much more remains to be learned regarding the relative effectiveness of teachers who stay or leave urban schools. Exit by ineffective teachers is not necessarily a negative event, although they may remain within the district. Although some literature on turnover considers the capacities of stayers and leavers in the classroom, less is known about their proficiency in contributing to schools' cohesion. Combining administrative data with teacher surveys could help us understand the mobility of effective and ineffective teachers.

Our results must be considered within the limitations of the study. We purposefully sampled schools that historically suffered from high rates of staff turnover. This constrains external validity, limiting our ability to generalize these findings to a wider range of schools. On the other hand, our results remain quite vivid even when presumably truncating variation on predictors and the dependent variables.

We also focus on individual teachers' perceptions of their school organizations rather than aggregating individual scores and inferring properties of schools (as with Bryk et al. 2010). We believe our approach offers basic building blocks analytically, as scholars associate teacher views of organizational features with the likelihood of leaving. Future work, however, should integrate into our approach organization-level features of schools and shared normative commitments, as sketched above. This could incorporate our focus on measurement modeling along with the action of mediators when estimating turnover from school- and teacher-level predictors (for one methods strategy, see Rabe-Hesketh and Skondral 2012).

Our findings suggest that interventions might focus not simply on altering social relations among teachers but also on how teachers come to perceive these favorable organizational features. The conflation of perception and material features of school organizations threatens to confuse the design of teacher-retention interventions. In one sense, organizational structure is manifest in teachers' shared perceptions of norms and expectations of collegial behavior. But material facets abound as well, from how time is scheduled during the school day to how incentives are distributed to teachers, individually or collectively (Fuller 2015). It is important that our theoretical representations of individual perceptions and school-level material features be distinguished in the design of interventions.

Future research might focus on how teachers' pedagogical skills may be tied with more cohesive and motivating school communities. Our measures of trust and collective responsibility, for example, tap into teachers' engagement with their social communities. But do these stronger social ties and open environments lead to classroom innovation, greater attention to weaker students, or more concentrated periods of instructional time? We don't yet know

how the uplifting features of social cohesion causally shape teachers' skills or the everyday experience and achievement of students (beyond positive associations with achievement growth in Chicago, Bryk et al. 2010).

Overall, these findings suggest that a two-pronged approach may yield greater benefits in reducing teacher turnover. Attending to what motivates individual teachers in their own daily work, largely from inside classrooms, may yield beneficial returns. To the extent that contemporary reforms act to deskill teachers or treat them in a mechanical fashion, policy makers may undercut intrinsic rewards and spur turnover—especially in urban schools where daily challenges are daunting. Sharp debate and mixed findings continue to unfold over the focus on value-added measurement and the utility of incentives allocated to individual teachers (for review, see Yuan et al. 2012).

Simply attending to individual rewards may distract policy makers and district leaders from building social cohesion inside school organizations. Greater progress in reducing turnover may result from building resourceful leadership, nurturing stronger collaboration and trust, and ensuring that all teachers are pulling in the same direction, mutually confident that student achievement can be lifted. Teachers appear to be more loyal to their schools when they are meaningfully engaged with each other, not simply toiling alone inside their classrooms.

Notes

We thank Justo Avila and Paul Miller for their steady leadership of this project, along with Cynthia Lim and her research staff, at the Los Angeles Unified School District. Appreciation is also expressed to the 548 teachers who took scarce time to participate in the study. Our work is funded by the Spencer Foundation. A special thanks to Susan Dauber for her support over the years.

1. This construct is a close cousin of collective efficacy, the perception that actors in a situation are looking out for and sanctioning others to serve a community's shared interests (Sampson et al. 1997).

2. We opted for the self-referential efficacy scale, given its conceptual location as a measure of one's intrinsic motivation inside a formal organization. Measures of collective efficacy have proved predictive of positive teacher or achievement outcomes (Louis et al. 2010). They may overlap conceptually with collective responsibility for school improvement and pupil learning, a question on which measurement work might focus.

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Exploring the Effect of Supportive Teacher Evaluation Experiences on U.S. Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Timothy G. Ford

Angela Urick



Alison S. P. Wilson

University of Oklahoma

United States

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Abstract: Teacher satisfaction is a key affective reaction to working conditions and an important predictor of teacher attrition. Teacher evaluation as a tool for measuring teacher quality has been one source of teacher stress in recent years in the United States. There is a growing body of evidence on how to evaluate teachers in ways which support their growth and development as practitioners. For this study, we inquired: What is the relationship between supportive teacher evaluation experiences and U.S. teachers' overall job satisfaction? To answer this question, we employed a multilevel regression analysis to multiply-imputed data on U.S. lower-secondary teachers' experiences from the 2013 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). We found a small, positive relationship between the perceptions of supportive teacher evaluation experiences and U.S. secondary teachers' satisfaction after controlling for other important teacher and school characteristics and working conditions. Further, teachers who felt their evaluation

led to positive changes in their practice had higher satisfaction. Teachers whose primary evaluator was a fellow teacher as opposed to the principal also had higher satisfaction on average. We discuss the implications of these findings for school leaders as well as future teacher evaluation policy.

Keywords: teacher evaluation; job satisfaction; teacher feedback; teacher motivation; multilevel modeling; TALIS 2013

Explorando el efecto de las experiencias de evaluación docente en la satisfacción laboral de los docentes de EE.UU.

Resumen: La satisfacción del maestro es una reacción afectiva clave a las condiciones de trabajo y un importante predictor del desgaste del docente. La evaluación de los maestros como una herramienta para medir la calidad de los docentes ha sido una de las causas del estrés docente en los últimos años en los Estados Unidos. Existe un cuerpo creciente de evidencia sobre cómo evaluar a los maestros de maneras que apoyen su crecimiento y desarrollo como profesionales. Para este estudio, preguntamos: ¿Cuál es la relación entre las experiencias de evaluación docente y la satisfacción laboral general de los docentes de EE. UU.? Para responder a esta pregunta, empleamos un análisis de regresión multinivel para datos de imputación múltiple en las experiencias de docentes de secundaria de EE. UU. De la Encuesta Internacional de Enseñanza y Aprendizaje 2013 (TALIS).

Encontramos una relación pequeña y positiva entre las percepciones de las experiencias de evaluación docente de apoyo y la satisfacción de los docentes de secundaria de los EE. UU. Después de controlar otras características importantes del docente y la escuela y las condiciones de trabajo. Además, los maestros que sintieron que su evaluación llevó a cambios positivos en su práctica tuvieron una mayor satisfacción. Los docentes cuyo evaluador principal fue un compañero profesor en comparación con el director también tuvieron una mayor satisfacción en promedio. Discutimos las implicaciones de estos hallazgos para los líderes escolares, así como la política futura de evaluación docente.

Palabras-clave: evaluación docente; Satisfacción laboral; motivación del maestro; modelado multinivel; TALIS 2013

Explorando o efeito das experiências de avaliação de professores na satisfação profissional de professores americanos

Resumo: A satisfação do professor é uma reação afetiva fundamental às condições de trabalho e um importante preditor do desgaste do professor. A avaliação dos professores como uma ferramenta para medir a qualidade dos professores tem sido uma das causas do estresse do professor nos últimos anos nos Estados Unidos. Há um crescente corpo de evidências sobre como avaliar os professores de forma a apoiar seu crescimento e desenvolvimento como profissionais. Para este estudo, perguntamos: Qual é a relação entre as experiências de avaliação do apoio ao professor e a satisfação geral do trabalho dos professores de EE. UU? Para responder a essa questão, utilizamos uma análise de regressão multinível para dados de múltiplas imputações nas experiências de professores do ensino médio em EE. UU Do Inquérito Internacional de Ensino e Aprendizagem 2013 (TALIS). Encontramos uma relação pequena e positiva entre as percepções das experiências de avaliação do apoio ao professor e a satisfação dos professores do ensino médio nos EUA. UU Depois de controlar outras características importantes do professor e da escola e condições de trabalho. Além disso, os professores que sentiram que sua avaliação levou a mudanças positivas em sua prática tiveram maior satisfação. Os

professores cujo principal avaliador era um colega professor em comparação com o diretor também tiveram uma satisfação maior em média. Discutimos as implicações dessas descobertas para os líderes das escolas, bem como a futura política de avaliação de professores.

Palavras-chave: avaliação de professores; Satisfação no trabalho; motivação do professor; modelagem multinível; TALIS 2013

Introduction

Teacher satisfaction is an important affective reaction to school working conditions, and has been found to mediate the relationship of working conditions to teacher attrition (Cha & Cohen-Vogel, 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009, 2010, 2011). The most recent *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher* (2013) reports that the percentage of U.S. teachers who report being “very satisfied” in their jobs has dropped 23 percentage points since 2008 to a low of 39%. At the same time, stress among teachers has increased, with over half of teachers reporting that they experience great stress every day or several times a week. This represents an increase of 15 percentage points since 1985—the last time the question was asked. While the causes for these sharp changes in teacher well-being are not localized to one source, the increased demands placed on U.S. teachers due to accountability have likely exacerbated the problem (Hargreaves, 2010). Increased pressure to conform to outside expectations for their work has made it difficult for teachers to pursue the psychic rewards that attracted them to teaching in the first place (Ford, Van Sickle, Clark, Fazio-Brunson, & Schween, 2017; Ford, Van Sickle, & Fazio-Brunson, 2016; Hargreaves, 2003, 2010; Ingersoll, 2003). Furthermore, lack of support to match increased pressure is damaging to teachers’ perceptions of self-efficacy and autonomy (Lavigne, 2014)—key sources of teacher satisfaction and intrinsic motivation for improvement (Firestone, 2014; Ingersoll, 2003; Lortie, 1975; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011, 2014; Sylvia & Hutchinson, 1985).

In addition to the effects on teachers themselves, there are several reciprocal consequences for the broader school community whose teachers experience disproportionate job dissatisfaction. Teachers with psychosocial issues stemming from dissatisfaction can negatively affect school climate through strained interactions with coworkers and students (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008; Kokkinos, Panayiotou, & Davazoglou, 2005). Additionally, schools pay the price through increased teacher absences, mental and medical healthcare costs, and compromised teacher performance (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008; Leithwood, Menzies, Jantzi, & Leithwood, 1999).

In addition to salary, working conditions such as stress and lack of collegiality, professional discretion, and administrative support remain key predictors of teachers’ decisions to leave the profession (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Pearson & Moomaw, 2005; Shen, Leslie, Spybrook, & Ma, 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009, 2011; Urick, 2016). Approximately 16% of U.S. teachers decided to change schools or leave the profession in 2012 according to the recent Teacher Follow-up Survey collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014). More than two-thirds of these teachers left voluntarily (Goldring et al., 2014), and may not have been replaced by a qualified teacher, which has contributed to growing teacher shortages (see Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Whether teachers ultimately decide to leave or not, negative teacher affective outcomes, such as job dissatisfaction, influence overall school working conditions, organizational capacity and, in turn, student outcomes (Cha & Cohen-Vogel, 2011; Evans, 2001).

The Landscape of “New” Teacher Evaluation in the United States

One potential source of teacher support or stress in recent years—teacher evaluation—has received increasing attention in the “new era of accountability” (Murphy, Hallinger, & Heck, 2013, p. 349). This new era, ushered in with the authorization of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2001, marked a shift away from social democratic education policy making towards neoliberal policy solutions to educational problems (Burch, 2009; Hursh, 2007). Neoliberalism emphasizes the efficiencies brought about by market competition, deregulation, and a more explicit focus on the measurement and tracking of performance outcomes for the purposes of incentivizing improvement (i.e., performance management). With Race to the Top (RttT) in 2009, the focus of NCLB largely shifted to the problem of “teacher quality,” and, in doing so, teacher evaluation again gained prominence as a proposed lever for school improvement (Lavigne & Good, 2015). Through funding attached to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, states were incentivized to implement annual performance-based evaluation systems for teachers which included common standards and assessments, feedback systems, and some measure of effectiveness based on student test scores (including value-added measures [VAMs]; Race to the Top Fund, 2016).

The thrust of current educational accountability policy, including the newest iteration of teacher evaluation, falls within Schneider and Ingram’s (1990) classification of authority/incentive policy tools. The underlying rationale of authority/incentive tools is that using rewards or punishment to induce desired behaviors is the most effective way to motivate individuals—an argument with a rich history in the social sciences. For example, in psychology, such an orientation to human motivation is aligned with classic operant theory (Skinner, 1953). However, due to the emphasis on performance over process (Hirsch, 2007), current education accountability reinforces *outcomes* not behavior, and this results in both desired behaviors (increased teaching effort/focus, instructional improvement) and undesired behaviors (teaching to the test, narrowing of the curriculum, cheating, etc.) being reinforced equally (Ryan & Brown, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2017; Ryan & Weinstein, 2009).

In organizational science, this approach to motivation is at the heart of the classic “Theory X/Theory Y” debate of organizational management. Theory X is undergirded by assumption that human beings are inherently averse to work and responsibility and are therefore best motivated by external means (via rewards or punishment). Theory Y, on the other hand, recognizes the limitations of authority as a form of control and instead operates on the assumption that humans have an innate desire to actively seek out and pursue identified goals (McGregor, 1960). While scholars now recognize that this dichotomy has limitations, evident is the degree to which a Theory X mindset has driven much of current education policy making (Harvey, 2014)—this despite the corporate world having largely rejected this approach in favor of more development-oriented approaches (Cappelli & Tavis, 2016).

Since the early days of Race to the Top, and now with the advent of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), some states have augmented their teacher evaluation policies based on early feedback, but the overall trend points toward the increased use of extrinsic motivational tools in state teacher evaluation policy. As of 2015, 43 out of 50 states new teacher evaluation systems include student achievement as a measure of teacher effectiveness; for 35 of these, student achievement growth is a preponderant or significant criterion in the evaluation. Around one half of states allow the results of teacher evaluation to inform dismissal decisions, 19 states allow evaluation evidence to inform tenure decisions, and in 14 states teacher effectiveness is tied to compensation (i.e., pay-for-performance; Doherty & Jacobs, 2015).

A growing number of education researchers and practitioners are skeptical of the ability of next-generation teacher evaluation systems, as currently designed, to improve teaching and learning

(Darling-Hammond, Amrein-Beardsley, Haertel, & Rothstein, 2012; Hallinger et al., 2014; Hewitt & Amrein-Beardsley, 2016; Murphy et al., 2013). Though the evidence on performance or “merit” based pay is mixed, several recent experimental evaluation studies revealed limited, if any, change in student achievement, teacher motivation, attitudes, or instructional practice over time (Marsh et al., 2011; Springer et al., 2012; Yuan et al., 2013). Furthermore, recent scholarship has revealed some unintended consequences of current U.S. teacher evaluation policy, such as: lack of support and/or guidance in the use of teacher evaluation results (Amrein-Beardsley & Collins, 2012; Ford et al., 2017); lack of validity and/or reliability (either real or perceived) of evaluation results (Darling-Hammond et al., 2012; Ford et al., 2016; Jiang, Sporte, & Luppescu, 2015; Longo-Schmid, 2016; Reddy et al., 2017); and evidence of increase in adverse affective states for teachers subjected to high-stakes evaluation, such as high stress and anxiety as well as decreased job satisfaction, professional commitment, and turnover (Ford et al., 2017; Hewitt, 2015; Holloway & Brass, 2017; Ingersoll et al., 2016; Jiang et al., 2015).

Current Study

When considered together, these trends in current education policy mark an important shift in the nature and scope of teacher professionalism, and this has implications for how teachers view their work and the satisfaction they derive from it (Ford et al., 2017; Hargreaves, 2010; Holloway & Brass, 2017; Torres & Weiner, 2018). In her work in the sociology of professions, Evetts (2009, 2011) distinguishes between occupational and organizational professionalism, with the former denoting a professionalism characterized by partnership, collegiality, autonomy, and trust, and the latter a professionalism of bureaucratic and hierarchical control, standardization, and hyper-rationality. She argues that while administrators may espouse the values and approaches of occupational professionalism, the reality of day-to-day work reflects to a greater degree the values and approaches of organizational professionalism. We would argue, as others have, that this holds true for the teaching profession (Hargreaves, 2010; Zeichner, 2010) and by extension, teacher evaluation policy and practice. While district, state, and national teacher evaluation policies may espouse the importance of the benefits to teachers of evaluation (see, e.g., U.S. Department of Education, 2009, *Race to the Top*, Great Teachers and Leaders subsection D, Part 5), in practice high-stakes, top-down, teacher evaluation reflects an increasing prioritization of the needs of the educational organization for control and certainty over the needs of teachers to feel supported in their learning and development as practitioner-professionals (Holloway & Brass, 2017; Holloway, Sørensen, & Verger, 2017). These shifts have implications for teacher satisfaction, as we will discuss a bit later, because the characteristics of occupational professionalism are those historically that have been the primary sources of attraction and retention within teaching (Cohen, 2011; Lortie, 1975; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995; Scott, Stone, & Dinham, 2001; Shen et al., 2012). Given these considerations, an important question that remains to be addressed in the literature is: If current evaluation systems were designed to be more supportive of teachers’ growth as professionals, would this result in greater teacher satisfaction? While the answer to this question may seem obvious to most, it is somewhat surprising to note that, to date, it has received very little empirical attention.

As a first step in this over-arching line of inquiry, we took up the following question for this study: What is the relationship between supportive teacher evaluation experiences and U.S. teachers’ overall job satisfaction? To answer this question, we fit a multilevel regression model to data from U.S. lower-secondary teachers’ in the 2013 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). The benefit of using the 2013 TALIS data for this study were three-fold. First, the TALIS data was collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at the height of implementation of *Race to the Top*, so that, by spring 2013 when the TALIS data were collected, those U.S. states first

awarded the grants were already well into implementation of their new evaluation systems (Race to the Top Fund, 2016). Second, as an international survey, TALIS 2013 utilized a multitude of measures designed to capture a wide-range of teacher evaluation practices in schools, not necessarily just those reliant on formal incentives/punitive structures (see Strizek, Tourkin, & Erberber, 2014). Third, it was designed to capture teacher evaluation practice as situated within the context of a broad set of school climate and teacher working conditions.

The results of this investigation could be of benefit to both policy makers and practitioners in the US, as well as other countries employing more “high stakes” approaches to teacher evaluation. Furthermore, because states have more flexibility in augmenting teacher evaluation systems to encourage more routine, useful, and supportive feedback under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), information derived from this study might potentially be used to make changes to current systems with the enhancement of teacher support in mind. Additionally, because administrators are often responsible for overseeing the evaluation process at their respective school sites, a clearer understanding of the relationship between teacher evaluation policy and practice and teacher affective outcomes like job satisfaction could help school leaders adapt their roles within the evaluation system to foster a more supportive environment that better promotes authentic collaboration, professional growth, and instructional improvement (Davis & Wilson, 2000; Hulpia, Devos, & Rosseel, 2009).

Teacher Job Satisfaction: Measurement and Sources of Influence

Satisfaction is defined as a “...positive (or negative) evaluative judgment one makes about one’s job,” (Moe, Pazzaglia, & Ronconi, 2010, p. 1145) and informs teacher’s feelings of professional commitment and/or motivation (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). These evaluations involve an interplay between how individuals experience teaching as well as the school environment and what they expect from these experiences (Papaioannou & Christodoulidis, 2007). Sylvia and Hutchinson (1985) defined teacher satisfaction as gratification derived from “higher order” needs—in other words, work elements which are intrinsically rewarding. As a cognitive process, satisfaction occurs for individuals when their capabilities are well-matched with the challenge of a task (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Satisfaction for teachers, like workers in other human improvement occupations, is intricately tied to the degree to which they are able to pursue and reap the “psychic rewards” that attracted them to the field (Hargreaves, 2010). For teachers, having autonomy, meaningful relationships with colleagues and students, and seeing their hard work pay off in student success are all key psychic rewards (Cohen, 2011; Scott, Stone, & Dinham, 2001; Shen et al., 2012; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995).

Job satisfaction is a somewhat ambiguous term, and this has led to some variation in how it has been measured in educational research. In measuring job satisfaction, researchers have tended toward a more global perspective, as preferences about the specific circumstances which satisfy individual teachers can vary (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). In general, two facets of teacher job satisfaction have comprised the measure in past studies: the extent that teachers have had a positive judgment of their work and/or the profession as well as school working conditions (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Weiss, 2002). For this study, we followed this general operationalization, conceptualizing teacher job satisfaction as containing both positive evaluative judgments about working conditions in schools as well as that of their work and profession more generally.

Beyond the intrinsic factors that primarily drive teachers, there are other sources of influence on teachers’ job satisfaction, and these can be classified into two categories: a) aspects of school

context and process, and b) external factors (Dinham & Scott, 1998; Shen et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Aspects of school context and process consist of both fixed characteristics of schools such as school size and school composition, and school process variables which encapsulate school working conditions. Both school size and composition (percent poverty/students of color) have been found in prior studies to be negatively related to satisfaction (Perie & Baker, 1997). Yet others have found no association between school size and satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). Being assigned a mentor or participation in teacher induction have also been found to increase satisfaction, intent to stay, and perceptions of working conditions, particularly for new teachers (Pogodzinski, Youngs, & Frank, 2013).

Findings regarding the relationship of other teacher and principal background characteristics such as years of experience, gender, and schooling level have been mixed, but a general assessment of studies on teacher satisfaction is that the relative effects of school process variables like school climate/culture, administrative support, collegiality, empowerment/decision making, and relationships with students are larger than those of teachers and school background characteristics (Shen et al., 2012; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2012). The one exception to this generalization, however, is in the domain of teacher affective responses to school conditions, and these tend to be relatively strong predictors of satisfaction. Already discussed previously, as a corollary affective reaction to satisfaction, teacher burnout in response to adverse working conditions, is moderately-to-strongly related to job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009, 2011). Furthermore, self-efficacy, or a teacher's beliefs about the perceived internal and external resources (various forms of support such as autonomy, professional development, relationships with colleagues) they can draw upon in completing a teaching task, is also positively related to job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009, 2014), suggesting that it mediates the relationship between school climate and satisfaction (Malinen & Savolainen, 2016). These significant relationships with burnout and efficacy suggest that a factor, like teacher evaluation, which also shapes a teacher's perception of their ability, would be directly related to job satisfaction. Moreover, it is likely that the supports or climate surrounding the evaluation would further enhance or exacerbate this relationship.

In the accountability era, factors external to the school related to satisfaction are those related to external pressure and intervention, as well as public perception of schools (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011), and these likely have indirect effects on teacher satisfaction through the principal's enactment of leadership practice that either is (or is not) conducive to positive school climate and working conditions. Few studies in the literature focus on the direct relationships of these factors on teacher satisfaction, perhaps because of the indirect nature of the relationship or because of the lack of direct measures of these effects available for use. Our study, however, considers all the above sources of satisfaction in our models of the effects of supportive teacher evaluation practice on teacher satisfaction.

Theoretical Framework

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a multi-faceted psychological theory of human behavior and personality development (Ryan & Deci, 2017). SDT researchers have amassed, over decades of research, a set of empirically-tested theories and propositions about the various sets of conditions under which individuals are optimally motivated. A key maxim of Self-determination theory (SDT) is that of *dialectical integration*: an intrinsic desire to engage in and interact with the world, exercise capacities, and pursue connectedness toward a more complex sense of self (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT), a sub-theory of SDT, predicts that intrinsic drive will remain intact so long as certain key psychological conditions are met, namely the needs for

competence, autonomy, and relatedness. *Competence* refers to the need to experience performances as effectively enacted; thus individuals are driven to build upon existing skills and capacities in anticipation of future performance (Niemic & Ryan, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2002). *Autonomy* concerns a perceived internal locus of causality; that is, the taking of action for which impetus derives not from the need to conform to external forces/expectations but rather from self-endorsed or determined values and beliefs (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Finally, *relatedness* refers to the psychological need to feel connected to significant others; i.e., to care and be cared for as well as share a sense of belongingness to others in your community (Ryan & Deci, 2002). When these needs are met, the individual experiences a wide-range of positive outcomes including autonomous motivation, a personal growth orientation, engagement, enjoyment, self-efficacy, satisfaction, and decreased burnout (Kunter & Holtzberger, 2014; Ryan & Deci, 2017).

However, a significant part of daily life is carrying out tasks that are not intrinsically rewarding, and necessitate motivation by external means. In these cases, other SDT sub-theories, like Organismic Integration Theory (OIT), help explain how to move individuals from controlled towards more autonomous (intrinsic) motivation—an orientation to work, as mentioned above, that yields substantially greater positive behavioral and psychosocial outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The critical take-away in discussing these two distinct sub-theories is that understanding the context underlying the motivation of individuals towards a task is critical to selecting an appropriate motivational approach. At best, the misalignment between context and strategy will have no effect on behavior or performance; at worst, it can have deleterious effects of individual motivation, well-being, and performance (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

BPNT as a sub-theory is particularly relevant to understanding teacher motivation due to the unique characteristics of the teaching profession (Roth, 2014). Because the majority of teachers enter the profession for altruistic reasons (Lortie, 1975; Rosenholtz, 1991; Watt & Richardson, 2014), it is one of the few occupations where individuals exhibit an intrinsic orientation to their work (Kunter & Holtzberger, 2014). In this case, the motivational strategy is simple: create conditions that reinforce and activate existing intrinsic motivation. As was mentioned previously, this is not the approach accountability systems in the U.S. generally take; thus the prevalence of extrinsic rewards/punishment tied to performance creates a fundamental misalignment between the motivational context and the approach (Niemic & Ryan, 2009). This misalignment manifests itself, among other ways, as increased stress, decreased satisfaction, and increased attrition (Ford et al., 2017; Ryan et al., 2017; Saeki, Segool, Pendergast, & von der Embse, 2017; von der Embse et al., 2016; von der Embse, Schoemann, Kilgus, Wicoff, & Bowler, 2017). Refocusing the design and implementation of teacher evaluation to better reflect the characteristics of occupational professionalism—those things that provide teachers with a deep satisfaction in their work, namely partnership, collegiality, and autonomy—would begin the process of restoring working conditions to schools more conducive to meeting the psychological needs of teachers (Eyal & Roth, 2011; Ford & Ware, 2018; Roth, 2014; Ryan & Weinstein, 2009).

Teacher Evaluation Supportive of Teacher Growth and Development

Despite a continued struggle to remake U.S. teacher evaluation policy anew, there is a growing body of evidence about how to evaluate teachers in ways which support their growth and development as practitioners. There are many purposes for evaluating teachers, but a basic distinction we can draw is between teacher evaluation for accountability (summative) versus professional development (formative) purposes. On one hand, the goal of summative teacher evaluation is to assess the teacher's performance or quality, typically for accountability purposes (i.e., in reaching a decision about whether to apply reward or sanction; Organization for Economic Co-

operation and Development [OECD], 2009). Formative evaluation, on the other hand, involves evaluation for the purposes of teacher support and professional development (Delvaux et al., 2013).

Of course the formative/summative dichotomy can be a misleading one; these evaluation systems are not necessarily incompatible, but over-emphasis of the summative components of evaluation can undermine efforts to provide valid and reliable feedback to practitioners (Campbell, 1979; Ryan & Brown, 2005) as well as negatively affect school climate and culture (Ford et al., 2017; Saeki et al., 2017). Reinhorn, Johnson, and Simon (2017) found that the most successful schools in their sample prioritized formative evaluation, embedded within a supportive, improvement-oriented professional culture, and this in turn influenced teachers' attitudes towards evaluation as a developmental process and helped legitimize summative evaluation processes.

Recommendations for teacher evaluation practice which is supportive of teachers' growth and development can be traced back to the first teacher evaluation movement in the U.S. in the 1980s, but have resurfaced as a result of recent policy developments (The New Teacher Project [TNTP], 2010; Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009). First, teacher evaluation should be systematic and frequent and should yield useful, meaningful information about a teacher's practice as well as critical feedback on what to improve (Delvaux et al., 2013; Ford et al., 2016; TNTP, 2010; Tuytens & Devos, 2011). The SDT concept of *functional significance* states that the effects of external events on human motivation hinge on the psychological meaning they have for the recipient (Ryan & Weinstein, 2009). Events have a positive effect on an individual's self-motivation when they have *informational* significance—that is, when they provide feedback that helps learners become more effective but without eclipsing autonomous action (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017). On the other hand, events have *controlling* significance if they are experienced as pressure toward specific outcomes, and in these cases, individuals often respond by exerting the least amount of effort needed to gain reward or avoid punishment (Ryan & Weinstein, 2009). Finally, events have *amotivating* significance when the arousal they engender is debilitating or when they contain no inherent rationale for action. For example, events that are too challenging or feedback which is highly negative foster feelings of helplessness (loss of control) or incompetence (i.e., lack of self-efficacy), leading individuals to withdraw effort (Ryan & Brown, 2005). Time and energy are increasingly in short supply in U.S. public schools, so faculty who perceive the evaluation process as a waste of these resources are likely going experience frustration and stress from having to engage in it.

Second, assessments of teacher performance should be based upon a set of high-standards which reflect what is currently understood as good teaching practice (Darling-Hammond, 2013; Lavigne & Good, 2014, 2015). An evaluation approach based on the standards of good teaching supports instructional improvement by establishing the clear expectations necessary to motivate change (Kelly, Ang, Chong, & Hu, 2008) and by providing a common language for evaluators and teachers to discuss instructional feedback (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016). Clear standards can also facilitate perceptions of the evaluation as valid and fair, and this can drive use of information from their evaluation to make changes in practice (Delvaux et al., 2013; Ford et al., 2016; Lavigne, 2014). Perceptions of the validity, fairness, and usefulness of the evaluation process are a strong determinant of teacher satisfaction with the teacher evaluation process (Delvaux et al., 2013).

Third, such information should be based on a thorough assessment of teaching practice—no one measure of performance (whether student test scores or otherwise) is adequate to arrive at a determination of teacher effectiveness and construct a plan for change (Grissom & Youngs, 2016; Lavigne & Good, 2014; Master, 2014; TNTP, 2010). “Objective” measures of success like test scores seem particularly inadequate as measures of high-quality teaching, where objective success is elusive, not easily measured, nor feedback necessarily immediate (Cohen, 2011; Lortie, 1975).

Furthermore, utilizing predominately summative measures of performance such as standardized test scores or other student growth measures to make judgments of teacher performance increase the likelihood that teachers perceive the information generated as controlling as opposed to informational and will be less likely (or able) to use it in making changes to their practice (Adams, Forsyth, Ware, & Mwavita, 2016; Ryan & Weinstein, 2009). Furthermore, the prioritization (whether intentional or unintentional) of one measure of teacher performance may undermine credibility in the evaluation system if teachers do not feel that this measure truly reflects the quality of their instruction (Lavigne, 2014). Such a narrow measurement focus also ignores other valuable contributions of teachers to the development of whole child, such as the cultivation of non-cognitive dispositions or deeper, higher-order thinking (Grissom, Loeb, & Doss, 2016).

Fourth, during the evaluation process, teachers must be properly supported (in terms of time, autonomy, but also collegial support and professional development) for improvement in practice to emerge (Darling-Hammond, 2013; Ford et al., 2017). These three areas of support align with self-determination scholars' identification of three psychological needs which must be met for intrinsic motivation for tasks to be activated: the need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Teacher involvement through meaningful dialogue, goal-setting, and peer support might also help promote investment in the process (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016) while supporting teacher autonomy. It stands to reason that a teacher who has been provided useful, critical feedback without the support needed to utilize the feedback in constructive way to improve his/her practice will likely struggle to change and be frustrated as a result. Innovative approaches to teacher evaluation which involve peer/mentor assistance and support are emphasized in the recent literature (Darling-Hammond, 2013; Darling-Hammond et al., 2012; Hinchey, 2010; Lavigne & Good, 2014).

The nature of the relationship between the evaluator and the teacher is also important to teacher's satisfaction with the evaluation system (Delvaux et al., 2013). If the teacher perceives the evaluator to be incompetent, or the feedback process is compromised by poor communication, this can have a detrimental effect on the perceived usefulness of the process and the likelihood that a teacher will act on the evaluation results (Chow, Wong, Yeung, & Mo, 2002; Kelly et al., 2008). Perceptions of competence of the evaluator are related to the degree that the teacher feels the evaluator is qualified to rate their performance, and this is driven by knowledge of the evaluator's teaching experience, subject matter content/pedagogical knowledge, and training in the evaluation process (Delvaux et al., 2013; Milanowski & Heneman, 2001).

Finally, supportive teacher evaluation processes as a whole should be viewed by teachers and leaders alike as a significant, worthwhile activity (TNTP, 2010). This perception is a more global determination of its validity and importance, and is based on many of the design and implementation features listed above, but also the degree to which these features lead to improved results.

The Role of School Leaders in Supporting Teacher Development through Evaluation

Many of the features of supportive teacher evaluation mentioned in the previous section will not work without concomitant attention to the organizational hierarchies and power dynamics of a school. School leaders can play an important role in this process not as implementers of evaluation systems, but as facilitators of evaluation systems embedded within a school climate which values and emphasizes the norms of authentic occupational professionalism (Murphy et al., 2013). This calls attention to the multifaceted role of the school leader in promoting a school climate conducive to teacher autonomy, satisfaction, and commitment (Dou, Devos, & Valcke, 2017), as well as teacher growth and learning (Drago-Severson, 2012).

While supportive teacher evaluation is one mechanism for teacher growth, teacher development is also enhanced within a professional context (Kraft & Papay, 2014), suggesting the need for a more comprehensive set of supports such as opportunities for collaboration, shared decision making, and professional development (Drago-Severson, 2012; Kraft & Papay, 2014). Additional features of a school climate that supports teacher learning and growth include a school leader's investment in relationships—conveying care, respect, and appreciation for teachers' work—as well as a willingness to model learning (Drago-Severson, 2012). While teacher evaluation is often associated with the instructional dimension of leadership (Blase & Blase, 1999; Grissom, Loeb, & Master, 2013), developing a school climate that supports teacher learning and growth requires school leaders to employ a range of leadership strategies that reflect a balance of instructional, managerial, and visionary leadership approaches (Drago-Severson, 2012). Thus, while school leaders are often charged with formal summative evaluation responsibilities, this role should not be considered in isolation from other important—and demanding—leadership responsibilities as well as the school context in which evaluation practices are enacted.

Another important consideration when evaluating the potential of evaluation systems to support teacher development is the possible discrepancy between espoused or intended implementation and actual implementation practices. Murphy et al. (2013) have suggested that school leaders lack the skills to meaningfully leverage teacher evaluation for improvement purposes. Moreover, Kraft and Gilmour (2016) found that principals' individual goals and attitudes can influence evaluation practices, and other constraints can influence the quality of evaluation feedback, including lack of time amidst competing responsibilities, the nature of support and training for implementation, evaluation systems requirements and design, evaluators' level of general pedagogy versus subject-specific expertise, and the trust required to balance summative and formative interactions with teachers. Grissom, Loeb, and Master's (2013) findings that some practices, such as classroom walkthroughs, might be less effective than more direct support for teacher development through evaluation and coaching have implications for evaluators' time use and priorities and point to the need to consider what instructional leadership practices are more or less effective for supporting improvement. This underscores the complexity of school leaders' efforts to harness evaluation systems to promote collaboration around instructional improvement.

Method

This study is a secondary analysis of the 2013 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS 2013) administered by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). TALIS 2013 surveyed a total of 34 countries including the US. The focus of the “core” data collection efforts of TALIS 2013 remained, as they did for TALIS 2008, on teachers and leaders who work in lower secondary schools, level 2 of International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2010, 2014). While options to collect data at Levels 1 (Primary education) and 3 (Upper Secondary) were left open for individual countries to pursue, the majority of the OECD countries—including the United States—did not exercise them (OECD, 2014). Thus, our inferences about the relationship of supportive teacher evaluation to teacher job satisfaction in the United States were necessarily constrained to lower secondary teachers as a subgroup.

This administration of TALIS focused on the policy-related matters of both the appraisal of teachers' work in schools and their reported feelings of job satisfaction (OECD, 2014). TALIS 2013 items regarding teacher “appraisal” were replete and elicited information about various aspects of the evaluation/appraisal process. For each country sampled, TALIS 2013 set a target size of 200

schools with 20 teachers per school. Schools were selected according to a national sampling plan which used systematic random sampling with probability proportional to size (PPS) within explicit strata which might include school types, regions or funding (OECD, 2014). In line with the study's stated purpose, only the U.S. sample of schools was utilized ($N=122$).

Measures and Instrumentation

Job satisfaction. TALIS 2013 presents a unique opportunity to study the relationship of aspects of teacher evaluation practice on teacher job satisfaction. OECD created a composite measure of this focal dependent variable based on analyses of reliability and construct validity across countries. Job satisfaction has been measured as the extent that teachers are satisfied with their position and school (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011), and teacher satisfaction has been linked to decisions to move schools or leave the profession (Klassen & Chiu, 2011). The TALIS job satisfaction scale includes satisfaction with current work environment with items, "I enjoy working at this school," "I would recommend my school as a good place to work," "All in all, I am satisfied with my job," and satisfaction with profession, "The advantages of being a teacher clearly outweigh the disadvantages," "If I could decide again, I would still choose to work as a teacher." For both scales, reliability was above .70 (OECD, 2014). The teacher job satisfaction measure was standardized to facilitate effect size interpretation.

Supportive teacher evaluation (SUPPEVAL). This measure was created from TALIS teacher-level items to capture strategies/approaches to teacher evaluation that research suggests support teacher development and build teachers' intrinsic motivation for improvement (Darling-Hammond; 2013; Delvaux et al., 2013; Firestone, 2014; Ford et al., 2017). Using the program WINSTEPS 3.81 (Linacre, 2014), a Rasch rating-scale model was applied to a cluster of items from the teacher questionnaire (IT2G31A-H) that reflect evidence-based approaches to supportive teacher evaluation.

TALIS 2013 utilized confirmatory factor analysis (a classical test theory [CTT] approach) for its measure construction and scaling (OECD, 2014). The Rasch model, in contrast, is an Item Response Theory [IRT] approach, and is distinguished from classical test theory in considering the ability of respondents in tandem with the difficulty (i.e., ease of endorsement) of the items to which they are responding. Advantages and disadvantages of both notwithstanding (see, for example, Singh, 2004), both approaches are useful in the development and scaling of latent measures; in fact, other prominent international education datasets have opted to use an IRT approach for measure construction and scaling (e.g., TIMSS and PISA). Our choice to adopt an IRT approach over CFA was due to the exploratory nature of our development of the SUPPEVAL measure, which required a wider range of information to assess person and item performance than is typically provided using a CTT approach.

In addition to a host of other diagnostic information, the WINSTEPS program produces a scaled-score for each teacher in log-odds units which represents where each teacher's perceptions locates him/her on the continuum of supportive teacher evaluation (low, negative values reflect perceptions of a more punitive/non-supportive system, and high, positive numbers reflect perceptions of a more developmental/supportive teacher evaluation system). We set our threshold at mean-squared values of .5 to 1.5—accepted thresholds for Winsteps analysis (Linacre, 2014). Based on these criteria, one item was discarded as misfitting (IT2G31F), and this item asked teachers about how dismissal was linked to teaching evaluation performance. We hypothesized that a likely possibility for the noisiness of this item (high infit/outfit) in the measurement model is because the applicability of dismissal as a consequence for low performance differs across sampled schools (some schools are subject to these rules and some not due to district/state-level mandate),

similarly rated SUPPEVAL teachers across sampled schools might have had very different responses to this particular item if it does not apply to them.

Information related to the items which comprised the measure and results of the Rasch analysis are all included in Appendix A. Our final Rasch model of SUPPEVAL revealed high person and item reliability, as well as adequate item separation. Item difficulty analysis revealed that the easiest item for teachers to endorse was: “Teacher and appraisal feedback are largely done to fulfill administrative requirements” (IT2G31), and the most difficult to endorse was “Measures to remedy any weakness in teaching are discussed with the teacher” (TT2G31C). In a rating scale model, item difficulty is interpreted as an estimate of the distance of the “balance point” of the data (i.e., where responses on either side of the scale are equal) from the mid-point of the scale (in the TALIS case is midway between ‘agree’ and ‘disagree,’ given a 4 point scale). In other words, more teachers agreed than disagreed with the first statement, and more disagreed than agreed with the second statement. Since, item 31C was reverse coded, both of these difficulty statistics reveal that, on average, TALIS teachers perceived their evaluation system as less supportive—hence the negative average SUPPEVAL score in the sample (see Table 1).

Analytical Approach

Handling missing data. Instead of employing list-wise deletion, we employed multiple imputation (MI) techniques to the raw, teacher and school level data utilizing the *mi* statistical package in R (Gelman, Hill, Su, Yajima, & Pittau, 2015). Multiple imputation is substantially more robust than typical list or pair-wise deletion procedures to missing data bias, and results in multiple versions of the same dataset with different plausible values for the missing data based on available variable data and their underlying covariance structure (Enders, 2010). Furthermore list-wise deletion requires that the data are missing completely at random (MCAR) in order to ensure unbiased estimates—MI assumes only that the data are multivariate normal and, at minimum, missing at random (MAR).

The one exception to using MI for handling missing data in our analysis was with respect to the focal outcome, teacher job satisfaction. Teachers in the U.S. sample who were missing a job satisfaction score were removed prior to analysis (i.e., the values were not imputed). In all, this resulted in only 72 U.S. teachers being removed (approximately 3 percent of the total). Teacher job satisfaction, as well as several other similar perception items towards the end of the TALIS teacher survey (such as self-efficacy and climate perceptions) exhibited a unit nonresponse pattern (Enders, 2010). After reviewing the missing data coding procedure in the TALIS technical manual, the missing codes in the dataset indicated that nearly all of the teachers who were missing a job satisfaction score either returned the survey blank or incomplete (OECD, 2014). In this case, we endeavored to determine whether or not there were significant differences between teachers who were missing a job satisfaction score and other measured variables—in other words, could the data be assumed to be missing completely at random (MCAR). To test this assumption, we conducted a series of Bonferroni corrected t-tests and chi-squared tests of independence between teachers who had a job satisfaction score and those for whom it was missing with respect to TALIS teacher and school level variables. We found no significant differences between the groups with respect to these covariates, and thus list-wise deletion was a justifiable missing data handling approach (Enders, 2010).

Once teachers without a job satisfaction score were removed, the remainder of the missing data exhibited a general item non-response pattern (deLeeuw, Hox, & Huisman, 2003). This missing data pattern manifests as gaps in item response that appear to be randomly dispersed throughout the dataset (i.e., MCAR). Because multiple imputation does not require us

to invoke a MCAR assumption for the results to be unbiased, and there was no evidence to suggest they were missing not at random (MNAR), we chose the less stringent assumption of MAR, which allows for missing data on a variable to be related to other measured variables in the analysis (Enders, 2010).

The multiple imputation procedure employed fading noise reduction and resulted in 5 imputed datasets, which achieved convergence at 120 iterations. Since the HLM program can handle multiply-imputed datasets in estimation, separate 2-level HLM analysis files were created for each imputed dataset and then pooled final model estimates were provided via the multiple imputation feature in HLM 7.0. These procedures resulted in a final sample of 1853 teachers nested within 122 schools. Table 1 displays both pre- and post-imputation descriptive statistics for all study variables.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Teacher Characteristics	Original <i>N</i>	Imputed <i>N</i>	Mean	Imputed Mean	<i>SD</i>	TALIS Variable(s)
Female	1852	1853	0.65	0.64	0.48	TT2G01
Years of experience ^a	1840	1853	0.01	0.01	1.03	TT2G05B
Graduate degree	1850	1853	0.02	0.02	0.13	TT2G10
Full time teacher	1853	1853	0.97	0.97	0.17	TT2G03
Permanent contract	1853	1853	0.67	0.67	0.47	TT2G06
Proportion SPED students in class	1853	1853	0.13	0.13	0.33	TT2G09
Participated in an induction program	1847	1853	0.61	0.61	0.49	TT2G19A
Assigned a mentor	1848	1853	0.12	0.12	0.32	TT2G20A
School mgmt. (Hrs/wk)	1751	1853	1.75	1.78	4.87	TT2G18E
Paperwork (Hrs/wk)	1800	1853	3.28	3.52	0.99	TT2G18F
Barriers to PD year	1843	1853	10.82	10.80	3.03	TT2G27C-G ($\alpha = .73$)
Felt prepared to teach	1851	1853	10.59	10.59	1.70	TT2G13A-C ($\alpha = .84$)
Depth of preservice content & methods	1853	1853	8.01	8.02	1.52	TT2G12A-C ($\alpha = .74$)
Feedback led to positive chg in practice	1810	1853	2.24	2.23	0.76	TT2G30A-N ($\alpha = .94$)
Perception of climate and student relations ^a	1850	1853	0.00	0.04	1.00	TT2G45A-D ($\alpha = .81$)
Tch. pcpt. of shared responsibility and decision making ^a	1850	1853	-0.01	0.00	1.00	TT2G44A-E ($\alpha = .89$)
Teacher self-efficacy	1844	1853	12.68	12.59	1.83	TSELEFFS
Supportive teacher evaluation	1853	1853	-2.04	-2.03	1.35	TT2G31A- E,G,H
Job satisfaction ^a	1853	1853	0.00	0.00	1	TJOBSATS

Table 1 (Cont'd.)
Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Principal/School Characteristics	Original <i>N</i>	Imputed <i>N</i>	Mean	Imputed Mean	<i>SD</i>	TALIS Variable(s)
Principal female	101	122	0.49	0.44	0.50	TC2G01
Doctoral degree	101	122	0.16	0.15	0.35	TC2G03
Principal experience ^a	101	122	0.04	0.07	0.97	TC2G04B
Village, <3,000	100	122	0.19	0.16	0.37	TC2G09
Town, 3k-100k	100	122	0.45	0.50	0.50	TC2G09
City, 100,001-1,000,000	100	122	0.22	0.20	0.40	TC2G09
Large City, >1,000,000	100	122	0.11	0.09	0.29	TC2G09
Private school	99	122	0.22	0.23	0.43	TC2G10
Stud./teacher ratio	99	122	14.90	14.50	7.26	G12A/G14A
% of non-native speakers ^a	99	122	-0.11	-0.10	0.91	TC2G15C
% disadvantaged homes ^a	99	122	-0.16	-0.14	1.00	TC2G15A
Principal perception of climate ^a	99	122	0.02	0.05	0.84	TC2G30A-F ($\alpha = .80$)
Prin job satisfaction ^a	99	122	0.00	-0.05	1.19	PJOBSATS
Eval. primarily by principal	99	122	0.78	0.82	0.38	TC2G27A
Eval. primarily by fellow teachers (non-mgmt.)	99	122	0.17	0.14	0.34	TC2G27D
Eval. primarily by external individuals	99	122	0.11	0.09	0.29	TC2G27E
Degree of external control over school policies	100	122	17.25	17.31	3.36	TC2G18A5-K5 ($\alpha = .91$)

Note: ^aVariable standardized. Appropriate weights applied for descriptive statistics and reliability analyses.

Two-level HLM analysis. In addition to the focal predictor, SUPPEVAL, we included other important teacher and school characteristics, attitudes, and perceptions about school working conditions and teacher appraisal practices that were presumed to be related to teacher satisfaction based on prior research. School level variables related to teacher satisfaction such as school climate, principal and school characteristics such as school poverty, urbanicity, sector, and principal satisfaction, as well as the primary evaluators in teacher appraisal were used to model between-school variation in teacher job satisfaction. The final 2-level HLM structure is represented in Equations 1 and 2 below:

Level 1 (Teacher):

$$Y_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \sum_{q=1}^Q \beta_{0qj} X_{qj} + r_{ij} \quad (1)$$

Level 2: (School):

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \sum_{s=1}^S \gamma_{0s} W_j + u_{0j} \quad (2)$$

$$\beta_{0qj} = \gamma_{q0} \text{ for } q = 1, \dots, Q. \quad (3)$$

Equation 1 indicates that teacher job satisfaction, Y_{ij} , was modeled with respect to Q number of teacher-level covariates, including SUPPEVAL. At the school level (Equations 2 and 3), variation around the grand mean of teacher job satisfaction, γ_{00} , was modeled with respect to the sum of S number of school level predictors, including various school and principal characteristics, and a term for unexplained school variation in teacher job satisfaction, u_{0j} . The teacher weight, TCHWGT, was incorporated into the final analysis to maintain the intended representativeness of the sample. All other teacher-level effects remained fixed at Level 2, as an analysis revealed that there was little between-school variance in the relationships between each of the teacher-level predictors and job satisfaction (Equation 3).

Results

The central purpose of this paper was to examine the influence of supportive teacher evaluation practice on teacher job satisfaction, and the results of the 2-level HLM analysis are displayed in Table 2. As an important first step in this analysis, we first examined the intra-class correlations (ICCs) with respect to the outcome via an examination of the partitioning of variance in teacher job satisfaction in the unconditional (null) model. Our analysis revealed a statistically significant amount of the variance in teacher job satisfaction (approximately 11%) was at the school level ($p < .001$), supporting our decision to model variance in teacher job satisfaction as containing both between-teacher and between-school components.

The final model of teacher job satisfaction revealed some important findings. First, our final model revealed an effect of SUPPEVAL (albeit small) on teacher job satisfaction (coef. = 0.051, SE = .018, $p < .01$). While controlling for all other teacher and school level factors, for each log-odds

increase in the supportive nature of the evaluation experience, (SUPPEVAL mean = -2.03, range \approx 10 log odds units), teachers had a corresponding increase in satisfaction of half of a tenth of a standard deviation. Put another way, all other variables held constant, there is an average predicted difference of a half a standard deviation (1 raw job satisfaction point) between teachers on the very low end of the SUPPEVAL scale, and those at the very top.

Table 2

Two-Level HLM of the Effects of Supportive Evaluation on U.S. TALIS Teachers' Job Satisfaction (n = 1853)

Teacher Fixed Effects			
	coeff	SE ^a	t-ratio
Intercept	0.295	0.149*	1.979
Supportive teacher evaluation (SUPPEVAL)	0.051	0.018**	2.784
Female teacher	0.018	0.041	0.435
Years of experience	0.003	0.024	0.106
Graduate degree	0.120	0.134	0.900
Full time teacher	-0.286	0.097**	-2.942
Permanent contract	0.033	0.051	0.655
Proportion of SPED students in class	0.025	0.069	0.358
Participated in an induction program	-0.054	0.044	-1.238
Has been assigned a mentor	-0.063	0.073	-0.867
School management (hrs./wk.)	-0.005	0.005	-0.940
Hours per week spend on paperwork	-0.011	0.005*	-2.052
High barriers to PD in last year	-0.037	0.008***	-4.818
Teacher felt prepared to teach	0.024	0.013~	1.788
Preservice training in content and methods	0.013	0.017	0.734
Eval. feedback has led to positive changes in practice	0.267	0.039***	6.823
Tch. percept. of climate and student relations	0.157	0.023***	6.720
Tch. shared responsibility and decisionmaking	0.214	0.031***	6.950
Teacher self-efficacy	0.042	0.013**	3.117
School Fixed Effects			
Female principal	-0.127	0.061*	-2.060
Principal doctoral degree	0.105	0.060~	1.753
Principal experience	-0.012	0.032	-0.379
Village, <3000 people	0.121	0.116	1.048
Town, 3001-100,000	0.160	0.090~	1.767
City, 100,000-1,000,000	0.030	0.118	0.258
Private school	0.128	0.095	1.342
Student-teacher ratio	-0.010	0.005*	-2.043
Percent non-native speakers	0.017	0.034	0.503
Percent students from disadvantaged homes	-0.011	0.049	-0.215
Principal perception of climate	0.059	0.032~	1.835
Principal job satisfaction	0.011	0.023	0.479
Eval. primarily by principal	-0.145	0.082~	-1.768
Eval. primarily by fellow teachers (non-mgmt.)	0.204	0.069**	2.945
Eval. primarily by external individuals	-0.126	0.092	-1.365
Degree of external control over school policies	0.018	0.009~	1.952

Table 2 (Cont'd.)

Two-Level HLM of the Effects of Supportive Evaluation on U.S. TALIS Teachers' Job Satisfaction (n = 1853)

Random Effects		
Level 1	Between Teachers	0.594***
Level 2	Between Schools	0.027***
Level 1	Pseudo-r ²	0.31
Level 2	Pseudo-r ²	0.75

*** $p \leq .001$, ** $p \leq .01$, * $p \leq .05$, ~ $p \leq .10$

Note. ^aRobust standard errors reported. Coefficient estimates in this table are the averaged results from the 5 imputed datasets provided by the HLM program, with the teacher weight applied (TCHWGT). The outcome variable, teacher job satisfaction (TJOBSATIS), was standardized for this analysis. Large cities (1,000,000+) were the comparison/holdout group for urbanicity.

A key related finding from the analysis was that teachers who perceived that the feedback from their evaluation prompted positive changes in their practice was associated with higher job satisfaction on average (coef. = 0.267, SE = .039, $p < .001$), and this finding was over 2.5 tenths of a standard deviation. This finding is demonstrated further in Figure 1. While there is a wider range of below average teacher satisfaction responses, teachers who perceived around average or above average satisfaction for their current school and profession had correspondingly higher perceptions of supportive evaluation as well as a higher perceived positive change in practice from their evaluation. In reference to this figure, the positive, three-dimensional relationship is demonstrated by the high clustering of responses at the intersection of the top of the figure, positive end of the scale of teacher satisfaction, and the corner of the cube where the positive sides of both evaluation scales (supportive and positive change in practice) meet.

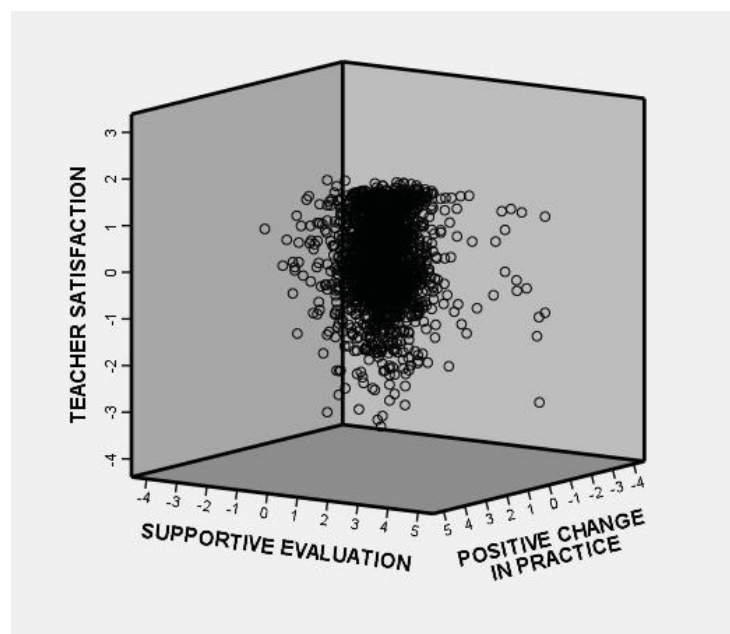


Figure 1. Three-dimensional positive relationship between supportive evaluation, positive change in practice from evaluation, and teacher satisfaction.

Note: Raw data from mean of imputed teacher datasets; standardized variables.

Other notable findings were that teachers' perception of climate and teacher-student relations and shared decision making were strong, independent predictors of teacher job satisfaction (coef. = 0.157, $SE = .023$, $p < .001$ and coef. = 0.214, $SE = .031$, $p < .001$, respectively). Teachers' feelings of self-efficacy were also positively related to job satisfaction (coef. = 0.042, $SE = .013$, $p < .01$). Further, teachers' job satisfaction was negatively related to the perceived barriers to professional development they experienced in the past year (coef. = -0.037, $SE = .008$, $p < .05$). At the school level, most notable was the estimate of the effects on a teacher's satisfaction attributed to their primary evaluator. We found a significant difference in average teacher satisfaction in USA TALIS schools where non-management teaching colleagues were the primary evaluator (coef. = 0.204, $SE = .069$, $p < .01$) as opposed to another group (principal, assigned mentor, other member of school management, or external evaluator). In contrast, in schools where the principal was identified as the primary evaluator, average teacher satisfaction was significantly lower than in schools where the primary evaluator was someone else within the school (coef. = -0.145, $SE = .082$, $p < .10$). Also of interest was the non-significance of principals' job satisfaction and the satisfaction of teachers in their school (coef. = 0.011, $SE = .023$, $p = n.s.$), as well as that of principal and teacher experience, assigned mentor, or participation in a mentoring program. Finally, there were also marginal positive associations of the school climate with teacher job satisfaction across schools (coef. = .059, $SE = .032$, $p < .10$), and a small negative influence on satisfaction as student-teacher ratio increased (coef. = -.01, $SE = .043$, $p < .05$).

In summary, this two-level HLM tested the independent influence of teacher evaluation and their surrounding working conditions on satisfaction. The main variable of interest, supportive evaluation, had a significant relationship with satisfaction. While in earlier arguments we suggest the importance of more supportive evaluations, as compared to summative, on teacher outcomes like satisfaction, this study did not seek to compare different forms of evaluation or predict how schools build supportive evaluation within broader working conditions. However, with these results, we do illustrate that a set of simultaneous, significant predictors at the teacher and school level represent working conditions which matter for teacher satisfaction—the nature of evaluation, climate, shared decision making, self-efficacy, professional development, and student-teacher ratio. This study extends the current literature by demonstrating that a supportive approach to teacher evaluation and a teacher's view of the usefulness of the feedback for positive changes in their practice help to explain variance in satisfaction within and across schools even after other working conditions of schools are taken into account.

Discussion

Central to this study was the assumption, rooted in self-determination theory, that the process of teacher evaluation most likely to result in positive benefits for teachers is when it is designed to support their psychological needs as learners and yields meaningful knowledge that can be directed towards meeting challenging goals for practice. The findings of this study provide some evidence for these assertions, revealing that there is a relationship between the perceptions of supportive teacher evaluation experiences and U.S. secondary teachers' satisfaction after controlling for other important teacher and school characteristics and working conditions. Beyond the basic features of the design and implementation of these supportive practices, we also found that the degree to which teachers experienced positive changes in their practice from evaluation was also related to their satisfaction—over two-and-one-half tenths of a standard deviation for every unit increase in perceptions of positive change. As with prior research, these findings suggest that teachers who find utility in the feedback they receive and can use this information to improve their

practice are more likely to be satisfied with the work they are doing and with their place in the profession (Ford et al., 2017; Hewitt, 2015; Ingersoll et al., 2016; Longo-Schmid, 2016).

With respect to prior literature on teacher satisfaction, other findings are important to note as well. Prior research has identified overall school climate as a measure of working conditions to influence satisfaction (Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012; Malinen & Savolainen, 2016). The findings here support prior findings, while noting that the relationship of a principal's perception of the school climate to teacher satisfaction was much smaller as compared to teacher perceptions of the climate, student relations, and shared responsibility and decision making. Furthermore, teacher efficacy, also found in numerous prior studies to be related to teacher satisfaction (Malinen & Savolainen, 2016; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010, 2014; von der Embse, Sandilos, Pendergast, & Mankin, 2016; Wang, Hall, & Rahimi, 2015) was also found to be the case in the TALIS sample as well. To our knowledge, few studies have examined the relationship between a principal's job satisfaction and the satisfaction of the teachers they lead. Interestingly, within the U.S. TALIS sample, principal satisfaction was not related to teachers' job satisfaction, though the link was a plausible one.

Furthermore, our findings demonstrated that average teacher satisfaction was likely higher in schools where someone other than the principal (or individual external to the school) was the primary evaluator—most particularly when the primary evaluator was a fellow teacher, mentor, or other member of school management. This aligns with some findings which suggest that who is evaluating teachers matters for the satisfaction they have with their rating and their perceptions of the fairness of the process (Delvaux et al., 2013). While principals can leverage their general pedagogical expertise to provide quality feedback, fellow teachers are more likely to be able to provide more frequent, subject-specific support (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016; Reinhorn et al., 2017). This does not minimize the role of principals in evaluation systems, but rather reinforces the potential for peer mentoring and instructional coaching to complement principal feedback within a more comprehensive system of teacher support. It also provides principals with opportunities to delegate evaluation responsibilities to others within the school, particularly if more frequent feedback is desired (Lavigne & Good, 2015). It is also possible that teacher evaluation designs that position fellow teachers as evaluators, might increase the likelihood that the evaluation process is seen as a collaborative one and the feedback generated from it safe, valid, and meaningful for improvement (Reddy et al., 2017). However, in the context of the TALIS data, the quality of the “teacher as evaluator” approach is, at best, unclear; thus our conclusions must be tempered accordingly.

A continuing area of concern for school leaders is the development of their instructional leadership and mentorship skills—historically a weaker area of leadership preparation. Self-determination theory suggests that providing feedback requires a delicate interplay between making it substantive and challenging while also staving off arousal that is debilitating to motivation for improvement (Ryan & Brown 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Principals' ability to effectively engage in these instructional leadership practices lies in the nature of the relationship that principals cultivate with teachers (Blase & Blase, 1999). Effective instructional leaders express an authentic interest in teachers' growth and development and leverage trust and mutual respect to engage in supportive interactions (Blase & Blase, 1999; Drago-Severson, 2012). By providing extensive teacher support within a collaborative model of teacher evaluation, principals can promote a professional culture focused on continuous improvement (Reinhorn et al., 2017). If evaluation is seen as an extension of daily practices within a supportive, improvement-oriented context, principals can help minimize the anxiety around evaluation (Reinhorn et al., 2017).

Finding likely gains in job satisfaction among teachers who experience more supportive teacher evaluation processes not only begins to corroborate existing psychological and educational research into what types of experiences build upon teachers' existing intrinsic motivation for

learning, but it also points to a key lever for change in the fight to retain good teachers—helping to keep them satisfied in their school and job. The results suggest we continue to study the ways in which teacher evaluation policies are designed and to what extent they incorporate teacher professional learning and development. We acknowledge that some summative evaluation of performance is necessary, and even desirable. However, ensuring that the teacher evaluation is seen as a fair and valid measure of performance should go a long way to building its credibility as a formative tool for teacher improvement and to ensuring that it is a valued part of the improvement process of a school (Ford et al., 2017; Longo-Schmid, 2016).

One possible limitation to the overall results of the study concerns our inability to tease out the individual effects of the different design features of supportive teacher evaluation that might be most influential to satisfaction. To this, we would argue that it is perhaps best to view these various features as a complementary system for teacher evaluation, one in which the whole is likely greater than the sum of its parts. Furthermore, while we were able to capture some perspectives on the teacher evaluation from teachers experiencing them, the TALIS measures were not equipped to capture the often subtle ways that power is exerted within schools which might affect teachers' experiences and their feelings about evaluation. As some scholars have noted, the years since NCLB have led to a gradual acceptance of the intrusions into their professional lives brought about by top-down accountability policies (Holloway & Brass, 2017). This observation has important implications for future research in this area, as it suggests that the standard by which one reports feeling satisfied with one's job might be shifting. Finally, because of our use of observational data and our investigation of supportive evaluation structures on teacher job satisfaction was exploratory in nature, it is important to emphasize that causal links cannot be made. Future research should establish more definitive causal linkages between teacher evaluation approaches and teacher job satisfaction.

Another important caveat to the above findings is the fact that our sample of teachers was limited to the lower-secondary level. Studies have revealed a small correlation between schooling level and satisfaction (Perie & Baker, 1997; Shen et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011), and this coupled with the fact that elementary teachers report higher instances of great stress in a given week (Met Life Inc., 2013) suggest the effects of supportive teacher evaluation practice on satisfaction could be even stronger for elementary teachers. Either way, future research should examine the relationship of supportive teacher evaluation practice at other schooling levels (i.e., elementary and high school levels). One final limitation to our study is based upon recent work which has found that a teacher's satisfaction is causally related to their evaluation rating in Tennessee, on the order of around .08 standard deviations (Koedel, Li, Springer, & Tan, 2017). Because such a variable is unavailable in the TALIS dataset (teachers' prior evaluation ratings), we are necessarily unable to empirically test its relationship to teacher satisfaction. Whether this relationship holds across states due to the variation in the rigor and quality of evaluation systems between them is still an open question worthy of exploration.

Implementing a more supportive teacher evaluation system is easier said than done, however. As Young and Kim (2010) assert, using assessment for formative/supportive purposes is "...is not a beginner activity" (p. 9). While the above findings implicate the actions of states, districts, and also individual school leaders, in crafting teacher evaluation systems that are supportive of teachers' psychological needs, this will necessitate the concomitant growth and development of principals and their knowledge and skills as instructional leaders. While the psychological needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness are universal needs (Ryan & Deci, 2002), providing targeted competence support to each and every lower-secondary level teacher will require at least a modicum of content and pedagogical knowledge for a wide-range of subjects on the part of principals. What

leaders can do, beyond becoming more skilled instructional leaders, is to work to make the school climate one which is more conducive to teacher learning by providing more space and autonomy for teachers wishing to reflect more deeply on their practice, and by providing access to expertise like instructional coaches to assist them in their classroom (Camburn & Han, 2015; Marsh, McCombs, & Martorell, 2010). To meet the demands of a more supportive evaluation system, principals might need assistance in reprioritizing, shifting, or delegating other leadership responsibilities (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016).

Conclusion

Hallinger, Heck, and Murphy (2014) assert that faith in the transformative potential of teacher evaluation as a tool for school improvement has far outstripped the empirical evidence of its effectiveness. These scholars, as well as others, continue to emphasize the importance of making the process (and products) of teacher evaluation supportive of teachers' learning and development as practitioners (Delvaux et al., 2013; Ford et al., 2016; Hallinger et al., 2014; TNTP, 2010; Tuytens & Devos, 2011). Of course, being able to render a summative judgment about a teacher's effectiveness provides information useful for determining a general evaluation of effectiveness, but to affirm and activate teachers' motivation toward improvement, we submit that these systems must also be able to yield actionable knowledge for teachers as well as provide an appropriate support structure as teachers work to make meaningful changes to their practice (Ford et al., 2016). Good teaching is difficult work. As a cognitive process, satisfaction in one's work occurs when capabilities are well-matched with the challenge of a task (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). An important focus of future policy and practice should attend to how we can apply what we know about teachers' needs for professional learning and development to the creation of an evaluation system which best supports teachers in meeting the challenges of teaching and learning in the 21st century.

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Appendix

Table 3

Rasch Measure of Supportive Teacher Evaluation (SUPPEVAL)

Item (4-point scale, <i>strongly disagree</i> to <i>strongly agree</i>)	D	Infit	Outfit
Teacher appraisal and feedback are largely done to fulfill administrative requirements (R) (TT2G31C)	.56	1.12	1.11
The best performing teachers in this school receive the greatest recognition (TT2G31A)	.33	1.19	1.23
Feedback is provided to teachers based on a thorough assessment of their teaching (TT2G31E)	.05	.80	.79
A development or training plan is established for teachers to improve their work as a teacher (TT2G31D)	-.05	.78	.77
A mentor is appointed to help the teacher improve his/her teaching (TT2G31H)	-.13	1.37	1.16
Teacher appraisal/feedback have little impact upon the way teachers teach in the classroom (R)(TT2G31B)	-.25	1.08	1.10
Measures to remedy any weakness in teaching are discussed with the teacher (TT2G31G)	-.51	.79	.77

Note. Person separation reliability = .83; item reliability = .99. TALIS teacher questionnaire item numbers in parentheses. D = item difficulty. R = item reverse coded.

About the Authors

Timothy G. Ford

University of Oklahoma

tgford@ou.edu

<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2975-4191>

Tim Ford is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Oklahoma. He examines the role of leadership in school improvement and teacher evaluation policy, particularly how leaders can support teacher occupational professionalization.

Angela Urick

University of Oklahoma

urick@ou.edu

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8868-8297>

Angela Urick is an assistant professor in the Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, at the University of Oklahoma. Her research interests include principal and teacher perceptions of leadership, leadership styles, school climate, teacher retention, and school improvement..

Alison S. P. Wilson

University of Oklahoma

alisonwilson@ou.edu

Alison Wilson is doctoral candidate in the Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, at the University of Oklahoma. Her research interests include the effects of school teacher and student learning conditions on achievement and school improvement.

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Testimony BOE

From: Deb McCurdy <debmcurdy80@yahoo.com> on behalf of Deb McCurdy
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:54 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Differential Testimony

2/16/2021

Dear BOE,

Please do everything possible to keep the differential pay for Special Education Teachers. I have been a Special Education teacher in Hawaii since 1992. Since then, the job involves many more responsibilities than before.

Presently, I have fifteen fourth and fifth graders in the same class with needs ranging from one fifth grader who can read grade level text to one 5th grader who is working on addition facts to ten and learning how to tell time, open a glue bottle twist top and put on a jacket with sleeves. I create specially designed instruction daily to meet all of my students' needs.

Additionally, I will prepare for, conduct and follow up on at least thirty IEP meetings this school year. I have Individualized Education Programs to write, Re-evaluations to conduct with re-evaluation summaries and worksheets to complete, Covid 19 Impact plan data to collect and write up, School Closure Plans and Total Distance Learning plans to write. Eight of my fifth graders are graduating this year, so I will hold Transition to Middle School meetings for all of them. Preparing for these meetings takes hours, the meetings take hours and the follow-up paperwork takes hours.

During our quarantine last spring when we were totally virtual, I kept extensive daily records of all of my parent contact as well as my contact with all fifteen students, the minutes I saw them, which IEP goals and objectives were worked on and how they were doing. The data was used to provide fourth quarter grades which were mandatory for special education students, but not general education students. I was on the computer from 7:30am daily until at least 5pm. I met virtually daily for two hours with my students and in between virtual instruction, I posted differentiated assignments for them.

I was exhausted and stressed more than any job in my life last spring and I considered retiring or taking a leave of absence as I felt my health was suffering. Knowing that I had the pay differential was very helpful to me at the time.

At our school, we have a new young teacher from the mainland teaching our special education pre-school. She worked very hard this year to attend school to become Special Education certified while teaching at the same time. She had no idea what she was getting into with all of the paperwork and all of the meetings required outside of teaching. She said that one of her Individualized Education Plans took six hours to write. She said she cries every day before work because it is so stressful.

I know that first year teachers do have a hard time, but I can assure you, nobody is going to want to come into the Special Education field or stay in it if there is not any incentive.

Personally, I just used to wish I was paid hourly beyond the salary for all of the paperwork and meetings like we are paid if we work during the summer. I must say that the differential made me finally feel appreciated for all of the extra work that the Special Education job requires. Not only that, it's a pretty impossible job. Just try teaching a dozen or more children at the same time with completely different needs. I feel like a waitress in a restaurant lunch rush running around to give all my customers what they want and need and do it pronto.

Now with pay cuts looming as well, the loss of the differential feels demoralizing and it doesn't seem worth it for me to stay on in the field much longer. I know these are hard times and I am grateful to have a job, however,

the state will find itself right back in the same place of teacher shortages in hard to fill positions if they do not maintain the differential.

I know that you will do your utmost to keep the pay differential in place.

Sincerely,

Deborah McCurdy

Noelani School since 1999

Testimony BOE

From: Clint Labrador <sakai7825@gmail.com> on behalf of Clint Labrador
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:03 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Differentials for Molokai

To Whom it May Concern:

Aloha, this email is in regards to the differentials for Special Education teachers on the island of Molokai. I fully support and agree that differentials help with the retention of quality teachers for IDEA students of trauma. I have been a Special Education teacher at Kaunakakai Elementary School since 2004. Through my years, I have serviced many students of trauma who have become functioning adults of society, some of whom have become more successful than me. I provided HOPE for many of these students, I provided a glimmer of light. Many of these students were headed down the unfortunate path of generational trauma and/or substance abuse. Already in my own experience of teaching, I have lost 3 students to suicide.

I am stating these experiences because, I too have experienced secondary post trauma from servicing these difficult students, many of which made me want to leave my position as a special education teacher. In addition, I have colleagues, who are positive male role models at the elementary level, want to switch to general education because of the clerical documentation required of us. The differential provided me the glimmer of hope, that my work is finally being acknowledged. With the removal of the differentials, I feel that the DOE is going backwards. IDEA students are MOST at risk for trauma and substance abuse. It is critical that they have quality role models who care at an early developmental stage of life. The differentials allow a safety net for our keiki because we will not consider leaving them for other less stressful opportunities.

Moreover, I plead with you BOE, please continue the differentials in order to provide a quality education for our most at risk keiki. Please consider keeping these differentials, because if you do, you will be looking out for Hawaii's future.

Mahalo,
Clinton Labrador

Testimony BOE

From: Dawn Ching <dawnching79@gmail.com> on behalf of Dawn Ching
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:04 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Parent testimony

As a parent, I value having qualified SpEd teachers in the classroom. Budget and position cuts will be detrimental to both students and teachers. Our SpEd teachers are so important and to cut even one position would be a disservice to the students. Our teachers love what they do! It's not "just a job" for them. Even in the pandemic, my daughter's teacher bought supplies with her own money. Please consider keeping all SpEd teachers employed without pay cuts. Our children need them.

Mahalo for your time,
Dawn Ching
Mother of Tehani Ching (SpEd student at S.W. King Intermediate School)

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: Sean Witwer <s_witwer@hotmail.com> on behalf of Sean Witwer
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:05 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A

My name is Sean Witwer. I am a special education teacher at Farrington High School and I have taught in the DOE since 1999.

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A, and I support the BOE's proposal directing the superintendent to continue shortage differentials.

There is a shortage of highly qualified special education teachers in Hawaii and the effects of this can be seen in the educational gap between students with and without disabilities in our public schools.

According to the Special Education Task Force Summary Report (May 2018), the on-time graduation rate of students with disabilities is 59% versus an on-time graduation rate of students without disabilities of 86%. (<https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/DOE%20Forms/Special%20Education/SPEDReport0518.pdf>)

Our special education students need more highly qualified teachers, not less, if we ever hope to close the educational gap in our public schools. The DOE has finally figured out how to attract special education teachers and now wants to reverse course after the most successful recruiting year since I've been in the DOE? That makes no sense.

The DOE must find a way to fund our schools, but not at the expense of our most vulnerable keiki.

Testimony BOE

From: Arnie Sing <kanusounds@gmail.com> on behalf of Arnie Sing
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:10 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Aloha!

May I kindly ask for your kōkua?

Please support Hawaiian immersion teachers in support of appropriate compensation.

The BOE Policy 105-8 which clearly states that Hawaiian Immersion Kumu are trained and educated in the **required** ADDITIONAL skill set in their field has ***already received approval.***

In 2020, that differential helped to ***decrease the amount of vacancies*** in Kaiapuni Schools which allows these schools to survive & the culture, history and language of Native Hawaiians to continue to flourish.

The amount of money that has already been approved and complies with this BOE Policy is reasonable.

Mahalo nui for doing the right and honorable next step. Support our Hawaiian Immersion Kumu & kula with the appropriate compensation & please comply with **BOE Policy 105-8.**

Respectfully submitted,
Arnold F. Sing
Kupuna of Kaiapuni Kumu & Haumana
Strong supporter of Kaiapuni Kula

Testimony BOE

From: Liz Light <lizzardlight@gmail.com> on behalf of Liz Light
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:12 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am submitting testimony for the BOW Special Meeting Action Item A.

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Elizabeth Light, and I am a Special Education Teacher here in Hawaii, and have been for the past four years. I have written testimony on this before, and am here again to speak out for myself and my colleagues.

I am deeply distraught that these differentials are again up for discussion, when it seems like I so recently wrote in testimony for them to be saved. These differentials were enacted only last year, and have been a resounding success in both retention and recruitment of teachers into Special Education. It cannot be said enough how much we NEED quality Special Education teachers.

To take these differentials away so abruptly gives us a feeling of whiplash, to say the least. Receiving this differential last year finally felt like the acknowledgement that we, in SPED, so rarely get. It lightened the load of the mountains of extra paperwork, of being the first ones back on campus during COVID-19, of doing the one hundred things a SPED teacher does every day that nobody ever realizes. To have this acknowledgement ripped away so suddenly feels like a slap in the face. I love my job, my students, and their families, but should I have to sacrifice my financial security for that love? I personally know at least three SPED teachers that will likely leave the DOE if these differentials are removed, and I fear that there would be considerably more. I believe that there would be an even greater shortage of qualified Special Education teachers than before the differentials were put into place, and ultimately it is the children who will suffer.

Aside from Special Education, I know that the differentials given to educators in hard to staff areas were equally important. I personally know an excellent teacher who moved to the Big Island when the differentials came around, and who will relocate back to Oahu should the differential be rescinded. Again, she is likely not the only one, and now the students on the Big Island will lose out on at least one quality teacher who cannot sustain themselves without that differential.

I implore you to consider other options than removing these differentials in order to avoid further breaking an already demoralized population of teachers. Balancing the budget is important, but should the education of our students in Hawaii be the cost?

Thank you for your consideration,
Elizabeth Light

Testimony BOE

From: Sharon K Sing <sharonksing@gmail.com> on behalf of Sharon K Sing
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:14 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Aloha!

May I kindly ask for your kōkua?

Please support Hawaiian immersion teachers WITH appropriate compensation.

The BOE Policy 105-8 which clearly states that Hawaiian Immersion Kumu are trained and educated in the **required ADDITIONAL** skill set in their field has ***already received approval.***

In 2020, that differential helped to ***decrease the amount of vacancies*** in Kaiapuni Schools which allows these schools to survive & the culture, history and language of Native Hawaiians to continue to flourish.

The amount of money that has already been approved and complies with this BOE Policy is reasonable.

Mahalo nui for doing the right and honorable next step. Support our Hawaiian Immersion Kumu & kula with the appropriate compensation & please comply with **BOE Policy 105-8.**

Respectfully submitted,
SHARON K SING
Native Hawaiian Kupuna

Testimony BOE

From: For our keiki <forourkeiki@gmail.com> on behalf of For our keiki
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:18 PM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: BOE Testimony - Special Ed Pay Differentials

2/18/2021

Hawai'i Board of Education
Attn: Chair Catherine Payne P.O. Box 2360
Honolulu, HI 96804

RE: Comments on disrupting/discontinuing pay differentials for Special Education

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on Superintendent Kishimoto's proposal to remove pay differentials for Special Education teachers. My name is Lara Bollinger and I am the Vice President of Together For Our Keiki (TFOK). TFOK is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to advocate and create a diverse and inclusive community for our keiki by empowering parents and caregivers and educating local stakeholders.

We know it is difficult to develop and determine a course of action that will work for everyone. However, we also believe our students, their parents, and our teachers have a right to be adequately supported, which includes maintaining proper funding for vital educational initiatives. We fully support maintaining these teaching differentials, which were intended as incentives for teachers who teach in high-need, traditionally understaffed positions. These hard-to-staff positions provide essential educational services for some of our most vulnerable keiki.

By removing the pay differential for teachers in these programs, which are often riddled with staffing shortages and lack of overall support, keiki in these programs will become even further negatively impacted. We fear the money our Superintendent claims the state will save will now be earmarked for the increased litigation we will see, as a result of students not being provided their federally-mandated care. We also worry the state will lose access to federal funds for our failure to meet the requirements of federally-funded special education programs. It is our strong opinion that more money will be spent due to the decision to remove pay differentials, than will be saved. We fear students, teachers, and overall state teacher shortages will be negatively compounded, possibly beyond the place-of-no-return, if the Superintendent's request is granted.

We recognize this is a difficult time for our state, our school system, the BOE, and our country. It is a difficult time for parents, teachers, keiki, and community members too. It is a tough time for us all, which is why we must push aside politically-fueled opposing views to come together for our keiki —and our teachers too.

Sincerely,

Lara Bollinger, JD, BCBA, LBA
Vice President, Together For Our Keiki
On Behalf of our Board, Advocates, & Ambassadors
www.forourkeiki.com

Testimony BOE

From: Waipiolani Aipia <gnsr.gess@gmail.com> on behalf of Waipiolani Aipia
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:24 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Waipiolani Aipia. I work in the cafeteria at Ānuenue School and my daughter is also a third grade student at Ānuenue. I am submitting this testimony in support of adequate funding for our school as part of the current BOE policy 105-8 Ka Papahana Kaiapuni. As a concerned parent of a Hawaiian emersion keiki any loss in funding to our school would have a devastating impact on all the children that attend this school. We cannot afford to make due with anything less. Lets put our children first by making sure they get the best education possible.

Mahalo,
Waipiolani Aipia

Testimony BOE

From: Logan Okita <lokitahsta@gmail.com> on behalf of Logan Okita
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:35 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony - Special Meeting - Action Item A

Testimony
Special Meeting Action Item A

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board,

My name is Logan Okita and I teach first grade at Nimitz Elementary School. I am writing to you today to urge you to vote against the action item on the agenda for your special meeting regarding the discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs.

I submitted similar testimony in July 2020 and my opinion on the matter has not changed. I hope that your opinions have not changed either. These differentials are important and have helped to recruit and retain teachers in areas where our students need them the most. You made a promise to my colleagues and the students they serve. Please keep that promise. I do not qualify for any of these shortage differentials, but I know that they help to improve our profession and Hawaii's schools. Every student deserves a qualified teacher. Hawaii was in a teacher shortage crisis that you as a Board acknowledged prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers are leaving and retiring due to the unknowns of the pandemic and discontinuing these differentials will only encourage those who are barely holding on to leave as well.

I am struggling this school year. It is my fifteenth year and I have never before thought that this was not the career for me. Two thirds of my first grade students are on a hybrid model and another third have opted to remain on full distance learning until at least Spring Break. Then there is the rotation of students who get put on quarantine and are moving between distance and blended. Every day I walk into my classroom planning on giving my students my best because it is what they deserve, but every day I leave at the end of the day exhausted, defeated, and wondering what I can do to make it better for them and for me. How do I differentiate for those who need more of a challenge while helping those who are struggling to master the foundations of reading all while trying to teach concurrently for part of the day and supporting those who are asynchronous while their peers are in the classroom with me? If I were receiving a shortage differential and relied on it to keep a roof over my head and food on the table, this would be the straw that broke my back. I can only imagine how my colleagues feel.

I urge you to not allow Dr. Kishimoto to stop the additional compensation. I would also like to remind you that you agreed months ago that we should be giving hope, acting with kindness, and working toward togetherness.

Sincerely,
Logan Okita, MEd, NBCT
Nimitz Elementary School

Testimony BOE

From: Pualei Jarrett <pualei.jarrett@gmail.com> on behalf of Pualei Jarrett
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:37 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Aloha mai kākou,

I am a Kaiapuni Teacher and I am writing this testimony in support of the differential pay that is in effect and has been previously approved by BOE, BOE Policy 105-8.

Your approval of BOE Policy 105-8 has helped to decrease the amount of open teacher vacancies within the Hawaiian Immersion Program. With this approval, the BOE has recognized that Hawaiian Immersion Teachers must be compensated for our extra set of skills. Please continue to keep your word, and appropriate the funding that was promised to the Hawaiian Immersion Program.

Mahalo nui loa for your support,
Pualei Jarrett

Testimony BOE

From: Carole Hasan <carolehasan9@gmail.com> on behalf of Carole Hasan
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:41 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for Continued Funding for Teacher Shortage Differentials

Aloha Hawai'i Board of Education members,

I urge continued funding for teacher shortage differentials. I am testifying on Action Item G: Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs.

My name is Carole Hasan, I teach at Konawaena Middle on the Big Island in Kealahou. I grew up on Oahu attending public schools from 1st grade-12th grade. I have 14 years of experience teaching special education and 12 years as a middle school counselor.

I currently receive a differential as a special education middle school teacher. The differential has helped me remain in my position, I would have applied for a counseling position were it not for the pay differential leaving my school with one more SpEd teaching vacancy.

I have seen the negative impact of unqualified substitute teachers on my students to a shortage of SpEd and Content Area teachers. Students feel less than without fully qualified teachers and lose interest in fully engaged learning. They engage in misbehavior to rid themselves of unqualified teachers who fail to help them learn needed grade level academic skills and a love of learning. A whole year of lost learning and setting them up for failure at the next grade level. It is no small thing.

Ending the differential pay would be a wrong decision that will hurt our most vulnerable keiki.

Hawai'i BOE Shortage differentials greatly reduced vacancies of licensed special education teachers this school year. SpEd shortage differentials helped decrease vacancies by 66%. Plus according to BOE data, the number of teachers transferring into special education positions for the 2020–21 school year went up by 77 percent over the 2019-20 school year, with the number of teachers who left SpEd positions went down by 57 percent. Almost two times as many teachers transferred into hard-to-staff schools for next school year compared to last, while the differentials led to a 41 percent decrease in those leaving hard-to-staff locations. The teacher differentials worked very successfully by making a major change in recruiting and keeping teachers in these shortage areas. It makes no sense to end a program that works so well in retaining teachers in critical hard to staff positions.

It shows the differentials have been a remarkable success. With a simple incentive, the Hawai'i have been able to nearly solve this decades-long problem that has cost our state more than \$1 billion in lawsuits. Last school year saw 1,685 teachers staying in special education teaching lines, this year, the number climbed by 48 positions, with 1,733 educators staying in their SPED positions. Higher education programs that funnel educators into these positions saw a significant increase.

I understand Hawaii is facing an unprecedented financial crisis due to COVID-19. But while a retraction of differentials may help to balance budgets, it will absolutely long term devastate our dwindling supply of qualified teachers for our most vulnerable students. Hawaii has faced a teaching

shortage of no less than 1,000 vacancies every year prior to the teaching pay differentials.

With the uncertainty and anxiety over COVID 19 still hanging over the fall 21-22 school year we are seeing even more teachers retire or leave the profession. Slashing differential teacher's pay will simply be the last straw for many already hanging by a thread.

If Hawaii's teacher shortage crisis worsens, I am concerned we will see a collapse in our public education system. We cannot allow this to happen. Our keiki will suffer the most, especially our most vulnerable students who need experienced educators during these difficult times.

Mahalo,
Carole Hasan
7th grade Math SpEd Teacher
Konawaena Middle
Kealahou, Big Island

Testimony BOE

From: Lauren Fuchigami <laurenfuchigami@gmail.com> on behalf of Lauren Fuchigami
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:43 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am submitting my testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Kishimoto's take away of extra resources.

First off, is this a joke? I would seriously like to understand her values for taking away these positions because I don't understand. If these positions get cut, this would cause serious detrimental effects to our students. Although personally I am not a SPED teacher or resource teacher but these teachers are seriously the greatest.

I work at a Title 1 school in the middle of Ala Moana and Makiki. These students live in small housing units with large families. If extra curricular teachers are cut, like P.E. or Library, Hawaiian education, our students do not have access to a playground or park nearby. Since their families work a lot, a lot of our students stay inside the house, doubled because of the pandemic. These students are not proper exercises to move their bodies or given the time too. Our kids do not participate in extra curricular activities outside of school because they either cost great fees or parents don't have time to take them. Child Obesity is one of the number one causes of death of adults and health conditions in children. Because money is so tight for our families, they just buy the cheapest and easiest thing (Hot Cheetos for breakfast!), these students are going to become obese before the age of 12. The weekly movement of Physical Education and force of team sports will close the achievement gap as students will receive as close to the same skills as others.

Hawaiian Education: What in the white-washed, diversity, privilege is taking away Hawaiian education? We embrace our state and our schools as being "diverse" and "equal" and we take away the ONE culture that makes our island unique. Wiping away Hawaiian courses from our school is like going to Japan and not having Japanese classes. It doesn't help that in education already, our schools are named after slave-owning presidents, were not teaching Hawaiian language in public schools but were teaching Spanish? French? That is like 2% of the population. In the 4th grade curriculum, students are supposed to learn about the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy and when I ask them, THEY HAVE NO IDEA. We are named after Kamehameha the 1st wife (Kaahumanu) and many of our students don't even know the origination of our school! How ashamed is that? We don't have a Hawaiian Education teacher right now because of the pandemic. We are living on the land of Hawaii, we need to embrace their culture not taking it away. Stop promoting diversity and equal treatment in all public schools if we decide to take away Hawaiian education.

Last but not least, the take away of SPED teachers and Educational Assistances. AGAIN-TAKE AWAY THE WORDS FAIR AND EQUAL IN OUR STATEMENTS IF WE DO THIS. We do not deserve to wear those phrases with pride if we take away our SPED classes. Coming from a school where our SPED population is high and we staff about 7 SPED teachers, they are still drowning in work. Because we are Title 1, we are providing these students whose families CANNOT afford to pay HEFTY fees for the services needed for their students. I can't understand or justify why this would even cross our mind. These teachers are seeing upwards of 12-16 students each year, which is absolutely ridiculous. There is 5 pages of IEP goals per student, they can't give individual attention to 12 students! It's like driving your car in 12 different lanes, it can't happen!!!

I can't even believe that this is up for discussion!! Haven't they been through enough? They're already first in line since last year to be exposed to COVID and now this!!!

Testimony BOE

From: Patricia Nevada <patricianevada@icloud.com> on behalf of Patricia Nevada
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:46 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Good evening,

I am writing to ask for stopping the cut for SPED differentials .

The differential has made it possible for us to survive with one income.

We rely on the extra income for rent and emergencies with elderly parents.

Please retain the SPED differential as many of us are living with spouses who are laid off or have reduced hours.

Mahalo.

Patricia Nevada

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: JRB321 <beds007@gmail.com> on behalf of JRB321
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:51 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: SPED Budget

Aloha,

Please let us begin by thanking you all for the effort and success you have been able to provide during this pandemic. We are very grateful to and proud of you all. You should be very proud of yourselves, because as far as we are concerned you have been more successful than any other State at continuing all our children's education as "normally" and safely as possible.

Our son Parker is 9 years old and has Autism. He attends Kaneohe Elementary School in Mrs. Lauren Collier's SPED classroom. We have been blessed that Parker has attended her classroom the last 2+ years. When Parker began school with Mrs. Collier he was borderline non-verbal, either unable or indifferent to understanding even the simplest one-step request, and had the most frequent loud and disconcerting emotional meltdowns.

Mrs. Collier's dedication, intelligence, and organization has literally taught our son to speak, read above his grade level, understand and complete math problems at least equal to his grade level, and actually care about interpersonal relationships.

It has come to our attention that because of financial difficulties the SPED program and in particular qualified SPED teachers salaries will be cut.

We beg of you to consider the long term and not just the present. If we may be so blunt, it is just not logical to cut the spending on the program and in particular to the people that educate the Special Needs Children.

Statistically speaking these kids are 12 times more likely to end up homeless, I believe, 10 times more likely to end up in prison, 9 times more likely to commit suicide and have an average lifespan of 36 years.

If the money is not spent now on the effort to assist the education of these children and thus increase their chance to be productive, tax paying citizens we have failed them and failed as a society.

The money spent on just incarceration or institutionalization would far outstrip any money spent now. We plead with you to please not cut SPED programs and SPED educators salaries. Please continue to set an example to rest of the nation on how to help prepare our special needs children for a productive, safe, and happy life. I thank you for your time and if we could speak with you any further on this we would be greatly honored and appreciative.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Bednar

Dyan Kaneshiro-Bednar

Testimony BOE

From: Evelyn Gamez <evelyn.gamez@mauihigh.org> on behalf of Evelyn Gamez
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:52 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Evelyn Gamez, and I am a special education teacher at Maui High School. I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the special meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian Language programs.

Special education teachers are a hard-to-staff position in Hawaii for a multitude of reasons. Firstly, they must carry out heavier workloads than their gen ed co-workers. Besides lesson planning, grading, teaching, and professional development, sped teachers must also collaborate with others to create IEPs, hold IEP meetings, hold revision IEP meetings, hold re-evaluation meetings, hold behavior meetings, modify curriculum, create individual progress reports, create individualized materials for student programming, create data collection systems, record and analyze data, and consult with various IEP team members for every single one of the students on their caseload.

When special education positions are not filled by certified special education teachers, special ed teachers who are certified must carry the load of completing all of the aforementioned case coordinator tasks for students who they may not even be teaching in their classroom. This very common scenario creates unbearable caseloads and stress which contribute to teacher burnout, and eventually leads to a teacher's decision to leave the special education profession for a lighter workload. If you speak to any sped teacher who has quit the profession, they will most undoubtedly mention teacher burnout, not enough pay for the workload, too much stress, no uniformity in procedures, and no feeling of belonging at their respective work sites. We have too much to do and not enough time to make meaningful connections with other staff.

The differentials are effective; they reduced vacancies by 66 percent in only 1 year of implementation. During a time when many are questioning leaving the profession due to ever-changing protocols, a decision to reduce an educator's pay by almost \$16,000 will drive many away.

Furthermore, sped teachers are the only teachers who were forced to work in-person for the entire 2020-2021 school year. We were not given the option to telework if our students needed to attend in person due to their needs. We were given PPE and told to wash our hands frequently and that we had our admin's support. However, the ones in the classroom were sped teachers... EVERY DAY this school year. For the foreseeable future, sped teachers WILL be the only ones who will not be given the option to work-from-home even when the rest of their campus is told that coming to work is too dangerous. Not only will we show up, but we will continue to be there for our students. We will work closer than 6 feet because our job requires it. We will help with our students' hygiene needs such as changing diapers and wiping saliva from their mouths because it's part of our job.

The differentials have helped me pay for unexpected child care for my child that could only attend via distance learning. Without the differential, child care during distance learning will be too expensive. I will be in a situation where working will cost more than staying at home with my child.

The differential made me feel worthy and incentivized when so many other parts of my profession made me want to quit on the spot.

The state spends thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of dollars in due process hearings yearly. This is partly due to the fact that many sped students are not serviced by certified sped teachers or their care coordinators are spread so thin that they fail to make sure students receive all the services they need. Spending the money on differentials will help with the amount of money spent on cases that DOE loses and then has to compensate students for.

I beg you to continue the differentials to support our keiki who are already in a vulnerable state due to their unique needs and the unprecedented changes from COVID. The differentials are much more impactful than just higher pay for teachers. The differentials help with teacher morale, ease workloads, give students certified teachers, and most importantly, help decrease the achievement gap between gen ed and special ed peers.

Mahalo,

Evelyn Gamez
M. Ed. Special Education
Special Education Teacher
Maui High School
Rm. O102, ext. 4146

SPEDucator 2020-2021

Learn more about [The SPEDucator Project](#)



The Hawaii State Department of Education ("HIDOE") does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion or disability. This requirement extends to all of HIDOE's programs and activities, including employment and admissions as applicable. In addition, the HIDOE does not tolerate acts of harassment on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion, or disability. Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment on the basis of race, sex, age, color, national origin, religion, or disability, is encouraged to report such harassment. Students and parents may report allegations of discrimination or harassment to the Principal, Mr. Jamie Yap at 727-4000, or via email at jamie_yap@notes.k12.hi.us; OR to the HIDOE's Civil Rights Compliance Office at (808)586-3322.

Testimony BOE

From: Cari Yamafuji <cari@yamafuji.com> on behalf of Cari Yamafuji
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:54 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am a special education teacher. I love my students and their families. I teach 6 grade levels and at least 6 different academic levels. My students are aggressive due to their frustration and emotional stability, they yell, hit, kick pinch and spit. Again, I can say I love my job and my students. I make a difference, I help these students learn to facilitate life. I help these students when others do not want to.

I'm not here to say that I worker harder than general education teachers. I am writing to say that most of those teachers do not want my job. This is a fact, look at the statistics. My job is one of those hard to fill positions. The class that I am now teaching did not have a qualified teacher for over 4 years. For 4 years my students were taught by people who did not have special education knowledge. Their progress suffered. Our system failed these students.

My teaching experience, what I go through out the each day can be dangerous, it can be wonderful, painful and amazing.

These proposed cuts will again put special education students in the hands of those with out knowledge. They will be in classes with large numbers. They will not get what they deserve or what they are promised. We have to look at what these pay cuts will do to the students. They are our responsibility, how can that not be understood?

Cari Yamafuji
Special Education Teacher
ADR K-5

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Testimony BOE

From: Yavette Charles <yavette.charles@gmail.com> on behalf of Yavette Charles
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:54 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Please include your name, and your school or workplace if you're an educator, or school that your children attend.

The BOE summary calling on Kishimoto to rescind her memo stopping shortage differentials states: Aloha!

My testimony is that I **Support** the recommendation of the **Board of Education to direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum** and to refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

My name is Yavette Charles and I am a SPED teacher at Kailua High School. I teach in an alternative resource classroom for students with behavior and anxiety needs. The following are just a few of the reasons why I support the continuation of the differential pay.

1. The Board of Education ("Board") approved differentials for licensed teachers to fill vacancies in the areas of special education ("SPED"), hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion, effective January 7, 2020
2. Highly qualified in every subject - Required
 - a. I am required to be highly qualified in every subject I teach. There are two ways to obtain these qualifications; 1) through PD classes or 2) the Praxis exam; both are at my expense! The problem is unlike Gen Ed teachers, who are required to only be highly qualified in the ONE subject they teach.
 - b. I teach at a high school level which means I teach the courses the students assigned to my class need to graduate. This requires me to be highly qualified in: English, Math, Science, History, PE/Health, Art, CTE. SPED teachers are highly qualified beyond any general ed teacher and therefore recognized by the differential pay for the difference in qualifying requirements to work in the DOE and maintain national and state standards.IEP's
 - c. I have to write an IEP for ALL students that I am a care coordinator for. An IEP can take up to 4 hours or more to put together properly for one student. If a student has a complicated case it can take even more than that. I can have anywhere from 8-12 IEP students at a time. My contract hours are from 7:30 -3:30, I teach until 1:55 and then I have meetings 4 days a week until 2:40. IEP's are legally binding and MUST be done. This legal requirement forces SPED teachers such as me, to work on MY OWN time! Again, justifying the differential pay to SPED teachers who have requirements far and beyond the gen ed teacher. Every 3 years an IEP requires an IEP Re-eval. That takes several hours to complete on top of putting together an IEP.
3. IEP / Re-Eval Meetings
 - a. We are required BY LAW to have an IEP meeting every year and a re-eval every 3 years. We have to schedule this when it is convenient for the parent/guardian, then we need to make sure that therapists can attend, DOH can attend and everyone else who needs to attend. These meetings often aren't able to take place during the day BECAUSE WE ARE TEACHING! So we have to have them after school, oh when we are DONE WITH WORK and OFF THE CLOCK, but because we are the IEP teacher WE are REQUIRED to attend. Gen ed teachers don't always show up or may show up for a few mins and leave. WE DON'T have that LUXURY! Sometimes thankfully it's rare but there are times these meetings can last for 2-3 hours AFTER we are OFF the CLOCK! Or we have to hold a meeting during our class time so we have to get subs to cover our class and do all the extra work to to make sure our other students are taken care of and do the extra work needed (by the way,

I almost NEVER call in sick due to ALL the work required to get a sub for my class or subs not wanting to cover me because of the type of class I have) and after I get all that extra work done to cover my class I then have to prep for the IEP and/or Re-eval meeting. Gen ed DOES NOT EVER have to do this and we get paid the same.

4. IEP Students

a. I have to take care of the students who are in my class. Then I have to take care of my IEP students who may not be in my class. I have to make sure that their IEP's are being followed, have IEP meetings when there are issues, get phone calls, emails from parents, teachers and others who are involved with this student on top of preparing for my own classes, teaching my own lessons, taking care of the students in my own classes. Gen ed teachers ONLY deal with the students in THEIR classes.

5. Teach GEN Ed instead

a. SPED teachers should have a higher base pay than GEN ed teachers PERIOD.

b. The differential pay should be permanent.

c. If the Differential is taken away, you invite all SPED teachers to look to moving back to or consider moving to gen ed. SPED teachers work for the good of students, but your additional certifications for highly qualified have changed the playing field. This move to eliminate the differential gives SPED teachers a reason to move out of SPED. Level the playing fields for all teachers. We level the playing field for all students, we are asking no less from you for all teachers.

Thank you for your time and I pray you will make the right decision. I also encourage ALL of you to visit SPED classrooms and see what SPED teachers are doing on a daily basis. You are all welcome to come to my classroom anytime.

Yavette Charles

Testimony BOE

From: Jenella Ogitani <jogitani@yahoo.com> on behalf of Jenella Ogitani
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:54 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Good evening ladies and gentlemen,

I am writing to support Action Item A, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical location and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Jenella Ogitani. I am a certified special education teacher here at Kapolei High School. In my 16 year career, I have never been given a differential pay to supplement the additional work expected of my position. To be given this pay during the last year has helped me, my family and my students tremendously.

The additional pay has helped to give me some breathing room since the pandemic took affect in March 2019. I was able to pay bills I could not have done prior to receiving the diffential pay. It has allowed me to engage in courses that has helped me grow in my profession, and it has made it possible to improve my level of Distance Learning through online technology courses.

My family's has benefited from the additional income. The household monthly income has been affected by the pandemic and without the differential pay, I believe we would be in dire straight in trying to make ends meet.

The students I work with has also benefitted from the much needed income. There has been so many years I have sacrificed my family's income to be able to provide much needed supplies to my students. I have spent a lot over the years and it was nice to know that I was not only going to be able to continue to help with supplies, but I would be able to use money that didn't take food off of my family's table. The online courses and technology webinars has helped me become a better teacher to assist my students with Distance Learning and the technologies needed to be successful in class.

If the differential pay was to cease, I would definitely have to rethink my options. To remain in Hawaii and possibly become a statistic as a "working homeless" or moving to the mainland where my credentials would stand alone to provide me the income worthy of my dedication to the profession. The cost of living in Hawaii is what it is. My family and I are truly priced out of the market to survive in Hawaii without the addition of the differential pay. I have lived in Hawaii for over five decades. To continue to live here would depend if I can afford to on my paycheck.

Please consider to continue to supplement the differential pay indefinitely to special education teacher and others on this bill. We do a lot of work for the pay we receive and I would like to be compensated for that work. Throughout the day, we as special education teachers, will wear many different hats, but none greater than being a teacher. Please let me continue doing what I am so passionate about.

Sincerely,
Jenella Ogitani
Special Education Teacher
Kapolei High School
91-5007 Kapolei Pkwy,
Kapolei, HI 96707
Jenella.Ogitani@k12.hi.us

Testimony BOE

From: Emilio Macalalad <egmacalalad@gmail.com> on behalf of Emilio Macalalad
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 8:59 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony for the [BOE Special Meeting Action Item A](#): Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

The decision to remove the salary differentials for hard-to-staff, special education, and Hawaiian Immersion teachers is hurtful, drastic, and without reason. The memo sent out by Dr. Kishimoto regarding the end to salary differentials shows that the differentials are doing exactly what they were meant to do. The number of teachers doubled from 19-20 to 20-21 school year for hard-to-staff schools. The number of special education teachers also went up. This was only implemented last year before the pandemic occurred and is just the beginning of progress. They cannot remove this at a time when we as teachers are struggling to stay alive in the classroom.

Every day is mentally, emotionally, and physically draining and on top of that the DOE wants to jeopardize our pay by first imposing furloughs and now threatening to remove differentials we need to survive. Why is education always the first to get cut? They are telling us teachers to be more data-driven. The DOE is looking at the wrong numbers. What happened to the stimulus money? Was nothing left for public education? Was the news giving us false information that some of the stimulus money was meant for public education? We are all suffering during this pandemic and the DOE and state want to continue dragging us through the mud making us suffer more and stress more.

At a time when teachers are barely hanging on by a thread, the DOE threatens to make things worse not better for teachers and students. I have been teaching for 18 years and 6 years on Molokai. I am questioning if I should continue. This year has been incredibly grueling and the DOE does not value the blood, sweat, and tears I put into teaching or any of the other teachers. We need the salary differential to continue working in these positions, they are hard to staff positions for a reason.

Mahalo for your time,

--

Emilio Macalalad

808-658-9303

egmacalalad@gmail.com

It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.

—Charles Darwin

Testimony BOE

From: Jonah Purdy <keonizzz@yahoo.com> on behalf of Jonah Purdy
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:00 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am a Hawaiian Immersion teacher at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waimānalo. I believe all teachers deserve much much more but special education, hard to staff, and Hawaiian language teachers are a breed of our own. You are always welcome to my class room to see how much time, effort, money, etc. we put into educating our keiki.

Ke aloha,
Keoni Chang-Purdy
Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waimānalo
Papa māla a'o

Testimony BOE

From: Katy Tsark <kahelemaui@gmail.com> on behalf of Katy Tsark
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:01 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Maui High parent

Aloha,

My name is Katy Tsark and I am a parent of a special education student who attends Maui High School. I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the special meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian Language programs.

My child's special education teacher has helped my child Waimea .

Special education teachers must carry out even more workloads than their gen ed co-workers. On top of lesson planning, grading, teaching, and professional development, they must also collaborate to create IEPs, hold IEP meetings, hold revision IEP meetings, hold re-evaluation meetings, hold behavior meetings, create individual progress reports, create individualized materials for student programming, create data collection systems, record and analyze data, and consult with various IEP team members for every single one of the students on their caseload.

When special education positions are not filled by certified special education teachers, those who are certified must carry the load of completing all of the aforementioned case coordinator tasks for students who they may not even be teaching in their classroom. This very common scenario creates unbearable caseloads and stress which contribute to teacher burnout, and eventually leads to a teacher's decision to leave the special education profession for a lighter workload.

The differentials were effective and reduced vacancies by 66 percent in only 1 year of implementation. During a time when many are questioning leaving the profession due to ever changing protocols, a decision to reduce an educator's pay by almost \$16,000 will drive many away. I urge you to continue the differentials to support our keiki who need more during these trying times.

Mahalo,

Katy Tsark
808-381-7693

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: Bella Fiorello <luckystaralmighty7@gmail.com> on behalf of Bella Fiorello
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:19 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Don't Cut Differentials

Hello,

I am a teacher for the Deaf Education in elementary level. Our school is highly struggling with shortage of staff, frequent staff turnovers, and hard-to-staff geographical.

It does not make sense for the BOE to make the determination of cancelling the differentials of the teachers' wages while we severely struggle with those issues mentioned above.

Think of the students who need us, the teachers who help and guide them to their future journeys.

There is always another solution or a different way of cutting down the funds on other divisions or different agencies. There is no dead end. Solution is always in the air.

K -teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Gavin Hashimoto <gavin.hashimoto@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Gavin Hashimoto
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:20 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Covid has not only stolen many lives, but has crushed dreams and expectations for everyone. While trying to deal with all the stresses of our personal lives, we had to add the pressure to help and care for all of our students. Teachers across the state stepped up during Covid and took on more work, responsibilities, gave up our personal time, risked our health and our families to be there for the children. We didn't ask for anything special in return, but expected to be treated fairly and/or respected as "Essential Personal" as they stated. As you can tell we are only essential when it is to help others and keep families happy.

With so many mixed messages because a lack of communication from the top all the way down to the school level. Schools were left fending for themselves during this entire time. All the while teachers got slammed and blamed for decisions occurring that were way above our pay grade (FYI-which is pretty low). We expected to pitch in our FAIR share of cuts, but as usual nothing is FAIR when it comes to schools. Talking about no furloughs, but pay cuts in the range of 9% is a real slap in the face for all the hard work, effort, and sacrifices we have made over this past year. I don't see any other State agency talking about pay cuts, I am betting they will all be getting a furlough plan if anything. BUT, teachers are "ESSENTIAL" so we are too precious to furlough because that would upset families and businesses.

Which brings me to the point that the State of Hawaii DOE does not have teachers' best interest in mind and really doesn't care about teachers and their students at all. So with pay cuts and eliminating differentials next school year the STATE will definitely be in for a rude awakening of teachers leaving or retiring early. For how much we have given up for our students, only to know that the State plans to bleed us dry for the next 4 years. You have truly taken away the joy of teaching for many. You have shown your hand or tried to bluff, but we are not in the mood for these games. We are tired, depleted, unappreciated, and truly disgusted.

The differentials have been a huge help to fill SPED positions and create a deeper commitment and drive in our SPED teachers. We felt that the job has increased in difficulty, but we were being compensated and appreciated with the differential. SO it gave us the motivation to push on and work through all the difficulties even with no guidance or assistance from above. Without the differential and a pay cut on top of that I can't imagine how many SPED teachers will disappear from quitting or returning to Gen. Ed. positions. I truly feel ALL teachers deserve a differential this past year, but SPED teachers are very deserving of it. SPED teachers need more training and education than the general education teachers, so it was nice to get some recognition and compensation for once. It has made a huge impact in SPED departments across the state. It will be sad to see that momentum derailed next school year.

Gavin Hashimoto

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

Testimony BOE

From: Karol Wack <alohilani39@aol.com> on behalf of Karol Wack
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:23 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: BOE Special Action Item A

Dear Distinguished Members of the BOE,

Once again, I find myself writing to plead for my livelihood. Never have I felt so under appreciated by a governor and superintendent. The differentials we have been receiving have allowed me to support myself. I can pay my rent and bills and have been able to spend more money for my classroom/students. For the first time, I felt appreciated and compensated for all the hours outside of the school day that I spend working for my students. If I were anywhere close to retirement, I'd resign. The pressures and constant threat of pay cuts is getting to be too much. If we lose the hard to staff and special education differentials, I may have to quit and find another profession. If we lose the differentials and get a pay cut, I will definitely have to quit. I don't want to, I love what I do.

Do you know, my families send me photos and videos over the weekends and vacations to show me things the students are doing. They call me to share good news and ask for suggestions to help with challenges. We celebrate their child's accomplishments and I offer encouragement and support through the challenges. So you see, my day isn't just with my student's in the classroom. It's much more than that, it's about building relationships to help that student be supported in every way possible. I teach Special Education K-2 FSC/Resource and I love what I do.

As I write this at 9pm, I am also printing out visual sight words that I bought for my students. They weren't cheap and I'm using my own color printer at home. You know what though, I am happy to do it because I believe it will help those struggling to learn their sight words. Having these differentials helps me pay for resources like this and printer ink, and makes me feel somewhat compensated for my time. Other professions pay a lot more than I make and FAR less work is required. I shouldn't have to feel as if I'm asking too much to make a living wage. Teachers are marginalized and expected to do a ridiculous amount of work and create miracles, then when finances are tight, it's "oh, let's take it from the teachers".

I apologize if this letter is too wordy or if I seem unappreciative. I have so appreciated the differentials this past year and pray that they can be continued as they have made all the difference in the world. I have also appreciated your support through this past year and would humbly ask that you continue to support us.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my feelings and how the differentials have supported myself and my students this past year.

Sincerely,

Karol Wack
Special Education Teacher K-2 FSC/Resource Honokaa Elementary School Hawaii Island

Testimony BOE

From: Kit Brizuela <kitbrizuela@gmail.com> on behalf of Kit Brizuela
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:24 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony in support of Action Item A

Aloha!

I am testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

According to data provided by Dr. Kishimoto in the same memo, the differential pilot program showed that teacher shortages can be and are alleviated by paying teachers a fair salary for the work they do to educate our keiki. This principle also works for certain non-teaching positions in the HIDOE, as well as in businesses and employers in general.

Although further raises and further expansion of cost items should be on hold during our current budget crunch, we should use all resources at our disposal to provide consistency for our teaching force, by avoiding all cuts. We need all the qualified teachers we have; to lose any of them would do an injustice to students and schools, as well as to the individual teachers.

Mahalo for your consideration of my testimony.

Kit Brizuela, teacher

Kahuku High and Intermediate School

Windward O'ahu District

Testimony BOE

From: Julie <jamperkins@aol.com> on behalf of Julie
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:25 PM
To: TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Children First

Dear BOE,

We are all struggling with this pandemic! Our children, families, and schools need You to make the best choices in regards to funding public education.

Please put the needed money into what matters most, our children. The future of this state, country, and world are counting on You to put Children First.

Mahalo,

Julie

DOE Teacher 21 years

TESTIMONY to the HAWAI'I BOARD OF EDUCATION

RE: Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Aloha Chair Payne and Members of the Hawai'i Board of Education,

Please accept my testimony **in support** of the above aforementioned Action Item A regarding the differential pay. I **strongly urge** all of you to stop the superintendent's plan to discontinue shortage differentials. The shortage differential pay has worked to retain teachers in the hard to staff positions for the most vulnerable populations of our student population. Teachers who received these differential pay are in positions that require a lot more time, attention, accountability, and dedication. Receiving these funds felt like an acknowledgement of all of our hard work and taking them away so quickly feels unfair.

My name is Rebecca Kapolei Kiili and I am one of the handful of Hawaiian Language Immersion program teachers who received the differential pay at the start of the school year 2020-2021. I have been working in the HLIP for sixteen years and receiving this differential pay half way through my public school teaching career **significantly renewed my commitment to staying in this program and my position.**

Having the differential pay stripped away during a time when teacher morale is at a low because of the challenges we continually face with distance learning adds insult to injury. We are all working so much harder because of the pandemic and working with minimal resources. I have had to be extra, extra resourceful this school year because public schools are sorely underfunded and even more so now. So, while the differential pay had added some extra pay to my income, I am using these funds to pay for my own school supplies. How much more do teachers have to sacrifice for our students and the greater good?

Hawaiian language immersion program schools have had severe vacancies for many years in communities across the state. The differential pay helped fill those positions with qualified teachers and for the first time in a long time. All schools on Maui with HLIP on their campuses were able to fill the vacancies with highly qualified teachers this school year, a monumental accomplishment for our community. Taking away the differential pay on top of the challenges we are still grappling with will only create greater problems for our program. Our students deserve to have qualified teachers. Our teachers deserve differential pay for all the sacrifices we make.

Please do not allow the superintendent to unilaterally discontinue the differential pay.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Kapolei Kiili

Rebecca Kapolei Kiili

Testimony BOE

From: Michael Kline <mikekline999@msn.com> on behalf of Michael Kline
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:48 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

02/16/2021

Board of Education Members,

I am testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am a Special Education preschool teacher at Kilauea School on the island of Kaua'i. I am a National Board-Certified Teacher, as an Exceptional Needs Specialist since 2003. I have been teaching 22 years now.

During the Covid 19 pandemic, I and all other Special Education teachers, as well as all teachers, have been working harder than ever to meet the needs of our students. These are challenging times, but we love our students. I have 11 students attending in-person at present and will have 14 by the end of March. This is an incredible amount of work in these times with 3–5-year-old students with all of the Covid 19 regulations.

It is my understanding that at present, our salaries will be significantly cut. It is proposed that there will be a 9.23% salary reduction. On top of that, a 1.23% salary reduction due to the elimination of the 21 hours. This will be a devastating cut to our salaries. Even more, the superintendent is proposing to cut the 10% differential that SPED teachers had started receiving last school year. This does not make sense. We are working harder and longer hours and will be rewarded with a devastating pay cut? Our Special Education students are struggling in these times and the superintendent would like to undermine our morale?

From my understanding, there was a significant increase in the number of SPED teachers across the state because of the increase in pay. Why would you want to negatively impact our students by imposing a pay cut, which will definitely impact teacher retention and recruitment?

Please do not take away our differential. Please call on Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her memo stopping shortage differentials.

Michael Kline
Special Education Preschool Teacher
National Board Certified Teacher Exceptional Needs Specialist
Kilauea School
Island of Kaua'i

Testimony BOE

From: Eric Wada <udui808@gmail.com> on behalf of Eric Wada
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:49 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Fwd: Testimony

"He kehau ho`oma`ema`e ke aloha."
Love is like a cleansing dew

Sent from my iPhone Xs

Begin forwarded message:

From: Eric Wada <udui808@gmail.com>
Date: February 16, 2021 at 9:03:14 PM HST
To: BOE.Hawaii@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha Mai Kākou,

I am writing to express and testify my support for appropriate compensation of Hawaiian language medium educators in our kaiapuni schools. BOE Policy 105-8 has already been approved for compensation of extra skill sets required. The differential implemented in 2020 has helped to decrease the amount of vacancies in the kaiapuni schools and provided the much needed skilled educators for these unique spaces servicing not only native Hawaiian students, but a growing number of non Hawaiian students and families who realize the value in Hawaiian medium education.

I realize that budgets are tight during these times that we have gone through together, but we need to move forward and recognize the unique skills and education, as well as the value that kaiapuni schools provide. The educators in these spaces not only carry the kuleana of what the general public school educators need to take to task, but also nurture students to embody the language and values of these islands with the breath passed down by their kūpuna. For kaiapuni educators, there is no choice. The continuation of Hawaiian language education and educators is the lifeline and hope to the survival of the Hawaiian race. This IS Hawai'i and we need to help in every way we can to make sure that Hawai'i and the Hawaiians survive. That is the kūleana of the board, as it connects to each one of you and your own roots. If you understand the importance of the survival of your own ethnic identity, then you can surely agree the Hawaiians are in a sink or swim situation. The appropriation of what is needed to compensate these educators is possible.

"I ka 'ōlelo nō ke ola, i ka 'ōlelo no ka make." In language there is life, in language there is death. I look forward to your positive decision and mahalo all of you for your work during this time.

Me ke Aloha ha‘aha‘a,

Eric Wada

--

"Ua ola loko ke aloha"

"Love is imperative to our mind and body"

Testimony BOE

From: Mikala Fernandez <fernandezmikala1@gmail.com> on behalf of Mikala Fernandez
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:51 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Aloha mai kākou,

My name is Mikala Fernandez & I am a Hawaiian immersion teacher at Waiau Elementary. I graduated from a Hawaiian immersion school and am proud of where I come from & the gift I was given & am honored to be giving the next generation that same gift & connection to our culture & land.

Although I am very grateful for all the teachers I have had I know that there was a huge shortage that not only puts a lot of pressure on the teachers but also doesn't allow them to get the support they needed to effectively teach students. This is a huge reason why I decided to become a Hawaiian immersion teacher myself. From grades kindergarten to 4th grade I was in a K-5 classroom with two teachers because of the shortage of Hawaiian immersion teachers in my community. I am beyond grateful for their contribution & am thankful that we don't see the same shortage today.

The pay differential not only encourages Hawaiian immersion teachers to teach but encourages great teachers to stay and teach our next community leaders. Being a Hawaiian immersion teacher is no where near easy, it is a lot more than a 7-3 job. We spend countless hours translating & using our rare skill to 'ōlelo to build & create materials so that our keiki get the best that we can give them.

This pay differential was already approved to serve as compensation for the extra skill set but has helped tremendously in decreasing the amount of Hawaiian immersion teacher position vacancies across the state. Each keiki has the right to learn their language & perpetuate their culture but without kumu kaiapuni none of that would be possible. There are only so many Hawaiian immersion teachers in our state, the least you can do is support them with the inexpensive & affordable pay differential that these Kumu so well deserve.

Thank you for your consideration!

Mahalo nui,
Mikala Fernandez

Testimony BOE

From: Karol Wack <alohilani39@aol.com> on behalf of Karol Wack
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 9:58 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: BOE General Business Mtg Action Item V, B testimony

Dear Distinguished Members of the BOE,

It is now almost 10pm and I just finished submitting testimony regarding the proposal to end the shortage differentials. This was after having a 3 hr professional development course meeting and printing out resources for my students. I am enjoying the course, but isn't it sad that I have to do even more work in order to move up in steps for increased pay. Most jobs have an automatic raise (at least annually) if you do a good job during your normal working hours. Not teaching in Hawaii. No, in Hawaii, the powers that be want to cut our pay and positions and hire private tutors and academic coaching.

I humbly ask that you support us and use the stimulus money to restore positions, programs and school level funding. Our keiki deserve qualified teachers, the teachers that have been supporting them through this pandemic. Our schools deserve the funding to continue supporting students, teachers and staff.

More cuts will cause irreparable damage to our students, staff, schools and even our economy. Along with the stimulus money, there are other ways our state can make up funds without destroying an already struggling educational system.

I have appreciated your support this past year and once again, I ask for that support. Please support us for our keiki, we really need you.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Karol Wack
Special Education Teacher K-2 FSC/Resource Honokaa Elementary School Hawaii Island

Testimony BOE

From: Janet Kim <janetmc@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Janet Kim
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:06 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

My name is Janet Kim and I am the Special Education Recruitment Specialist at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and a previous special education teacher for the Hawaii Department of Education.

- Special Meeting (Thursday, Feb. 18, 2021)
- Board Action on discontinuing compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs
- SUPPORT CONTINUING EXTRA COMPENSATION DIFFERENTIALS

The US Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education shared a report outlining teacher shortages each year from 1990-2017 (Cross, 2017). Although shortages are widespread, Hawaii was one of twenty states who reported having a shortage of special education teachers every reported year. So many problems in education stem from not having enough qualified teachers. Even worse, the lack of teachers causes current teachers to leave the profession because of burnout and stressful working conditions. In the end, the revolving door of teachers coming and going, especially in the hardest-to-fill fields and areas, perpetuates inequities. It has been a never-ending cycle that has plagued our public education system for over three decades. However, instating differentials has finally closed that gap in a single year. How can we turn our backs on something that produced the results we have been dreaming of for so long? We can't close the achievement gap until we have a teacher workforce that is stable, committed, and qualified to serve in the areas we need them most.

What it really comes down to, is that our teachers are the heart and soul of our education system. There is no curriculum or technology we could buy that would be as impactful as having knowledgeable, caring, and effective teachers who continually care and do much more than any of our assessments or evaluations could measure. Over the last year, I have had the honor to connect with twenty of the most passionate, devoted, and skilled special education teachers from across the state. Amidst all the debates regarding whether or how to reopen schools, our special education teachers have been teaching our most vulnerable students face-to-face since August. These are the types of teachers who continually put their students' needs before their own and show up each day because they truly care. These teachers are worth investing in.

It's time for us to take a stand and advocate for those who spend their career advocating selflessly for others. As someone who works hard to recruit new people into pursuing the profession, there is no point in recruiting if we can not retain the ones we already have. It will cost us much more in the long run, both financially and figuratively, if we do not commit to the extra compensation for special education, Hawaiian Language Immersion, and hard-to-staff locations.

Thank you for your time,
Janet Kim

Testimony BOE

From: Chris Nakagawa <cnaks65@gmail.com> on behalf of Chris Nakagawa
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:18 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: pay differential

Aloha BOE Members,

My name is Chris Nakagawa and I have been a Special Education Teacher for a little more than thirty years. I went through an accelerated program to earn my license in Special Education and have often thought about leaving the field, not because of a lack of money, irritating students or unreasonable parents, but the overall system in the DOE needs an overhaul especially in Special Education. Money is tight and I am happy that I am employed, but there is just too much responsibilities placed on a Special Education Teacher. I am sure you have heard of the term "top heavy" in the DOE- please times this by 10 in Special Education. Special Education Teachers deal with the most challenging students and instead of allocating funds to ease the paper work burdens, you add positions simply to monitor the Special Education Teachers. There are too many chiefs (Resource Teachers, Sped DES, District Specialist, Administrators, SSC's and Counselors) and not enough Indians. If you want to keep Special Education Teachers in the profession, try adding more responsibilities to these other positions. They don't teach, but are really good and giving orders and finding errors. If this cannot be accomplished then by all means I want the 10 grand!

Sincerely,

Chris Nakagawa

McKinley High School Special Education Chairperson

Chris T. Nakagawa

cnaks65@gmail.com

(c) 808-282-5792

P. O. Box 17586

Honolulu, HI 96817-0586

Testimony BOE

From: Michael Kumabe <kumabes002@gmail.com> on behalf of Michael Kumabe
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:21 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Below is my testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

BOE Members,

My name is Sen Haw Kumabe and I have been a Special Education Teacher for 26 years. On February 9, 2021, Superintendent Kishimoto sent out a memo regarding discontinuation of pay differentials for Special Education Teachers and other educators. This memo shows a lack of understanding of the critical need for licensed Special Education Teachers. The shortfall of these teachers will have a profound impact on the future of Special Education Students in Hawaii. Special Education Teachers are already in short supply because the job requires exceptional patience and commitment to teaching and working with these students and their parents. These teachers' work encompass long meetings beyond their workday, additional effort to plan student's programs, data collection and required federal mandates for Teachers servicing these students. Special Education Teachers work tirelessly on student's academics, speech, communication, social emotional behaviors, gross and fine motor skills, and self-help skills. Special Education Teachers serve as related service providers because the related service providers do not work continuously with the students so the Special Education Teachers must provide the required additional services. Without the pay differential, qualified Special Education Teachers will leave the field in favor of Regular Education or other better paying careers. The result will be that Special Education Students will fail in school, and will be part of an increasing number of illiterate adults which will burden the State's resources. These student's quality of life will never be on par with their regular education peers.

It is also disheartening to see that 11 HIDOE employee types are not getting the reduction in the differential pay which shows the lack of commitment to helping Special Education Students over psychologists, engineers, therapists, public works staff and speech pathologists. It is sad to see that these Special Education Students' futures are not a priority over these other employee types.

Please consider other alternatives to continue funding pay differential to help retain and provide highly certified Special Education Teachers for our Special Education Students. The children of Hawaii need qualified teachers and without the differential, Hawaii's Special Education children will be the ones to suffer the consequences of this decision.

Respectfully,

Sen Haw Kumabe

Early Childhood Special Education Teacher, M. Ed

Alvah Scott Elementary School

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

RE: IN SUPPORT OF ACTION ITEM A, SPECIAL MEETING,
REGARDING DISCONTINUANCE OF SHORTAGE DIFFERENTIAL (Hard-
to-Staff, SPED, Hawaiian Immersion)

THURSDAY, February 18, 2021
11:00 A.M.

Chairperson Catherine Payne and Board Members

Aloha,

My name is Karen Veriato. I am a 3rd grade teacher at Na'alehu Elementary School in the Ka'u, Kea'au, Pahoia Complex on Hawaii Island.

I am submitting testimony to oppose the discontinuance of the shortage differential.

I work at a hard-to-staff rural school with a high ELL population, increasing SPED caseload, and widespread poverty. It is difficult to keep teachers here because of the location. Many dedicated teachers commute about 70 to 130 miles round trip to work.

Many teachers throughout the state have made decisions based on the continuation of the shortage differentials. Superintendent Kishimoto's memo dated February 9, 2021 to discontinue the shortage differentials is a slap in the face.

To be faced with the prospect of losing the shortage differential plus the possibility of a 9.23% pay cut for four years is demoralizing and may lead teachers to leave the profession sooner, including early retirement.

Please rescind Superintendent Kishimoto's action and continue to fund the shortage differential for Hard-to-Staff, SPED, and Hawaiian Immersion educators.

Mahalo,
Karen Veriato
Ka'u District
Island of Hawaii

Testimony BOE

From: Dr. Marcia Howard <mdhoward.phd@gmail.com> on behalf of Dr. Marcia Howard
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:28 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

I am testifying on Action Item A: **Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2020-2021 school**

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 17, 2021

My name is Dr. Marcia Howard. I am a Special Education Teacher at Waianae High School in Leeward District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Special Education Teacher differentials.

It is imperative that this committee provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and continue providing funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching special education for the past 26 years (20 here in Hawaii) and it has been a rewarding yet difficult experience at the same time. I enjoy working with students with special needs however there are parts of my experience in teaching that have been frustrating and mainly it's the pay. I received my Doctorate Degree in Exceptionalities from The University of Hawaii at Manoa in 2014 and was hoping that with this degree I could attain enough salary to sustain my living here in Hawaii, however I have not.

In Brooklyn, New York where I am originally from, teachers with 26 years of experience are making upwards of \$120,000. I can only imagine that with a PhD they are making more. It is sad that with a PhD and 25 years experience in special education here in Hawaii my salary is only \$68,000. I would implore this committee to keep the salary compensation for special education teachers especially when you consider the amount of paperwork that we deal with on a daily basis, the amount of time we spend in meeting that goes beyond the contractual hours on writing IEPs, grading progress reports, contacting agencies and service providers, gathering data, and conducting meetings that can have up to 8-10 people! I can't even stress upon the effort put forth to teach the students with special needs in hopes that they can grasp the concept enough to possibly move them into inclusion classes with their nondisabled peers. This compensation is needed and eagerly welcomed!

Lastly, I know that all teachers spend an insurmountable time in writing and creating lesson plans, tests, and projects, but if Hawaii is to tackle the issue of shortages in special education, by attaining and maintaining licensed, certified, and highly qualified Special Education Teachers, then continuing to provide funding for the amount of time and effort in the form of salary compensation is a excellent start!

Marcia D. Howard, PhD
11th & 12th grade
Special Education English Teacher
Waianae High School

Testimony BOE

From: Lauren Nix <nixalauren@gmail.com> on behalf of Lauren Nix
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:37 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Dear Board of Education Representatives,

I am writing to you to testify in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am a kindergarten teacher at Wai'anae Elementary School. This is my third year teaching at the school. I would like to give you some perspective on how cutting teacher pay will negatively impact teachers at our school and our community. For one, the Nanakuli-Waianae Complex side already has a history of the highest levels of teacher shortage and lowest levels of teacher recruitment and retention on the island. Cutting the hard to staff differentials will make schools that are difficult to staff even more difficult to staff next school year. Secondly, schools in low socioeconomic communities across the island are known to have significant issues with student behaviors, poverty, and lack of funding. This includes homelessness on campus, lack of school supplies and support staff, and old classrooms that may cause health problems. This year, schools are being forced to cut budgets in preparation for next year. All year long, for 8 months, we have been virtual. I have completely depleted my classroom supplies in order to get my students what they need so they can learn from home. Every year, I must tap into my own personal funds to get my students school supplies. I work another part-time job on top of being an educator in Hawai'i because honestly we already are not paid enough as it is for the work we do. By cutting teacher pay, you will be taking away from all that students need to be successful. That would be a huge disservice to both students and teachers.

I currently teach 20 kindergarten students without full-time assistance and minimal educator assistant support online. Large class sizes with minimal support has always been an issue on the Leeward Coast. Now, add a pandemic on top of that with no to little funding, and it is difficult to make sure our students are successful when their basic school supplies needs are not met. Teachers have been forced to pay for class sets of masks and cleaning supplies.

Lastly, students that receive SPED services may be impacted by this decision as the differentials brought attention to hard to staff locations and more qualified teachers are now serving in these areas. There are numerous reasons and data supporting why cutting the differentials will negatively impact schools and student achievement. I do not support this decision. Teachers deserve to be compensated fairly, and I propose that there be an alternative solution rather than suspending the shortage differentials that does not harm educator and student livelihoods in hard to staff locations.

Mahalo,
Lauren Nix

Testimony BOE

From: Marilyn Coloma <colomamh@yahoo.com> on behalf of Marilyn Coloma
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:40 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To: The Board of Education
Re: BOE Special Meeting Action Item A

Hi! My name is Marilyn Coloma and I am a special education teacher at Lihikai Elementary School. I take care of students in the Fully Self Contained classroom (K - 4) and also the care coordinator for 9 grade 4 special education students. Should I stay in special education or should I transfer? Discontinuing the extra compensation of special education teachers, hard to staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language program will create severe problems in the future. We used to have chronic shortage in special education, hard to staff areas, and Hawaiian Language teachers and it improved because of the differential, why take it out now? All positions in special education are still not fully staffed and it will be worst if the differential is not funded.

Most special education teachers are dually certified and we decided to stay in the program because we love our special students. The differential provided us with extra money to use and more time to spend in our classrooms. Because of the differential, we are not rushing out to go to a second job and that means spending more time for our families also. Happy Families becomes a Healthy Community. Please fund the differentials!

Marilyn Coloma
FSC and 4th Grade Special Education Teacher
Lihikai Elementary School

Testimony BOE

From: Derek Govin <derek.govin@gmail.com> on behalf of Derek Govin
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:44 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Hello. My name is Derek Govin and I am a Special Education Teacher for the Community Based Instruction Program at Roosevelt High School. I am also the co-coordinator for the SPEDucator Project, a collective of 20 classroom special education teachers across the state of Hawaii. Let it be known that I am writing as an individual. I represent myself and not the feelings of anyone else at Roosevelt High School, or those in the SPEDucator Project.

I am respectfully writing and submitting testimony on BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I believe BOE Chairperson Catherine Payne said it best when she said "We must take positive action now to address the growing gap of qualified educators who provide instruction to our students with the highest needs." I moved to Hawaii in June 2017 to be a Community Based Instruction Special Education Teacher for students with moderate to severe special needs at Roosevelt High School. I have been in the same position for what will make three years upon the finishing of this school year. My life's work revolves around educating and serving students with disabilities, and I work tirelessly to advocate and elevate my students to find their talents, develop a sense of inclusion and belonging, and support them to be empowered to find and use their voices in their learning experiences. After living in Hawaii for 2.5 years, I had discovered that my income was not a fair living wage considering the high cost of living in Hawaii. I was thrilled for the differentials to be approved, effective January 7, 2020. Now, just a year later, I'm sitting at my laptop after working on documents, activities, and hopeful emails to the speducators in the SPEDucator Project, thanking them for all of their work this year. I have to say, now writing testimony to plead for my differential to not be taken away is quite a different set of feelings.

Let me be clear. My position was hard before the pandemic, and now it is unreal at times. I work to help students to develop self-regulation skills so that inappropriate behaviors such as yelling, crying, scratching, hitting, biting, and eloping, are lessened or aren't displayed. I work hard to maintain a safe environment for all, and then I work to develop functional life skills. Let me be clear. I admire and love my students with every ounce of my being. Setting foot in my classroom for no more than 10 minutes will reveal to you the love and dedication I have for my students with special needs, my positive classroom culture, and public education.

This being said, my position is not one that is easy to fill and should be incentivized to retain highly qualified teachers. Local surveys and HIDOE focus groups have shown that not only are there hard to staff areas and a need to focus on Hawaiian Immersion, but there is also a need to focus on strengthening our special education programs. In the 2018-19 school year, 198 non licensed teachers were instructing students while another 154 special education teaching positions were left vacant. Students with disabilities, regardless of the extent of their disability, deserve to be taught by highly-qualified special education teachers. There is a need to fix a system in Hawaii where our students with special needs are not being provided the opportunity to have an education that is being taught by highly qualified teachers. Data has been presented on the reduction of special education teacher position vacancies. From 10/1/2018, vacancies were reduced from 125 to 69 vacant positions, a 45% decrease. We aren't only facing a teacher shortage crisis in the nation, as well as in Hawaii, but we are facing moral inequity where targeted populations and demographics continually face shortages which result in a disastrous education being offered to these targeted populations. It comes down to one thing: Money. Bottom line. The question then comes "Where will the money come from?" I wish I knew the answer to this. Perhaps we wouldn't be doing this back and forth every year at that point. That being said, it makes me ill to think of the devastating impact that we will increase from 69 vacant positions to what....100+ again? What are our students with special needs worth to us? They are my world. I put my career and life's work to this

profession, only to fight yearly for a livable wage to do so!? It's infuriating. It's maddening that special education teachers will be forced to leave, and students with special needs will be, yet again, sitting in their classrooms watching movies because their "teacher" isn't a licensed, highly qualified individual who is capable of delivering individualized and specialized instructional programs. They need someone who knows how to implement Individualized Educational Programs, modified instruction, behavior support plans, forward and backward chaining, and developing appropriate task analysis, just to name a few. These students need an appropriate education to develop skills to have access to adult day cares, competitive employment opportunities, and become a contributing member of society. When we sit silent and watch while thinking "I'm not political," or "someone else will deal with it," we condone meetings and actions performed that will have detrimental impacts on students with special needs and their families for years to come. When do we say ENOUGH. What does it take for our state to realize that we MUST prioritize all students, including those with special needs, and retain high quality special education teachers in the DOE? After the immense workload that has been given during the 20-21 school year as a result of the pandemic, I cannot believe I am sitting here writing a testimony to keep my pay while STILL advocating for what is best for the students with special needs. Our students and teachers deserve so much better than pleading year to year for what students need to have access to a free and APPROPRIATE education. NOTHING about cutting the differentials, knowing the effect it will have to increase the vacancies again, is promoting FAPE for students with special needs. It's sickening and disheartening, and cutting the differentials must not occur. I STRONGLY oppose BOE Special Meeting Action Item A.

Respectfully,
Derek Govin

Testimony BOE

From: M & M Vierra <m.vierra28@gmail.com> on behalf of M & M Vierra
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:57 PM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Testimony Re: February 18, 2021 Special Mtg at 11am II **A. [Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs](#)**

Name: C. Milika'a Vierra Parent/Concerned Citizen

Position: I Agree with Catherine Payne's recommendation to rescind Superintendent Kishimoto's Feb 9, 2021 Memo and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials w/o prior Board approval.

To whom it may concern,

I agree with the Honorable Chairperson of the Board of Education Catherine Payne's recommendation that the Board direct Superintendent Kishimoto to RESCIND her February 9, 2021 memorandum and to REFRAIN from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

I am a Native Hawaiian parent of Native Hawaiian children, one of whom has made significant progress in Special Education. I also previously sat on 'Uo Mamo, Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau's Governing Board as Pelekikena (Governing Board President) and know first hand how hard it is to seek and retain qualified Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers, for numerous reasons such as low salary, lack of funding, lack of facilities, often inconvenient locations and a failure to transfer years of accumulated DOE benefits for teachers already in the system.

Supporting our teachers should be paramount. Not only are they on the "front lines", most teach because they are compassionate individuals who genuinely care about Hawai'i's children. One would be laughed at if they said they went into teaching for money...because it has historically never been there...for what is arguably one of the most important jobs on this earth. So why not provide incentives? I can't put into words how positively life changing Special Education has been for my child and it is the right of children who qualify, to receive an education from a qualified Special Education teacher. A teacher that remains at their school, bonds with them, knows each child's quirks for the benefit of both the teacher and the child. Now more than ever, the Department should seek, train and retain Special Education Teachers, because they serve our most vulnerable and rapidly growing population. For example, according to the CDC, about 1 in 54 children have autism and that rate has steadily increased over the years and will continue to (in the year 2000, 1 in 150 children were autistic and in the 1970's it was 1 in 10,000). The need to incentivise and fill positions will only steadily increase with these numbers.

The pay differentials make a difference. Teachers make a difference. Please continue to support them. I urge the Board to oppose Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs, demand that she rescind her memo and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval. There is always another way, and I am confident you can help guide the Department and Superintendent to find it.

Sincerely,

C. Milika'a Vierra

(Parent of a child receiving SPED services at Kane'ohe Elementary)

02/16/2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been a special education teacher at Nanaikapono Elementary for little over 10 years now. The pay cut 10 years ago hurt for a long time. Here we go again. What will happen 10 years from now?

I understand desperate times, but not desperate decisions. Does it make any sense to take from my position 3 times? Hard to staff, special education, and a 10% pay cut all at once? That would be \$1,000 per paycheck. I'm willing to sacrifice, but not that much. That is ridiculous when currently special education teachers have so many more requirements than the general education teachers due to legal concerns from the pandemic.

Can a limit be set for how much one teacher should have to sacrifice? \$2,000 a month seems outrageous for being a teacher responsible for care coordinator duties during a pandemic.

Societies have been judged by how they treat the weakest. Please don't attack the most vulnerable, local children on the islands.

Sincerely,
Stan Livingood

Testimony BOE

From: Kauwe, Shay <shay@kauwe.net> on behalf of Kauwe, Shay
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 11:01 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To Whom It May Concern,

I am submitting testimony for the [BOE Special Meeting Action Item A](#): Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Shay Zykova and I am a 9th grade SPED teacher at Waianae High School. Currently, I receive the differential for hard-to-staff locations and for teaching special-education.

If the differentials were to be removed, and if the 9.25% budget cut goes through, I can expect to lose around \$22,000 dollars of my salary - or approximately one-third of my current pay. I don't think that I have to explain how much this would affect me and my family. Prior to the pandemic, my family had done everything right. We saved. We paid off student loans. We were in the position to start looking for our first house.

Then my husband was laid off. Our down payment savings became an emergency fund for COVID. We scraped by on unemployment until he was finally able to get back to work. However, just when we felt like we had finally headed towards financial recovery, we were hit with this gigantic cut in pay announcement for teachers which has once again shifted the ground beneath our feet.

Already, the DOE makes it incredibly hard to get paid fairly in compensation for our education and professional development. Despite having a MA in Education and also taking additional classes to reclassify, losing the differential would put me back at the same salary scale as a first-year teacher with just a BA.

This is absolutely ridiculous.

Why are qualified teachers who chose to teach in areas that most need help, being specifically targeted and made to suffer for a choice that ultimately helps the kids who need the most help?

I chose to teach at my school on the Leeward Coast prior to the differential being implemented and got to see first-hand just how bad teacher retention was, especially in special education. This was no surprise. Lack of funding limits the number of papers teachers can print, access to new books and materials for students, and in other smaller details like having enough pencils and notebooks for kids - as a result, a lot of classroom expenses end up coming out of teacher pockets.

The differentials do something to offset some of these hidden expenses for teachers as well as take care of other costs like the expense of driving to such a geographically isolated area and maintaining the wear-and-tear on a car in such a place as well. For SPED teachers, this problem is even further compounded as the extra amount of work that gets piled on our plates in the form of IEP paperwork, data tracking, etc. was originally not given any additional compensation or time to complete the work.

To be frank, if the differential were taken away - I do not think that I could financially afford to remain a teacher. The severe cut in pay added to the undoubted rise in classroom sizes as teachers seek to leave the Coast will be an unsurmountable burden on students and teachers.

I don't understand why the first people to be put on the chopping block every time there is a crisis is our most vulnerable student population. Let's be very candid - these cuts will directly affect the students who need the most support, who need the most qualified and stable teachers, and who need the most assistance from our government.

At this point, it is becoming clearer and clearer that the well-being of our disenfranchised students is not a priority for this government. That my students are being treated like disposable commodities for the sake of the "economy." The long-term impacts of this misguided philosophy are one that will greatly impact Hawaii for years to come. How long can Hawaii continue to ignore its keiki without facing repercussions?

Proper education from highly qualified teachers is the only way to address a lot of the systemic problems that plague hard-to-staff areas, but policies, like the one proposed by Superintendent Kishimoto, will undoubtedly drive teachers away from these schools.

Myself included.

I love my job. I love my students. But I cannot get by with such a deep cut to my salary. Period. At this point, I am realizing I would make around the same money (with far less emotional stress, overtime, and better benefits) by working at someplace like Foodland. It seems ridiculous, but that is the situation teachers are being forced into at the moment.

I am tired of the lip service given to supporting Hawaii's keiki while at the same time the government is slashing budgets that disproportionately negatively impact the kids who need it most. I am tired of politicians lauding teacher's work ethic while actively pushing for cuts in pay that are unsustainable to retain a high-quality workforce. I am tired of constantly having to write testimonials to defend the salary I make to others who have never set foot in the classroom.

The choices that the BOE and DOE chose to make in the next few months will be pivotal moments for the future of Hawaii.

I urge you to decide wisely and to put our keiki first. I wish I could say that I have faith in the BOE to make the right choice - but, as this is only one of the many testimonials I've written this year, I am quickly losing hope.

Sincerely,
Shay Zykova

Testimony BOE

From: Juan Espinal <thejuanespinal@gmail.com> on behalf of Juan Espinal
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 11:03 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony

Dear Board Of Education,

I think life is better for teachers when you pay us more money.

Your differentials have helped. Thank you!

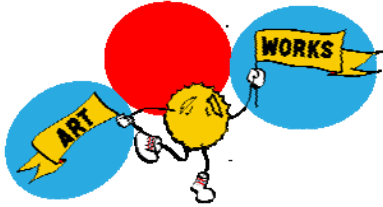
I think things are not as good when you don't pay us more money.

Cutting teacher pay feels bad and it makes the job feel bad. It's never proven to work.

You should do the right thing, because you can do it, even though it's more profitable for you to do the wrong thing.

--

Juan Espinal



juanwork.com

Testimony BOE

From: Leona Watson <lpwright@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Leona Watson
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 11:05 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha BOE Board Members,

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.

With the high demand and shortage of teachers in my school I feel that using the COVID-19 relief package for teachers. WE as teachers worked very hard to serve our keiki during this pandemic therefore, we should be the ones who should assist in developing our keiki. I believe our schools have EAs and Teachers who are able to fill the needs in helping our haumana achieve their academic goals. Please consider using the funding to keep teachers and EAs at our school so we can continue to help our keiki succeed.

I appreciate your time and kokua in this matter.

Malama a me Iesu Pu,

Leona Watson

Testimony BOE

From: Sharde Freitas <skmfreitas@gmail.com> on behalf of Sharde Freitas
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 11:06 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony in SUPPORT to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A.

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

I write this testimony in **SUPPORT** to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A., with Chair Payne's proposed recommendation that the "Board direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval." In particular, I submit this testimony in support of kumu kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion teachers) as a mākua (parent) with keiki that attended kula kaiapuni and based on my experience as the Parent Community Network Center (PCNC) for Ke Kula Kaiāpuni 'o Ānuenue. I appreciate and commend Chair Payne for her memorandum ("memo") dated February 18, 2021 to the Board of Education for this Special Meeting, and also add to key points she included in her memo.

As Chair Payne's memo notes, the DOE is Constitutionally mandated to provide Hawaiian medium education under the recent Hawai'i Supreme Court decision in Clarabal v. Department of Education. Kumu kaiapuni are a critical and necessary component to the DOE to fulfill its Constitutional mandate in providing Hawaiian medium education, and as Board Policy 105-8 states,

"The program's success is largely dependent on the capacity, capability and expertise of the program's professional staff. The Department will establish professional qualifications and develop training programs internally and/or in cooperation with stakeholder groups/universities. The goal is for program professionals to be qualified in both English as a medium of instruction and Hawaiian as a medium of instruction and **appropriately compensated for these additional qualifications.**"

Providing kumu kaiapuni with this needed pay differential will in-turn help the DOE to fulfill its constitutional mandate to provide Hawaiian medium education.

Expanding upon this Constitutional mandate, it is also the DOE's continued commitment to equity, as stated in its Strategic Plan and the 2030 Promise Plan that would be furthered with providing kumu kaiapuni this needed pay differential. In terms of equity, haumāna kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion students) are among the student group disparately impacted as a result of COVID-19. Not only was KĀ'EO testing not administered last year due to the pandemic, but also haumāna kaiapuni have experineced unique opportunity to learn impacts during this pandemic. See ['Aha Kauleo's meeting minutes](#) with survey results on opportunity to learn metrics.

Lastly, and this is likely the most obvious to you all, this pay differential was previously approved. As noted in Chair Payne's memo, Superintendent Kishimoto did not anticipate this to be a pilot program or to cease beyond 2021. Questions and discussion have been ongoing with regards to preparing for legislative budget shortfalls, even prior to the pandemic, and identifying funding sources. With all of the prior points mentioned, and in light of the anticipated budget shortfall from Governor Ige being 7.5% less than anticipated, the pay differential for kumu kaiapuni should not be where cuts are made.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. I urge members to **SUPPORT** the recommendation for the Board to direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

Mahalo,

Sharde Mersberg Freitas, JD, MPH
skmfreitas@gmail.com

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HAWAII STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

RE: BOE SPECIAL MEETING ACTION ITEM A

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2021

LUCA BARCENILLA

NĀNĀKULI HIGH AND INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

COMPUTER SCIENCE GRADE 8

Chair Payne and Members of the Board:

POSITION: Opposition of discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in Special Education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Regarding Action Item A, I strongly oppose the discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. These differentials have been such a lifesaver for me and my ohana that helped us stay afloat as we drowned in debt.

I began my teaching career in Nānākuli nearly ten years ago and I had no idea what a hard-to-staff differential was until halfway through my second year of teaching. I did not choose to teach in Nānākuli for the extra compensation, but it has been a factor in my decision to remain in Nānākuli. As with many of my colleagues, I lived paycheck to paycheck having to prioritize which bills I needed to pay first. Teaching was a career that I had dreamed of for quite some time, and when I finally received my degree and

license, I was ecstatic. Then the bills began to pile up, my ohana began to grow, and the bills began to pile up higher. When the hard-to-staff differential was increased and I was eligible for the Special Education differential, I felt like a giant weight had been lifted off of my chest and I could breathe once again.

There is no way to sugarcoat this. COVID-19 is a virus that has had a devastating impact on the entire world. The haumana have shown incredible resilience throughout this pandemic and we are all doing our part, but cutting the differentials will have a tremendous impact on our ability to provide haumana with the education they deserve. Cutting the differentials will send the state right back into the depths from which we climbed out with another teacher shortage and low teacher retention rates. Class sizes will increase, school services will decrease, and morale will be low across the board. I have experienced firsthand the positive impacts of the differentials and the negative impacts of not having them and it breaks my heart to think that my ohana will go back to living paycheck to paycheck, or worse, I may have to find work elsewhere.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my mana'o and to provide testimony. Please join me in opposition to the discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. Our haumana and kumu deserve better.

Testimony BOE

From: Bill Giebink <giebink@gmail.com> on behalf of Bill Giebink
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 11:16 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: SPES Pay Differential

Aloha,

I urge you to keep the current pay differential for Special Education teachers. This program has made a significant difference in the retention rate and has improved the quality of services to our special needs students. I understand the financial pressures that exist, but it's our obligation to do the best we can. This program makes a difference and it deserves your support. Thank you,

Bill Giebink

Teacher

Maui High School

Testimony BOE

From: Kekoa & Kela Bay <kbaysquared@gmail.com> on behalf of Kekoa & Kela Bay
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 11:19 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony - Special Meeting - Action Item A

Aloha,

First I want to express my gratitude to Chairman Payne and the Board for bringing this item to the public attention. This is a monumental concern in maintaining highly qualified teachers in Hawaii's public schools and many of the people impacted were not aware that this was a discussion. I fully support the request to have Superintendent Kishimoto withdraw her memo and her decision to unilaterally take away the differentials that have proven to be very effective in maintaining appropriate qualified teachers in our classrooms.

Hawaii public schools greatly need qualified teachers and the differentials were a major step as was evidenced by the success and retention that happened. In Special Education it was previously very difficult to find enough teachers to fill the spots. I was hired as an emergency hire to fill one of those slots. Starting teaching in a Special Education environment without the training and necessary understanding of how to teach students with disabilities put them at a greater disadvantage. As I went through the process of becoming highly qualified, there were many things I learned that the students from my first year of teaching did not receive. I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to learn, but it was not fair to my students to have an unqualified teacher who did not know how to give them the proper support.

Taking away the differentials will likely have more than just a reversal of the benefits, but likely a large exodus of teachers that would leave our most vulnerable students even more at risk. It is absolutely disheartening to know that the lack of qualified Special Educators has caused the achievement gap to get even wider because of the lack of trained teachers to provide the proper support needed for this population. A reversal of the differential pay would not only dishearten our current teachers, but would have a disastrous impact on our keiki.

Thank you for your consideration and taking time to read through my testimony.

Mahalo,
Kekoa Michael Bay
Pearl City High School - Special Education

Testimony BOE

From: Nara Takakawa <ntakakawa@gmail.com> on behalf of Nara Takakawa
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 11:30 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony on Action Item A

Testimony submitted for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Dear Members of the Board of Education:

My name is Nara Takakawa, and I am a seventh grade special educator at Central Middle School in Honolulu. The differential played a significant role in my decision to remain a special educator.

There are a plethora of reasons why special educators burn out. First, we work very closely with the most challenging students with varying disabilities. Last year, I had students with the following disabilities all in one class: Specific Learning Disability, Intellectual Disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Visual Impairment, and Other Health Disability (ADHD). Second, I need to figure out how to teach this diverse group of young learners in a way that best suits their needs. Third, I have to help their general education teachers teach them as well. I spend quite a bit of time conferring with my English, Math, Science, and Social Studies counterparts to provide accommodations and modify the curriculum for students who need them. Fourth, I also have to manage a range of behaviors that can include tantrums, shutdowns, defiance, and insubordination. I do these things every single day. Not surprisingly, this work is emotionally exhausting and draining.

However, instruction, planning with my colleagues, and managing student behavior is only part of my job. I also have to schedule annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and write the IEP's themselves. Scheduling a meeting sounds like an easy task, but many parents don't answer their phone, so I write an email. When they don't respond to an email, I have to mail a letter home. If I still don't hear back, I might use the student's phone to call them. Then, I have to document all of these attempts in eCSSS, so there's evidence that I made at least 3 good faith efforts to contact parents to have the annual IEP meeting by the due date. All of these actions to schedule meetings take time away from everything else I need to do.

Then, I need to actually draft the IEP, which takes me a minimum of 4 hours because I am synthesizing information from a variety of sources including tests, such as the SBAC, i-Ready, WIAT-III, and WIDA Access for ELLS, input from the student's general education teachers and Behavior Health Specialist if the student has one, and school records (grades, attendance reports, medical conditions, etc.). If a student has greater needs, then the IEP adjusts accordingly, and I need even more time to write it. I have spent as many as 8 hours drafting IEP's. Essentially, a special educator is constantly

writing reports--at least one IEP for each student on one's caseload as well as 4 progress reports--one for each quarter.

Honestly, there are not enough hours in the school day to do all the tasks of a special educator, and I work 2 unpaid hours every school day. I try to arrive on campus by 7 a.m. and usually stay until 4 p.m. (at my previous middle school, I stayed until 5 p.m. every day), and I often work through recess and lunch.

The pay differential has kept me in my special education position. It also made me feel appreciated and respected for being the educated professional that I am. If it is taken away, it is very likely that next year (my tenth as a special educator) will be my last. (I dream of just being able to teach and not having to worry about mountains of IEP paperwork.) Since I am also HQ in Secondary Social Studies, I will most likely seek a position as a Social Studies teacher. The pay differential is keeping special educators like me in our jobs. Please do not eliminate it.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my story.

Respectfully,
Nara Takakawa, Ph.D.

Testimony BOE

From: Ashley Olson <ms.a.olson@gmail.com> on behalf of Ashley Olson
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 11:36 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Good morning esteemed members of the Board of Education-

My name is Ashley Olson, and I write to you today in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting. I am a long time educator in Lahaina who is benefitting from the hard to staff differentials that were expanded last year.

The differentials were broadened in order to reduce shortages in various hard to staff locations and teaching assignments. The differentials have proven to be wildly successful by any metric used to assess them, and yet, the Superintendent has indicated that she wishes to end them. Even when taking the current financial challenges into consideration this makes no strategic sense at all and only the most cursory, short term financial sense, if that.

I am on the verge of purchasing an affordable, workforce housing unit, because even with the geographical hard to staff differential and 27 years in the HIDEOE, I cannot afford a market-rate condo in West Maui. Ending the differential will mean that my housing costs will be more than half of my monthly take home pay.

Stories like mine offer a strong disincentive to those who might otherwise consider a career in the HIDEOE.

Please use your power to ensure that the differentials established last year are not terminated.

Thank you-

A. Olson

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HAWAII STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

RE: BOE GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING ACTION ITEM V, B

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2021

LUCA BARCENILLA

NĀNĀKULI HIGH AND INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

COMPUTER SCIENCE GRADE 8

Chair Payne and Members of the Board:

POSITION: Support of the BOE to prioritize using stimulus money to stabilize classroom and staff funding instead of creating new tutor programs

Regarding Action Item V, B, I strongly support the use of federal stimulus funding to restore all cuts to the weighted student formula (WSF) and special education per-pupil allocation (SPPA), to avoid the layoffs of any HIDOE employees.

As a teacher in the public school system of Hawai'i for nearly ten years, when I think of the HIDOE, I think of stability. COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on nearly every country in the world, but we have to fight back. With the drop in state revenue due to the shutdowns, we are facing a tremendous shortfall. There is a silver lining in that Congress approved a federal stimulus package at the end of last year which can be used to end the proposed layoffs and pay cuts and restore school-level funding. Then I read an email a while back about how HIDOE wants to use nearly \$50 million of that lifesaving federal funds on private tutoring and academic coaching that nearly broke my

brain. I am not trying to be facetious. I had to stop, re-read that part of the email and try to figure out why we would even think of hiring tutors from outside of the HDOE organization when we have so many highly qualified educators.

Being laid off is no joke as I have experienced this in the past during the recession of 2008 and this turned my life upside down. I am still trying to recover from this life-changing event and the hard-to-staff and Special Education differentials have done wonders for helping me regain confidence and solidify my financial footing. Now with the proposed budget cuts, I am faced with the possibility of losing my job and I am terrified for me and my ohana. I am also terrified of what these cuts will do to the schools and haumana. Class sizes will increase, school services will be cut, and this is just the beginning of the downward spiral of our educational system. The federal stimulus funds can be used as a lifesaver for nearly 1000 educators and school employees.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my mana'o and to provide testimony. Please join me in support of the use of federal stimulus funding to restore all cuts to the weighted student formula (WSF) and special education per-pupil allocation (SPPA), to avoid the layoffs of any HDOE employees. Our haumana and kumu deserve better.

TESTIMONY FOR THE BOE SPECIAL MEETING ACTION ITEM A:

Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2021

Members of the Board of Education, Mahalo for accepting my testimony today. My name is Dari Shim Matsuura. I am a Special Education (Sped) Teacher at Ali'iolani Elementary School in the Honolulu district – KMR Complex on O`ahu.

I am married. My husband is permanently disabled due to a massive stroke 16 years ago. We have a special needs daughter. I am the primary provider in my family. Prior to becoming a Sped teacher, of which I have been licensed for 2 years now, I worked in the DOE classroom setting for 9 years – first as a skills trainer, then educational assistant while also working 2 to 3 jobs, including co-owning a successful floral business. In order to manage the chronic health and behavioral needs of a child and adult with special needs, working 2 to 3 jobs was not a choice. I have been working since I was 16 and for the majority of my adult life, I have always had at least 2 jobs -- in order to stay in Hawai'i and survive financially in Hawaii's high cost of living.

I am an intelligent woman with 2 college degrees, have worked in management and administrative positions, including 2 years at the Hawaii State Legislature, co-owned a successful floral business, and have been a Special Olympics coach for the past 15 years. My point is I work very, very, very hard. When the differential was given to Sped teachers, I was elated that I could quit my second job and pour my heart and soul into the success of my students. (A job in the restaurant industry, that by the way, I made as much in (12) 4 hr. days as half of my teacher's salary.) Taking away the differential will place an extreme financial hardship on myself and my family. My resolve would be to take on another job. I love being a Sped teacher. My job as a teacher isn't even close to being 8 hours/day. I work until midnight and most weekends planning and preparing for the constant changing strengths and needs of every single one of my students. A second job would place a heavy burden on my ability to provide the best my students deserve. I'm a perfectionist and over-achiever. I know, in time, my own health and well-being would suffer more than I already let it.

Due to COVID-19, I have spent upwards of nearly \$2000 this school year of my own money to ensure my parents their child would be safe returning to a supportive and positive environment that would meet their safety, health, social emotional, and behavioral needs so they could thrive academically. My principal, colleagues, and parents would attest, I didn't waste any time waiting for ifs, and what-ifs. For Sped students, time is of the essence. Though I provided synchronous

distance learning to my students every day in the 4th quarter of the 2019-20 school year, my students desperately needed to be back in the classroom with me, and as quickly as possible. I am proud to say my students have been in school for face-to-face learning since August 18th and by the way, they are healthy and thriving social-emotionally and academically – even in the context of a pandemic. That is the kind of teacher I am, and I am worth the differential.

Besides teaching, I am also the grade level chairperson for our Sped department and a recruiting member of our HTMSS committee and our Ci3T/RTI Program. Now in our third week, I also co-started and co-lead a weekly Aloha Resource cohort based on the foundations of ALOHA. The mere thought of taking on another job, if the differential is taken away is agonizing and frankly quite sad. I would not be able to commit to these committees and programs in my school. I implore you, please keep the differential in place.

I have one more year to fulfill the stipend I received from the state to pay for my schooling to becoming a Sped teacher. Board members, I'm fulfilling my contract. Superintendent Kishimoto needs to follow through on hers. Please vote to maintain the shortage differential for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion programs, and hard-to-staff geographical areas.

Mahalo for your time,

*Dari Matsuura, Special Education Teacher
KMR Complex, Honolulu District of O`ahu*

Testimony BOE

From: Serena Nishihara <snishiha@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Serena Nishihara
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:00 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov; crosenlee@hsta.org
Subject: Cutting Budgets as well as differentials does not help our future

Dear Sir and Ma'ams,

I would like to inform you that cutting our budgets and differentials does not help our keiki's at all. Sup. Kishimoto should cut back the higher level positions where they are not in the classroom teaching and making six figures. Those in the higher positions have forgotten what it is like to be in the classroom. We also have too many resource teachers running around and not being in the classroom. Cuts could be done elsewhere rather than cutting back on teachers who are in the classroom to teach.

Tutors are not teachers and they are not credentialed as such and should not be considered to take over the credentialed teachers positions which may in turn hurt our keikis in their learning/ We stress on STRIVE HIGH how would you expect our STUDENTS to become advanced learners without the credentialed and licensed teachers.

As a special education teacher I have had to use my own money's to purchase needed supplies for dissection since our Federal IDEA monies were given majority to the regular education departments. I remember receiving \$1,300 of federal monies in special education years ago but now those federal monies have been fizzled out to the other departments rather than to the Special Education Department. I am wondering is this legal for the State to do? Whenever there is a shortfall it is always the Special Education Department which gets hit drastically. Do you think this is fair?

I would consider removing the top echelon people who may be sitting on their "okoles" and not doing their jobs like we are. I start at 5:30 am and do not leave school until 4:30 or 5:00 pm or sometimes later until my planning is done.

I humbly remain, Kumu Serena

Testimony BOE

From: Lila Lelepali <kuupuni001@yahoo.com> on behalf of Lila Lelepali
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:18 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: "Testimony"

To the Board of Education Members,

‘O Kumu Lelepali ko’u inoa. He kumu a’o au ma ke Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Hawai’i Kahuku Academy.

(My name is Ms. Lelepali. I am a teacher at Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Hawai’i Kahuku Academy.)

I am currently receiving a differential incentive as a teacher in the Hawaiian language immersion program at Kahuku High and Intermediate Schools due to the teacher shortage statewide in the Hawaiian immersion programs. The Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Hawai’i Kahuku Academy, is the Hawaiian immersion program at Kahuku High and Intermediate schools. It previously was operated with only three Kaiapuni teachers, teaching 5 different content areas for 6 grade levels during the past 12 years. It took a lot of creative planning to work with a limited amount of resources (teachers) but it was done. The Office of Hawaiian Education (OHE) teacher recruitment and licensing program help provide for two new teacher recruits last year. They happen to be our Kaiapuni graduates, from the first graduating class of 2008, returning to become teachers and role models for our haumānas (*students*). Can you imagine the reprieve to have two more teachers in our program? Our immersion program will be in jeopardy of losing these two new teachers should the differential incentive ends because the differential is the incentive for retention. Please don’t end the differential incentive for Hawaiian immersion teachers because it has a positive impact on teacher recruitment that is definitely needed.

Mahalo,

Lila Lelepali ph: 780-2391 kuupuni001@yahoo.com Kahuku High School work: 293-8950 ext.255
lila_lelepali@notes.k12.hi.us "He ali'i ka 'aina, he kauwa ke kananka"

Testimony BOE

From: Lizzy Laliberty <puchanus@gmail.com> on behalf of Lizzy Laliberty
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:22 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: KEEP Pay differentials for special education teachers

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

Thank you for this opportunity to advocate on behalf of myself, my colleagues and our students. I am a special education teacher at Hilo High school and am currently in my 16th year. I am a National Board Certified teacher and have my Master's degree. I put myself through these programs including the now-defunct "RISE" program as a brand-new teacher with two young children. I'm not telling you this because I need your sympathy, but because my story is shared by so many other teachers who struggled to earn degrees, PD credits and extra certifications because that's the only way we could increase our pay. I love my job and my students. However, love alone doesn't pay the bills. The differential, incidentally NOT a pilot program as Superintendent Kishimoto declared, allows me to *finally* feel financially secure. In addition, due to the differential our Special Ed dept also has NO unlicensed teachers and long-term subs. The differential has been a win-win for our students AND teachers. What's good for teachers is good for students.

Through her words and actions, Superintendent Kishimoto clearly does not value Special Education students and teachers. She is comfortable knowing that if the Board agrees to cancel the differential, many Sped students will go back to having an unlicensed teacher or long-term sub. The day to day life of a special education teacher is tough. Our jobs require large amounts of specialized training and we don't get a commensurate level of respect or pay. But regardless of how tough our jobs can be, our students have it even tougher. They face adversity every day. Having special needs of any kind, in a society that glorifies achievement and success through competition is not for the faint of heart. They are heroes to me and if they have made it this far they can continue to succeed in their own way with the right amount of love, support and challenge. Sadly, Dr. Kishimoto's actions devalue these students by disrespecting their teachers. ALL students deserve a well-trained and well-paid teacher regardless of their background or needs. We are highly educated professionals who love our jobs and our students but also need financial stability and security. The pay differentials offer the stability we need at this time of crisis. Please show special education teachers that you care about them and the students they teach by keeping this differential. Mahalo.

Liz Laliberte
Hilo High School

Testimony BOE

From: Inga Park <ingapark@me.com> on behalf of Inga Park
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:31 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha Chair Payne and Board of Education Members,

I am writing testimony on the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. First of all, the differentials were created to help solve a problem, which it has helped to solve. So taking away differentials doesn't make sense. I know several teachers who said they accepted positions they would not have accepted had it not been for the differentials, and if the differentials are discontinued, I don't believe these teachers would remain in those positions. The differentials helped to create equity for students in hard to staff schools and classrooms. We took a step in the right direction. Please don't allow our superintendent to throw out successful initiatives like this. I had three foster children in special education at the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind, and it was vital for them to have the specialized education program provided by their teachers. It scares me to think that we could create an even greater shortage of special education teachers and how this will impact our keiki.

Thank you,
Inga Park Okuna
Parent and Grandparent of Public School Students
Kalihi Uka School Counselor

Testimony BOE

From: kristen tanski <ac2dburns@gmail.com> on behalf of kristen tanski
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 1:14 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

BOE Special Meeting Action Item A:

My name is Kristen Tanski and I'm a newly certified special education teacher. The differential for special education teachers has helped me save money (for once) and it could help me put a down-payment on a house here in Hawaii. Without the differential, my partner and I would have to rethink our plans to settle down in Hawaii. These differentials help make up for the lack of pay that teachers need to support a family. Teachers are underpaid in all states, but Hawaii's differential program helps to try to make up for this gap in pay and there isn't another program like it. Please don't get rid of this program.

Kristen Tanski
Mililani Ike elementary
Special education teacher

Testimony of Leinā‘ala Kuloloio Vedder
Board of Education - Special Meeting
Scheduled for February 18, 2021 at 11:00am
Agenda Item: II A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's
discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special
education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language
programs

Aloha Chairperson, Catherine Payne and board members. I am Leinā‘ala Kuloloio Vedder, a Hawaiian Immersion teacher for 23 years on Maui and I am against Superintendent Kishimoto’s February 9, 2021 memorandum regarding the discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. This would mean that my salary will decrease by \$667.00 a month. On top of that, a proposed 10% decrease in pay will result in an additional \$660.00 a month. Resulting in a decreasing total of \$1,327.00 a month of my hard earned dollars! This will have a devastating effect on the livelihood of my family of four. I also inherited my father’s estate last year and am financially obligated. I would have to apply for a part-time job on the weekends or after school just to make ends meet. At my age, I come after work exhausted and bewildered at expectations that are imposed on me.

The demands of distance learning, compiled with translating, producing slide show presentations, correcting work on different digital platforms, and creating interactive technology for my Hawaiian Immersion students keep me up at night. It’s like I’m a new teacher all over again. I have been teaching in my classroom since the first day of school and haven’t called in sick or chose to do teleworking. I am committed to my profession, my students, and my lāhui as a kumu Kaiapuni. I deserve the pay differential!

I ask this Board to support Chairperson Payne’s recommendation and direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and to refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

Mahalo,
Leinā‘ala Kuloloio Vedder

Testimony BOE

From: Manuel Jadulang <manuel_jadulang@yahoo.com> on behalf of Manuel Jadulang
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 3:13 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony against discontinuance of extra compensation of teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Aloha e Hawaii Board of Education

My name is Manuel Jadulang current teacher (Business and Natural Resources Pathways at Kealakehe HS in Kailua-Kona on the Big Island. I have been teaching since 2001 and sending my testimony for the [BOE Special Meeting Action Item A](#) regarding my stance of Dr Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am very displeased with her proposal to remove our extra compensation. Our state of Hawaii already has had shortage of teachers and removing the extra compensation will cause this situation of teacher shortage to worsen.

I have taught at 3 different schools during my career in Hawaii, Kohala HS (2000-2001), Honokaa High and Intermediate (2007-2020) and Kealakehe HS (2001-2007 and 2020-current) and know Honokaa and Kealakehe complex schools are schools that receive the differential. Over the course of my career I have seen shortage of teachers at the schools that I taught. When there is a shortage of teachers I have seen emergency hires, long term substitute teachers and Teach for america teachers are often placed in vacant positions which students suffer because these "teachers" are not properly trained.

I have colleagues in DOE who teach in special education, hard to staff geographical locations and Hawaiian language programs and I stand with all of them that we need this differential. I have teacher friends on the mainland and they make way more than teachers in Hawaii. The high cost of living in Hawaii does not help. My commute from home to schools is 50 to 60 minutes a day depending on traffic and the miles is approximately 40 miles.

I am a parent of 2 children that attend public and charter schools (Waimea elementary and Waimea Middle Public conversion charter school) and have seen shortage of teachers at those schools as well.

I am requesting that our BOE demand that Dr Kishimoto do not discontinue the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs for the sake of preventing shortage of teachers as well the need our students to receive instruction from qualified teachers.

Me ke aloha

Manuel Jadulang
Kealakehe HS Teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Andrea Chen <andrea.chen@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Andrea Chen
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 5:05 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Hawaii Board of Education,

I would like to submit a testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

After working for Mililani High School in the special education department for nearly three years, I sincerely believe that the extra compensation for special education teachers is a necessary pay differential for the work provided. Long hours after allotted school time are often put in to compensate for the additional work required for the special education program. Weekly, quarterly, and yearly documentation is being provided by the special education teachers in addition to frequent calls to parents and above and beyond teaching efforts to provide special education students with the support needed to be successful. This is in addition to the standard lesson planning, teaching, grading, and training that every teacher is expected to meet as typical job requirements.

As a newly single parent of four children who are in the Hawaii school system, the extra time spent at school and home to support special education demands takes away from daily parental tasks. Before the differential pay, this time was uncompensated and underappreciated. The time and effort is far more than what is asked of general education teachers who have the same base pay as special education professionals. In order for me to provide for myself and my family, the differential pay is vital to our family's livelihood. Without the pay, special education teachers like myself will not be able to meet the financial demands of living in our community. I will be forced to find other employment or to take a second job at the cost of my children's well-being of having a mother present to build a strong family foundation. This ultimately affects the community as a whole when work is not being done at home to raise strong, functional children who will contribute to society.

Please do not cut differential pay for special education professionals. We are working tirelessly to meet the vigorous demands of special education students and deserve compensation for the time and effort.

Sincerely,

Andrea Chen
Special Education Teacher
Mililani High School

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Testimony BOE

From: Noelani Takayesu <ntakayesu@gmail.com> on behalf of Noelani Takayesu
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 5:38 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To distinguished BOE members,

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.

2020 was a difficult year for all of us and the lingering effects of 2020 will be felt for years to come, however we have been afforded glimmers of hope in the shift of power in Washington D.C. What we cannot afford to do however is use the funds for purposes that are well intended but extremely short sighted.

Teachers know their students, they know their current levels, they know how to support them and they know how to continue to build on their academic progress from this tumultuous year. Private tutors have their place in the academic community but it is NOT to use Federal public emergency funds to give students a one-shot opportunity at summer tutoring.

These Federal public emergency funds need to be used to support teachers in their work. We cannot afford to lose teachers, we cannot afford to treat these exalted professionals in a constant state of fight or flight! This past year has been difficult but it has been made even more unbearable by the constant threat of furloughs, loss of income, loss of school level positions, loss of school funds, concerns of safety on campus amongst many other non-career related issues. Please continue to stress the importance of using these federal funds for their intended purpose!

Educators need help and they need your support to make it through this time!

Sincerely,
Noelani Takayesu
Central Middle School
Student Services Coordinator

Testimony BOE

From: Simone Ezzy <simone.ezzy@gmail.com> on behalf of Simone Ezzy
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 5:53 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony issue 1

When I was getting divorced 9 years ago, a lawyer told me that I should move back to the mainland because I would never afford to live here as a teacher with a child, with only my teacher income. She was almost right, except that moving was not an option, as joint custody with my son decreed that consent to leave the island needed to come from both parents, and my ex was established and happy here.

SO

I got an extra part time job, and stayed. I never have regretted the decision, but I must say that the differentials established a year ago have made a great difference for me in regards to financial stability. I am sad to have to again consider supplementing my income with another job, especially as the demands of special education during these times seem to have intensified. Please reconsider stopping the differentials, and leave them in place.

Simone Ezzy
Special Education teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Noelani Takayesu <ntakayesu@gmail.com> on behalf of Noelani Takayesu
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 5:57 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To distinguished BOE members,

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting **Action Item A:** Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

It was very disheartening to read the Memo from Dr. K regarding the differentials, I am going to make the comparison to science and the mind boggling explanation that based on evidence proving that something worked for its intended purpose we are going to discontinue it and risk losing all of that progress. That is what my mind jumped to when I read the memo that stated unequivocally by affording these differentials we significantly reduced these hard to fill positions and local Universities were turning away applicants interested in Special Education teaching pathways. I compare it to vaccine scientists in the lab, getting their intended results for a vaccine and then just chucking it into the trash when they encounter their first financial challenge. What sense does that make? It works and it was a long time coming to support the thankless work of Special Education teachers.

I personally work with dedicated special education teachers who will be devastated by this loss of income! We cannot pretend that the differentials they were just a "nice to have" they are a necessity! There are enormous unintended costs of not having qualified special education teachers in these crucial positions. The human cost is the one that hurts me the most, students with disabilities will be put at even more of a disadvantage due to the lingering effects of the pandemic and the risk losing their dedicated special education teachers.

Please let's continue to use evidence-based practices both in the classroom and in the policy decisions we make that significantly affect the most vulnerable communities!

Sincerely,
Noelani Takayesu
Central Middle School
Student Services Coordinator

Testimony BOE

From: Brandi Ahlo <brandiahlo@gmail.com> on behalf of Brandi Ahlo
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 6:11 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Kaiapuni Teachers

Aloha,

My name is Brandi Ahlo and I support our kumu kaiapuni. As a parent of two keiki that attend Pūnana Leo I understand the importance of kumu that excel regular teaching duties. These kumu DESERVE a pay differential. They need to be creative in planning lesson plans and learning manipulatives. There is no place to buy curriculum off the shelf like other types of lesson plans. This is our language in Hawai‘i and as such kumu who teach our next generation should be compensated accordingly.

The BOE Policy 105-8 states that Hawaiian immersion will be compensated for the extra skill that is needed. With this policy, it is affordable and I support it all kumu kaiapuni.

Mahalo,
Brandi Ahlo
Owner of Hale Niheu
Makeup Artist/Hairstylist
(808)230-1189
brandiahlo@gmail.com

Testimony BOE

From: Leslie Horn <leslie.horn@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Leslie Horn
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 6:22 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

As a special education teacher, I have been working face to face with my students since the first quarter of the school year. Special education teachers and the paraprofessionals we work with, before any other group of educators, were asked to put ourselves and our loved ones at risk by seeing students face to face while our COVID numbers were still dangerously high. No amount of PPE and training videos can take away the anxiety we all were feeling.

I cannot socially distance from my students. They require assistance with basic life skills such as feeding and toileting. I am in close contact and exposed to bodily fluids daily. Yet, I take the risk. One of my EA's and I were exposed to COVID. One of my students had COVID and I saw that child face to face before his family knew he had COVID. Thankfully we did not contract the virus or unknowingly expose other students we were working with or our loved ones to the virus. This risk is real. I

The pay differential does feel like some compensation for the additional risk we are taking. This has been a year of asking teachers to completely reinvent the way they do their jobs as well as do double the work. I still have students who opt in for distance learning. Carving out time to meet with them individually during the school day, prepare distance learning materials for them to have at home, and teach them virtually while simultaneously teaching my face to face students, is more than double the work, believe me. I can't imagine another profession where employees would be asked to do what we have been asked to do without being given a raise. Yet, here we are facing a massive pay cut. It's a kick in the gut. I feel completely undervalued and disrespected. I am not sure what my next step will be if this pay cut happens.

Sincerely,
Leslie Horn

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Testimony BOE

From: Joyce Phelan <j.phelan2424@gmail.com> on behalf of Joyce Phelan
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 6:38 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I write today in support of Action Item A, for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I left Hawaii and teaching as of December 31 st and the differential or lack there of, was a significant part of my decision. I taught in Hawaii at the end of 2020. I was promised a hard to staff differential, but never received it. I didn't get the differential because I wasn't told I needed to transfer my teaching certificate. There was no mention of the need to transfer my license as a requirement to receive the hard to staff differential- otherwise I would have done it before moving to Hawaii. When I applied to transfer my license - I filled in and uploaded all of the requirements and still I was told I was missing information and needed to jump through a variety of hoops. So I decided I had enough and resigned my position at the end of the second quarter. I was already taking a pay cut, even with the hard to staff differential then when I wasn't getting that - well it made my decision to leave a lot easier. I feel like the state of Hawaii and the school lied to me, offering a payment then rescinding it, or making it impossible for me to get the money I was promised.

I encourage you to keep the hard to staff differential and to be upfront with potential staff about the process to obtain the differential. As you all know it is incredibly expensive to live in Hawaii and making it difficult to get monies that were promised prior to moving/living there is unfair to people who just want to serve the children of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Joyce M Phelan

Testimony BOE

From: Leigh Barbieto <napualehua@gmail.com> on behalf of Leigh Barbieto
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 6:43 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,
Thank you for your time once again.

This differential has helped to keep immersion schools surviving and the immersion teachers should be compensated for the extra skill set needed for these positions.

Once again, I'm exhausted that during these times, this was the solution to our budget needs? Groups deserving of this differential would take the brunt of the budget cuts that has already been approved?

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahealani Barbieto
Waiiau Elementary School

February 16, 2021

Testimony on the Special Meeting of the Board of Education in relation to the Board action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Aloha Chairperson Payne and members of the Board of Education,

I am writing to express my opposition to the discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. My name is Rebecca Hadley-Schlosser, a proud special education teacher at Nanaikapono Elementary School and a proud member of the Hawaii State Teachers Association. I am in my 29th year as a Special Education Teacher, and my 24th in Hawaii. I have spent 23 years of my career teaching on the Waianae Coast.

I can't believe we're back to discussing this topic. We had this conversation back in July when you were considering temporarily halting the extra compensation and you elected to support the teachers who were receiving this extra compensation. I implore you to show your continued support for teachers like myself and not allow this discontinuance.

These differentials were intended to address the qualified and licensed teacher shortage in the areas of Special Education, Hard-to-Staff Geographical Locations, and for Hawaiian Language Immersion Programs. This was bold action, for which those of us who have received the compensation are very appreciative. In the documents provided for the Thursday meeting, you indicated that aside from these teacher positions, there were 11 civil service positions in the Department that are being provided a shortage differential due to a recognized labor shortage in their areas of expertise. My question in relation to this would be are these civil service positions also going to have their extra compensation discontinued?

Did the extra compensation have the desired effects of reducing the need to hire emergency hires, substitute teachers, or other personnel to cover positions that were not filled by qualified teachers? The data shows that, yes, they did have the desired effect. As someone who has received the extra compensation for being both a Special Education Teacher and teaching in a Hard to Staff area, I implore you to continue your commitment and promise to us that these differentials will not be discontinued.

Let's look at some numbers in relation to these differentials because the numbers don't lie.

As noted in your materials, on October 1, 2020, there were only 69 Special Education Teacher vacancies versus 122 and 125 in the previous two years. This was a 45% decrease from October of 2018.

You also noted that we had 1,733 teachers stay in Special Education positions this school year, which was a 3% increase. We had 129 teachers move into Special Education positions, which

was a 43% increase. We only had 116 teachers move out of Special Education positions, a 28% decrease, and 251 Special Education Teachers separated from service, which was a 3% increase.

These are great numbers to see. My biggest fear is that we will see a huge shift in the numbers in the opposite direction should the shortage differentials be discontinued. I know teachers who added Special Education to their area of licensure this year so that they can get the differential.

The second shortage differential I receive is the Hard to Staff School/Area differential. Looking at the numbers, again, shows that they had the desired effect. There were only 67 vacant position on October, which was a 42% decrease from October 2018. We had 2,034 teachers stay at a hard to staff site, a 3% increase, and 41 teachers move into a hard to staff site, a 52% increase. Only and 29 teachers moved out of a hard to staff site, a 45% decrease, and 235 separated from services, a 1% increase.

Additionally, there were 94 teachers receiving the shortage differential for Hawaiian Language Immersion, which was a 7% increase.

The numbers don't lie! When given incentives like the shortage differentials, teachers are willing to go that extra mile and stay or move into positions. Some will say that we shouldn't be given these incentives. Having spent 23 years on the Waianae Coast, I have seen teachers come and go from schools. I was excited to see the increase in numbers staying this year because of these differentials. Again, I fear the numbers leaving will increase should these differentials be discontinued.

Being a teacher during this pandemic is hard. Being a Special Education Teacher during the pandemic is harder because of the extra work that has been required by the state of us. Receiving that shortage differential has made a difference in my ability to focus on my students rather than worrying about whether I'm going to have to get a second job to help pay the bills at home. Because of the shortage differentials I receive, I was able to purchase a car after riding the city bus for almost five years. I am scrimping and saving as much as I can, but to lose the differentials amounts to a \$1500 monthly pay cut, which is just about half of what my take-home pay is each payday. For some of my colleagues, that money is the difference in them being able to eat healthy meals or if they need to survive on ramen between paydays. This continued fight to be paid equitably is making even me consider my options. I am even reviewing information to see if I can retire in the near future. I know that I can move to another state and make more money or even change careers because I have a business degree in addition to my teaching degrees. I have devoted my life to teaching students with special needs, but having to worry about my health, safety, and financial security have definitely made me reconsider whether I want to stay in this abusive relationship with the Department of Education. I know I'm not the only special education teacher who is considering this and that is unfortunate for Hawaii and the keiki we serve.

As I stated previously, being a Special Education Teacher during the pandemic is harder. Every Special Education Teacher in Hawaii was required within the first quarter of this year to conduct a learning loss analysis on each of our individual students. We were then required to complete a School Closure Contingency Plan that aligns with the student's IEP and, for those students whose parents chose total distance learning, we were required to complete a Distance Learning Plan that aligns with the student's IEP. We then had to call parents and schedule meetings to discuss these plans. All of this was in addition to annual IEPs and three year re-evaluations. In a school with over 100 students receiving special education services, this made for a crazy first and second quarter trying to schedule all of these meetings.

Special Education Teachers are also required to document all parent contact throughout the year on a separate document that we then have to upload to eCSSS at the end of the year. We have an event log that is available to us in eCSSS, but this parent communication document is an additional document that every Special Education teacher is required to do. All of this is in addition to us having students face-to-face from late August/early September to now.

I have 12 students on my caseload this year. Currently, I am supposed to have 11 of these students face-to-face. Not all of them have returned physically to my class. In addition to having students face-to-face, I also have up to 3 who are attending class virtually. Despite the intentions of the DOE and BOE to not have teachers teaching both face-to-face students and distance learners at the same time, this is an everyday reality in a lot of schools. Does everything run smoothly? Nope, but we do our best given the circumstances.

Because our students are considered the most vulnerable, we were generally the first group of teachers to have students return to face-to-face instruction at nearly every school in August/September. We are working harder than we have ever worked before to ensure there is no learning loss for our students and that we increase their skills while in our classrooms. To be told in July that these differentials are guaranteed for several years helped us adjust to this new normal as some of us are single parents trying to survive in Hawaii on that income.

I implore you, members of the Board of Education, to uphold your promise and that of the DOE to continue to provide these shortage differentials. If not, be prepared to have an even higher number of teachers leaving the field or transferring out of special education, Hawaiian immersion, and hard-to-staff locations across the state. What is in the best interests of our keiki should be at the forefront of your minds as you make this decision. You have the power to show Hawaii's teachers and all stakeholders that you value teachers and their impact on the future of Hawaii.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Hadley-Schlosser

Testimony BOE

From: Matthew May <maym@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Matthew May
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 6:51 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for BOE Special Meeting Action Item A:

Aloha,

My name is Matthew May, I am a new hire SPED teacher at Stevenson Middle School.

I am submitting testimony regarding BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

These differentials make a meaningful difference in the effort to raise teacher pay to a living wage. As I was leaving my graduate program and seeking employment, the differential played into my own decision making process to devote myself to serving students in my community that need special services in the public sector.

As the pandemic has deepened and my own household has seen the drastic loss of income, every penny has begun to be squeezed and stretched in ways I could not have anticipated. A sudden stop to these differentials would be a sudden blow to already fragile household budgets.

In spite of the pressures of the pandemic, as a teacher I have had to continue to spend from my own account to purchase school supplies that DOE budgets do not cover. These are investments in the children of our community, and reflect well established research on educational practice.

A cut to differentials would make such spending decisions even harder choices to bear, all while continued financial distress is incurred by the lagging job market that has left households like my own with far less stability.

I would compel the BOE and the State government to look for other sources of money, or the future impact will see SPED teachers like myself seeking other lines of work.

Please commit to protecting these differentials.

Mahalo,

Matthew May, Stevenson Middle School, Honolulu

Testimony BOE

From: Glen Eastman <gdeastman@gmail.com> on behalf of Glen Eastman
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 6:51 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony Action Item A

Aloha

My name is Glen Eastman and I am a Special Education teacher at Pomaka'i Elementary School on Maui. I am testifying on Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Please do not defer the teacher shortage differentials. With so many of our spouses working in hospitality a lot of our teachers are the only ones working right now too in this economy. My wife is furloughed and I am the only one working right now. A lot of my colleagues are in similar situations. She is going to lose medical care for her and our baby so I'm adding them to my insurance which is going to cut into even more of my take home pay. The server side job at the resort that I have has all but been eliminated. In these times every little bit of that differential helps Hawaii's middle class families.

The confusing thing to me is why is this even being considered. The differentials clearly worked, look at the data. As a special education teacher, all I do is look at data to evaluate educational decisions and this clearly shows the shortages should continue. If I was in an IEP meeting, and the data showed a student was making progress towards a goal from a certain intervention, I would never discontinue that intervention without reaching the goal. That would never fly with the parents or admin, I would absolutely continue it or even increase it! This is exactly the same thing. Discontinuing the shortage differentials would be two steps back after one step forward. Cut the funds from somewhere else, we can't afford to have another Felix case on our hands. That would be devastating and inevitable if we don't continue to recruit and retain quality teachers for our keiki. Don't go back on your promise to fund the differentials, do what is right for our most vulnerable keiki.

Mahalo for your time,
Glen Eastman

Testimony BOE

From: jesserinford <jesserinford@gmail.com> on behalf of jesserinford
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 6:54 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Testimony In Support of Maintaining Differential Pay for SPED, Hard to Fill, and HLIP teachers

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a High School Special Education Teacher on Molokai, an area culturally important to the Islands & Hawaiian Culture, and my employment is with high needs students on a remote island.

Special Education has additional demands: higher liability with difficult, high-end cases; an increased level of responsibility for the care and individual attention for each student; increased work time for many additional after school meetings and individualized programs, as well as more contact and facilitation with parents.

This pay differential has been a motivator for me in continuing in my current position. This is due to more fair compensation for my time, my professional work, extra meetings, additional paperwork, and many mandatory trainings. Without this differential, it is unlikely I will stay in Special Education, and will transition to regular education, as the intensity and demands are too great without fair compensation.

It is concerning to hear of the possible retraction of the Differential Pay for Teachers. This impacts the quality of education for students with reduction in services and support for students on one of the most culturally intact island populations in the state. To reduce support here negatively impacts the Hawaiian culture and things most dear to our island population.

Positive feedback from parents and Special Educators throughout the state supports the value of this Differential program. Retention of quality teachers in these hard to fill fields and areas, with additional focus being put on having continuity of expert & experienced Special Education teachers speaks to the desirability of continuing this program. The alternative does not bode well for excellence in the education of our children.

Sincerely,

Jessie Ford, MEdT

Testimony BOE

From: Lisa Galloway <lisa.galloway@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Lisa Galloway
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:01 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony supporting extra compensation and use of federal funds

I respectfully ask the Board and Superintendent Kishimoto to ask themselves and Hawaii's legislators why teachers are always the last in line to receive even basic salary increases (like keeping up with the rate of inflation) and the first to have them taken away (as has been promised several days ago)?

I've worked on Lanai for 12 years, where EVERY item in our stores costs at least \$1 more than on other islands, and some items cost double! Add to this the lack of, and expense of, housing, and it is no wonder we cannot retain teachers here. Finally, last year, extra compensation helped us retain teachers and attract them. Yet already, the threats we are used to hearing are eroding this success.

One skilled teacher has resigned mid-year. The relationship between the DOE and teachers has caused too much stress, year after year, so this teacher is now leaving the profession!

Another who we managed to recruit as an emergency hire in special education, and train to become an excellent educator, was poised to leave for the mainland last year. This teacher stayed because of the hard-to-fill and special education pay bumps. This teacher will definitely leave as soon as these are taken away.

This leaves the rest of us to hang on and burn out, initiating another group of emergency hires, and short-changing our students because we lack the time to teach them at the same time we are training unqualified teachers and EAs (without any compensation, of course)!

We know there is a pandemic, and the state budget is badly effected by this. But wouldn't it be great to see the BOE stand with the teachers, and ask the governor to look further down the line at who can better afford a budget cut? Especially when federal funds are coming our way specifically to help schools where the impact of the pandemic is already so harsh?

Please don't make things worse by ending differentials that worked, or hiring tutors to help kids whose teachers have been let go! We have the time for the BOE, DOE and HSTA to work together on this. We are counting on you!

Thank you for your time,

Lisa Galloway, PhD
Lanai High & Elementary School

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Testimony BOE

From: Angela <cain.angela.r@gmail.com> on behalf of Angela
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:02 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony Action Item A 2/17/21

Aloha, my name is Angela Cain and I am submitting testimony for BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

As a special education teacher, I currently receive a shortage differential of \$10,000. This differential has allowed myself and other teachers to stay or transfer into special education allowing for students with special needs to have access to more highly qualified teachers.

If these hard to staff differentials were to be discontinued, I would have to seriously consider staying in special education as much as I enjoy teaching my students as I am the sole provider for my family. I believe that other teachers will reconsider their positions as well which could potentially lead to another increase in the shortage of qualified teachers needed to serve Hawaii's most vulnerable population.

I urge the board members to have the superintendent retract the memo and her actions to discontinue the differentials.

Mahalo,
Angela Cain
Kauai

Testimony BOE

From: banyan regina <banyanr@yahoo.com> on behalf of banyan regina
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:17 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Action Item A

Esteemed Board Members:

During these difficult economic times, I support Dr. Kishimoto. I just received a special education student yesterday in my at-risk student class. Most of my homeroom consists of special education students. Yet, I receive no differential. I am not alone.

Since our principal espouses inclusion of special education students into mainstream classes, we "regular" education teachers are teaching more special education students than before.

\$10,000 is far too big a differential. Why so much during this horrible economic crisis? That is much more than a step increase.

Please discontinue the huge differential for special education teachers.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Hosokawa
High School Teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Justin Hughey <justin.hughey@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Justin Hughey
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:18 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony supporting differentials

Aloha Chair Payne and members of the Hawaii Board of Education,

Thursday, February 17, 2020 11:00 a.m.

Testimony on action item A:

A. [Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.](#)

Please continue to support the differentials! Why on earth would the Superintendent prioritize paying out of state agencies for tutoring services, over the first program that is filling the teacher shortage? Hawaii doesn't have tutoring federal requirements but it does have federal requirements on delivering Special Education services. Kishimoto wasn't living in Hawaii in 2000 when the state suffered the billion dollar Felix Consent Decree lawsuit, for failing to fulfill those federal requirements.

I became a Special Education teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary school in 2005. I was replacing a teacher who quit mid-year because she didn't feel supported. I don't recall a year where we didn't have a teacher quit or a position wasn't filled by an uncertified emergency hire. Even though I had a masters degree, I could not pay my bills at the time. Moving here to become a teacher forced me to go into credit card debt. In 2006 I was hired at Sansei in Kapalua Maui as a part-time server. Unfortunately, you don't have any rights in the private sector and when new management came in I was working upwards of six nights a week. I would have to leave school roughly around the same time the kids were let out in order to drive to and be ready for my second job. They had karaoke and a late night menu on Fridays so I ended up working 19 hour work days. I would work until roughly eleven at night, drive an hour home, get less than six hours of sleep and do it again the next day. I always found it ironic when I would talk to kids about the importance of getting eight hours of sleep so you can function properly at school the next day. I was also jealous of the teachers who were married or had significant others because they weren't dependent on another job to go paycheck to paycheck. They could spend more time at school to fulfill their job requirements. This filled me with massive resentment. Thus, it was no surprise that when I turned forty my body broke down. I suffered a slipped disc and was unable to work for a year and a half. Luckily, I wasn't single and was able to weather that storm. My wife has a PhD and teaches Advanced Placement Biology at Maui High School. Together we have a child that just turned one. Even with two advanced degrees, working in two hard to staff areas, we had to take a major loan out for daycare. Since our pay was so low we started to apply for job openings on the mainland. My 2019 tax return showed I made \$58,000 with a Masters Degree and 15 years of experience as a Special Education Teacher. A friend of mine in Washington told me I would be making \$105,000 if I was teaching in his district. My wife would make around \$85,000 instead of \$60,000 with her PHD. That is \$70,000 more in net income.

After the first draconian negotiations proposal by the employer teachers are talking about retiring and moving out of the state. Balancing the budget shortfall yet again, on the back of teachers, is the last straw for many.

The employer's initial proposal calls for the following:

- Elimination of the 21-hours of paid job-embedded professional development and then a 9.23% across-the-board pay cut for the next four years
- No increase in employer health plan EUTF premium contributions for the next four years, regardless of rising health care premiums
- Elimination of the \$2,500 probationary bonus;
- Elimination of the language requiring "no less than 50 teachers" be granted sabbatical leave, replacing "shall" with "may" when it comes to the granting of sabbatical leave;
- No renewal of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) for 21-hours of paid professional development;
- No renewal of hard to staff recruitment and retention incentive MOU;
- Reduction of the teacher assignment and transfer postings to just a single one-week posting each year;
- Elimination of all references to annual incremental step movements; and
- No renewal of all other MOUs including teacher evaluation, supplementary pay and licensing fees, and the English Learner (EL) Joint Committee.

Cutting the differentials should not even be considered until after the legislative session.

Governor Ige could choose to value teachers over the wealthy this year due to the pandemic. REITs own approximately \$17 billion worth of Hawaii real estate and earn about \$1 billion in profits every year. They pay zero corporate taxes at all! Closing the REITS tax loophole could generate \$60 million in potential tax revenue annually.

Here is the revenue generated proposals according to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, November 2020.

- Create a flat 10 percent corporate income tax rate + 94,400,000
 - Impact of closing the capital gains tax loophole + 80,200,000
 - Impact of eliminating the deduction for property taxes paid + 39,600,000
 - Impact of implementing a millionaires tax at a 13 percent rate + 25,200,000
- (adding an additional bracket on income over \$1m married, 750K HOH and 500K single)
- Increase cigarette tax by \$1.00 +15,900,000

The Trump tax cut reduced taxes on the wealthy at the federal level. They need to pay their fare share. The Department of Taxation stated two new tax brackets could be created with new rates that would generate new revenue. For people who make \$250K for single and over \$500k for joint —tax rate of 12%. Then for people who make over \$300K for single and over \$600k for joint —tax rate of 13%. This would create new revenue of; 59.8m for fiscal year 2022, 61.7m for fiscal year 2023 and 67.8m for fiscal year 2026.

I called the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education this week. They informed me that even though Biden's new Secretary of Education has not been confirmed there are protocols in place for processing state waivers for the standardized assessments. The DOE could save 60 million by waiving the for-profit assessments if she follows the Memorandum Of Understanding and submits a waiver to the new Secretary of Education.

Biden's Covid Relief bill is supposed to pass in March. The bill is going to send upwards of 400 million to Hawaii for public education alone, as well as millions for our state budget shortfall. The differentials are not scheduled to expire until June 30th. We should wait to see how much new revenue is created during this legislative session. We should also wait to see how many millions come to Hawaii from Biden's Covid bill.

Overall any house needs a foundation to stand upright. Kishimoto's priorities could create a mass exodus in the state's teaching profession. We should be focusing on zero cuts and zero staff reductions. Keeping the differentials which are filling the teacher shortage, could save this state from another billion dollar lawsuit.

Mahalo,
Justin Hughey
Special Education Teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary
Democratic Party of Hawaii, State Central Committee, Education Caucus Rep.
37 Poniu Circle
Wailuku, HI 96793

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Testimony BOE

From: Kaumualii Titcomb <kaumualii_titcomb@anuenue.org> on behalf of Kaumualii Titcomb
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:21 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony - Tutors vs Teachers/Differentials

Aloha,

My name is Kaumuali‘i Titcomb, and I am a 2nd grade teacher at Ke Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Ānuenue. This is my fourth school year as a full time teacher and it has been a rocky road. I still consider myself a new teacher but those first two years were very taxing and it seemed like I was underwater the whole time. Teachers in general work very hard and put in a lot of time into their students. But to be honest, the amount of extra work that is required from kumu kaiapuni is enough to push away a lot of people. When I started at my school, there were 3 other kumu who had just recently started as well. Out of the four of us, I am the only who still teaches Hawaiian Immersion. The other 3 either left the Hawaiian immersion program or left teaching altogether. It is not an easy job.

I have never been in this job for the money, obviously. But that pay differential given last year was very helpful to me and my ‘ohana. Although it only came out to an extra \$500 every month, I appreciated every cent. It showed the extra work and the extra certification I had to get was valued. I will struggle a lot next year trying to bridge the gap for my new students, a gap caused by this crazy pandemic. And now I hear that money will be funneled to paying for tutors.

Tutors and PTTs are helpful. But how can they replace the value of a highly-qualified teacher? My co-workers and I have worked our asses off to reach this position, to be deemed qualified to be a kumu kaiapuni. I can’t see any sense in spending all this money on tutors and then letting go seasoned and veteran teachers. Our school alone has grown exponentially to the point that we have had to increase the number of 1st grade and 2nd

grade classes. We have turned our library into classrooms because we don't have any other building to house the new classes. If we have to get rid of anymore teachers, I can imagine the size of our classes bursting at the seams. My 2nd year I had to teach 28 keiki, that felt like my first year all over again.

Please reconsider your position on cutting the differentials for these teaching positions that are so valuable but that take so much more. And please use your power to keep teachers over tutors. Mahalo a mālama pono.

Me ke aloha,

Kaumuali'i Titcomb

"I ulu nō ka lālā i ke kumu"

This e-mail is being sent by a student or employee of Kula Kaiapuni 'O Ānuenue.

Testimony BOE

From: Mae Oshiro <m.oshiro@seariders.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Mae Oshiro
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:24 AM
To: TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard to staff geographical locations and Hawaiian Language programs.

I am currently receiving a hard to staff geographical locations differential because I teach at Waianae High School. The Nanakuli--Waianae complex schools have always had difficulties filling our teacher positions. One reason is because the percentage of those with college degrees is extremely low in this district. Secondly, those going into teaching from this area are even lower. However, it has been getting better because of the hard to staff differential pay with more on this side going to college and getting a teaching degree. They want to teach on this side because they live in this area.

Many teachers are like me who do not live on this side, and can transfer to a school closer to where they live but do not because of the differential pay. The differential pay has helped to work late hours in school, being at meetings (PTSA ,SCC and neighborhood board) helping new teachers, mentoring teachers, etc. so that our school can develop into a better school. The staff turnover was really bad before the differential pay, many transferred once they got tenured, or left for the mainland because of the cost of living here. The differential pay has helped to have a more stable staff to support the students.

Before the differential pay, seniors didn't have a lot of choices on who to ask for a recommendation letter because many of their freshmen and/or sophomore teachers were gone...not here to ask for a recommendation letter whether they transferred to a better complex or closer to home, moved to the mainland or went into administration positions not at this school. That didn't help their (seniors) chances for scholarships against students whose teacher recommendations were from teachers they knew from their freshmen year. The same goes for references. Furthermore, the students suffered in their studies and knowledge on a subject with unqualified or inexperienced teachers. Research finds that a teacher needs to have between five to nine years of experience before they understand how to plan effective lessons and units and how to use those teachable moments that will have an impact on their students' knowledge and lives.

For my fellow new and young colleagues, before the differentials, new teachers had difficulties surviving here on the Waianae side. Even though the rent for a studio or 1 bedroom place was cheaper than other places on this island, they also had car payments, cell phone bills, internet/wifi bills, gas, food, etc. With all the deductions for taxes and dental, medical, vision, there wasn't much left for take home pay that I know of two teachers who didn't have medical insurance for years because they couldn't survive on a teacher's salary here and pay for all their other necessities. Our PCNC facilitator would make lunch about twice a week because some teachers couldn't afford to eat at the end of the month. He even gave canned goods to teachers (through his church) to help the young teachers here. Though he would invite all teachers so as not to single out those needing help. I ,for one, was living from pay check to the next pay check because I was paying for childcare until the differential helped for me to have some saving every year.

When I first applied for my son to go to preschool, the administrator told me (when she found out I was a teacher teaching in Waianae) to apply for the PATCH scholarship because there were teachers who qualified. I wondered, "How can this be?" How can teachers, who are the foundation builders for children's education and their futures, who should be receiving a salary befitting of our status in the lives of our keiki are not attaining

such a salary? I did not qualify because of the years I was teaching (over 12 years before having my son). I was a little above the limit. But when I told a new teacher (only teaching for 4 years) about the PATCH scholarship for her daughter for preschool, she qualified. But back then the differential wasn't in effect.

In closing, I am in support of a meeting to support the side to continue differential for hard to staff and special education teachers. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Mae Oshiro
Waianae High School
English Teacher/AVID Elective Teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Ezra Witsman <yoshitoshi2@yahoo.com> on behalf of Ezra Witsman
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:22 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Aloha Board Members,

I am submitting testimony for [BOE Special Meeting Action Item A](#): Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Ezra Witsman and I have been a social studies teacher at Kealakehe High School for 18 years. For years, the Hawaii DOE has had a teacher shortage because it has been difficult to recruit and retain teachers. Finally, the shortage differentials were having an impact on reducing these teacher shortages.

At Kealakehe High School, we have had a shortage of teachers and it has been difficult to retain the teachers that were hired. I work in a hard-to-staff area and the differentials have helped me to remain at the high school.

It doesn't make sense to eliminate the shortage differentials when we have started to make progress to reduce teacher shortages. Students' education suffers when qualified and licensed teachers are not hired or retained.

I urge the Board to retain the shortage differentials. The education of our students is too important to eliminate these shortage differentials.

Mahalo nui loa for reading my testimony. Take care, Ezra Witsman

Testimony BOE

From: Paul-david Burns <paul-david.burns@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Paul-david Burns
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:29 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Kula Kaiapuni Teachers

Aloha,

I am a Kula Kaiapuni Teacher at Hāna School for past 4 years. I taught on the English side for 16 years before this and I can testify that the job of a Kaiapuni teacher is much harder than the English side. There is very little curriculum created for us so we have to create and translate our lessons which is very time consuming being done on my time after school, weekends and holidays. Also because we are part of a movement to revitalize a language that was almost lost we donate a lot of our time providing opportunities for families of our students to learn Hawaiian. We provide classes twice a month and plan family days. This is all our own volunteer time because of our dedication to this movement. A little extra pay is a motivation to continue this important work and to bring in new teachers which is so needed. I hope you consider these extra duties of a Kaiapuni teacher and continue to support us in this important work.

Mahalo Nui
Paul-David (Paulo) Burns

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Testimony BOE

From: Valerie Simmons <waifongsimmons@gmail.com> on behalf of Valerie Simmons
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:34 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Board of Education members,

I am writing in support of the HSTA in having the superintendent retract the memo to end the shortage differentials. The differentials have helped to reduce the shortage in unfilled teacher positions. With the looming pay cuts/furloughs and teacher cuts, we will have additional difficulties in retaining the teachers we have now.

I also do not agree with the hiring of outside tutors to bring our students up to standards. Who better to know our students' needs than the teachers who are already working with them.

We need to all work and communicate together so that we are all on the same page. Thank you for supporting our hard working teachers in unprecedented times.,

Valerie Simmons

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Testimony BOE

From: Sacha Hemenway <sacha.hemenway@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Sacha Hemenway
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:35 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for BOE Special Meeting Action Item A

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sacha Hemenway and I am a Kindergarten teacher on the Waianae Coast. I have been teaching in a hard-to-staff area for the past 9 years but it has taken a toll. The recent shortage differentials have played a big part in keeping me from transferring out of the hard-to-staff area. I live in Kaneohe, and would love to continue working in Waianae, but the gas to get to and from work each day is not cheap. I need the hard-to-staff differential in order to pay for my gas to get to work and back home at the end of each day. This hard-to-staff differentiate not only helps me to pay for the cost of commuting to work but it also helps pay for the school supplies and materials needed for my students to be successful in the classroom. Coming from a low poverty area many of these students do not have access to the tools necessary to succeed in school and I therefore end up buying it out of my own money.

Not only has the hard-to-staff differential helped me, but the differential for Special Education has also played a big role in my school. I see the positive outcomes from it on the daily. We have more teachers for students who have special needs and the teachers are much more qualified. I now see a lot of general education teachers becoming special education certified (myself included). I believe this action was brought on for many by the motivations received from the differential. More experienced and qualified teachers in these positions will help our student population grow to the best of their potential.

I have the upmost faith that by giving these differentials, the DOE is taking a step forward in our keiki's education. I believe it gives hope to many around us.

Pease continue shortage differentials, not only for the teachers benefit but for the children.

Aloha,
Sacha Hemenway
Leihoku Elementary

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Testimony BOE

From: hughey2000@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:39 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: mtanji@mauinews.com
Subject: Testimony in support of differentials

Aloha Chair Payne and members of the Hawaii Board of Education,

Thursday, February 17, 2020 11:00 a.m.

Testimony on action item A:

A. [Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard](#)

Please continue to support the differentials! Why on earth would the Superintendent prioritize paying out of state agencies for tutoring services when we have federal requirements on delivering Special Education services. Kishimoto wasn't living in Hawaii in 2000 when the state suffered the billion dollar deficit.

I became a Special Education teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary school in 2005. I was replacing a teacher who quit mid-year because she was an uncertified emergency hire. Even though I had a masters degree, I could not pay my bills at the time. Moving here to become a teacher forced me to have no rights in the private sector and when new management came in I was working upwards of six nights a week. I would have to leave school at 11:00 for karaoke and a late night menu on Fridays so I ended up working 19 hour work days. I would work until roughly eleven at night, drive an hour home to get the importance of getting eight hours of sleep so you can function properly at school the next day. I was also jealous of the teachers who were married and had more time at school to fulfill their job requirements. This filled me with massive resentment. Thus, it was no surprise that when I turned forty my boss told me to weather that storm. My wife has a PhD and teaches Advanced Placement Biology at Maui High School. Together we have a child that just turned 10. Since our pay was so low we started to apply for job openings on the mainland. My 2019 tax return showed I made \$58,000 with a Masters Degree. If I was teaching in his district. My wife would make around \$85,000 instead of \$60,000 with her PHD. That is \$70,000 more in net income.

After the first draconian negotiations proposal by the employer teachers are talking about retiring and moving out of the state. Balancing the budget is not the

The employer's initial proposal calls for the following:

- Elimination of the 21-hours of paid job-embedded professional development and then a 9.23% across-the-board pay cut for the next four years;
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- Elimination of the \$2,500 probationary bonus;
- Elimination of the language requiring "no less than 50 teachers" be granted sabbatical leave, replacing "shall" with "may" when it comes to sabbatical leave;
- No renewal of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) for 21-hours of paid professional development;
- No renewal of hard to staff recruitment and retention incentive MOU;
- Reduction of the teacher assignment and transfer postings to just a single one-week posting each year;
- Elimination of all references to annual incremental step movements; and
- No renewal of all other MOUs including teacher evaluation, supplementary pay and licensing fees, and the English Learner (EL) Joint Compact.

Cutting the differentials should not even be considered until after the legislative session.

Governor Ige could choose to value teachers over the wealthy this year due to the pandemic. REITs own approximately \$17 billion worth of Hawaii real estate. A tax loophole could generate \$60 million in potential tax revenue annually.

Here is the revenue generated proposals according to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, November 2020.

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 - Impact of closing the capital gains tax loophole + 80,200,000
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- (adding an additional bracket on income over \$1m married, 750K HOH and 500K single)
- Increase cigarette tax by \$1.00 +15,900,000

The Trump tax cut reduced taxes on the wealthy at the federal level. They need to pay their fair share. The Department of Taxation stated two new brackets for people making over \$500k for joint —tax rate of 12%. Then for people who make over \$300K for single and over \$600k for joint —tax rate of 13%. This would generate \$10 million in additional revenue.

I called the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education this week. They informed me that even though Biden's new Secretary of Education has said that she would save 60 million by waiving the for-profit assessments if she follows the Memorandum Of Understanding and submits a waiver to the new Secretary of Education.

Biden's Covid Relief bill is supposed to pass in March. The bill is going to send upwards of 400 million to Hawaii for public education alone, as we see how much new revenue is created during this legislative session. We should also wait to see how many millions come to Hawaii from Biden's

Overall any house needs a foundation to stand upright. Kishimoto's priorities could create a mass exodus in the state's teaching profession. We could save this state from another billion dollar lawsuit.

**Mahalo,
Justin Hughey
Special Education Teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary
Democratic Party of Hawaii, State Central Committee, Education Caucus Rep.
37 Poniu Circle
Wailuku, HI 96793**



ReplyForward

Testimony BOE

From: Sandra Hashida <sjhashida222@gmail.com> on behalf of Sandra Hashida
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:43 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony
Attachments: Differential testimony 2 - Google Docs.pdf

Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

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.

Honorable Members of the Board of Education;

I am testifying in support of using federal funds for the continuation of shortage differentials and teacher pay and **not** for private tutors, BOE Special Meeting **Action Item A:** Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs and 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.

My name is Sandra Hashida, and I am a special education teacher who has been teaching for 19 years here in Hawaii. I teach at Kipapa Elementary School and live in Mililani.

Previously, the Board recognized the importance of providing differentials for special education and other hard-to-fill positions. The results of providing the differentials have been a reduction in positions filled by unlicensed and unqualified individuals and fewer teachers leaving the profession.

Now, in addition to across the board cuts in education, the state superintendent wants to take those differentials away.

This would be unfair for the teachers who earn the differentials by providing specialized services during the school day; and by planning, preparing, facilitating, and documenting IEP related meetings after school hours - quite frequently working on the paperwork during evening, weekend and holiday hours. This year alone, I have had thirty-four such meetings. In a typical year, I am assigned to either a inclusion class or a resource class. This year, I am assigned to both an inclusion class and resource class. I have had students coming to school in-person from day one in both settings, while also teaching students online from day one. I am sure I am not alone in experiencing these work demands. Whereas general education teachers are able to stay in the same position for years or even a whole career, special education teachers must be flexible to the needs of the students and must be prepared for any assignment.

Teachers in hard-to-fill positions would be doubly affected by the pay cuts. Not only would they lose the differentials, but also have a decrease in their base pay. How unfair would that be?

Tutors are not the answer to supporting struggling students! The majority do not have specialized training to identify and target students' specific needs. They are not familiar with grade level standards. Several years ago, tutors were offered. The results were unimpressive. Why would it be any different today?

Thank you for your keeping our students' best interest in mind .

Sincerely,

Sandra Hashida

Testimony BOE

From: Kayla Marie Milke <kayla_marie.milke@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kayla Marie Milke
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:44 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony Action Item A

I am submitting Testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item

A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am a special Education teacher in the State of Hawaii who teaches at a school in a hard to staff geographical location. Although I took my position at this school prior to the institution of the differentials, I have seen first hand how difficult this job is and how hard it is to staff these locations. By taking away these differentials so quickly, it will cause many people to leave the positions they took up. This in turn will create shortages and vacancies in positions that are of the utmost importance. Our students with disabilities deserve to have certificated personnel leading their classes, not long-term subs under the supervision of administration. I have seen first hand how putting someone underqualified for special education into a SPED line can be a detriment to the education of our students. I urge you to rescind the order to disband the differentials. Please continue providing the support to our teachers and schools that they so desperately need!

Kindest Regards,
Kayla Milke

--

Kayla Marie Milke
Palolo Elementary School K-5 SpEd
kayla_marie.milke@k12.hi.us

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Testimony BOE

From: J T <tamayej@gmail.com> on behalf of J T
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:49 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Hello,

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am in my 21st year as a classroom teacher with the DOE and during my tenure I have seen many special education teachers come and go. These teachers have a very challenging and demanding job that requires their expertise if we want to make sure that our special education population is receiving the best educational experience. The extra compensation is needed in order for us to retain these hard working and talented teachers. Without the compensation we will see an increase in teachers leaving the profession, possibly leaving the position unfilled or filled by an unqualified person.

I hope that you will take this into consideration during your deliberations of this issue.

Thank you,

Jacob Tamaye

Testimony BOE

From: Anjelica Ayers <aiayers@yahoo.com> on behalf of Anjelica Ayers
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:50 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Dear BOE Members,

I am testifying on the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. I am also testifying on the BOE general Business Meeting Action Item V, B: Board Action on Department of Education's plan for the use of federal fund in the new COVID-19 relief package and annual federal spending bill.

In regards to the pay differentials, I implore the Board to not allow funding to be cut for programs that have shown to benefit our community. Special education differentials attract high quality teachers to educate our most vulnerable population. Without them, teachers will leave those positions, forcing schools to employ unqualified persons in their place. Moreover, with reduced number of special education teachers, students with disabilities are put into classrooms with a larger amount of students. In this situation, their needs are not met.

This land belongs to Kanaka Maoli. The Hawaiian culture and language has been systematically oppressed by foreigners' policies and actions. It is an insult and unethical to continue the systematic destruction of Hawaiian language by cutting extra compensation that attracts Kanaka Maoli and their expertise to the classroom.

In regards to spending Covid -19 funds on private tutoring rather than restoring funds for schools cut from the DOE budget, I am appalled. The DOE has continuously insulted teachers throughout this entire pandemic. It is ludicrous to spend that money on a pilot program that has no research backing rather than providing schools with the funds they need to operate. I view this as an attack on Hawaii's public schools. I ask the Board to not approve the DOE's plan to use federal funds to hire tutors and instead prioritize keeping teachers and other school professionals on payroll.

My name is Anjelica Ayers. I am a 4th grade teacher from Queen Kaahumanu School. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Testimony BOE

From: Calley Neva <calley.neva@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Calley Neva
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:52 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony--Action Item A

This testimony is to address BOE Special Meeting Action Item A

By discontinuing extra compensation to SPED teachers, hard to staff geological locations, and Hawaiian language programs you are causing a great disservice to our keiki. We already have enough of a teacher shortage here....making these cuts will not retain current teachers. You will cut a main part of our Ha framework by cutting Hawaiian language classes. This is a part of our children's culture that should be embraced, celebrated, and encouraged. This is not going to help our schools, or our students.

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Testimony BOE

From: Zarmun Duke <zarmunduke@hotmail.com> on behalf of Zarmun Duke
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:54 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am submitting testimony regarding BOE Special Meeting Action Item A, Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education and the proposal to use tutors in place of teachers.

I think this is a mistake. Students with the most needs require the best teachers. Pay in Hawaii is already significantly lower than anywhere else in the country when the cost of living is considered. I don't see how the DOE can expect to recruit and retain the best when the pay is not commensurate. They prey upon our loyalty to our community, students and ancestors. Our families and community deserve the best possible people. The data I've seen indicate the program was having the desired effect on increasing the number of teachers going into special education or supporting communities that are traditionally understaffed.

When we experience success with our students, we save the community a huge amount of money. A student who becomes a successful member of the community doesn't need expensive services from the court system or social welfare providers. Finding success in school saves the community a huge amount of money in the future. The best teachers get better results. When you cut costs, you cut quality.

We have all suffered because of COVID. As students have returned to classrooms, I have family members who no longer welcome me to their home. They are afraid I am going to pass the disease from students to them. I pay a significant emotional toll for trying to develop the next generation. Now I'm looking at a massive reduction in pay. Combined with inflation due to the devaluation of our currency, it puts me in a bad spot. Others depend on me for their food and shelter. It is already more difficult to make ends meet. Now, I'm looking at the elimination of my pay differential and a reduction in pay. There will be no reduction of work demands. Rather the opposite will happen. There will be more students in my classroom and more IEPs to write. Not only do I fill the role of teacher, but I am also trying to help students deal with their emotional needs related to COVID. At the same time I support students, I'll need more support myself to deal with the changes, and as I mentioned, I am being cut off from my family because of COVID. But, I'll have less time to help myself because of increased demands and pressures at work.

I'd also like to say the proposal to shift money into a tutoring program is a foolish idea being pushed by leaders far removed from the classroom setting. My school already has three different tutoring programs that are under utilized. The students are tired after a long day of work. We find they do not want to commit to spending even more time working on their skills. I don't think we should be shifting funding to a support system that is unnecessary when we already have those services in place. There are a lot of things that could be considered to improve student performance besides throwing millions of dollars at a tutoring program.

I appreciate you taking the time to review my comments. I wish I had more time to edit and be more articulate, but I need to get ready to teach my students.

Zarmun Duke

Testimony BOE

From: Angela Sagisi <angesagisi@gmail.com> on behalf of Angela Sagisi
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:55 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To Whom It May Concern:

I am submitting a testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I kindly ask that you do not cut differentials. SPED support is greatly needed at this time. There are too many gaps between the special needs students and general education students. Taking away this help will only make our students suffer. We need all the support we can get at this time. Mahalo for your support.

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: Kori Harvey <koriharvey@gmail.com> on behalf of Kori Harvey
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:55 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony

Aloha my name is Kori and I am a 3rd grade teacher at Kipapa Elementary School. My husband is a teacher and Sunset Elementary school. My Husband is sped certified and has been doing the work of 2 people - the Special Education Job and the General Education Job. The special Education Job requires him to make individual plans for a handful of students - and on top of that he is teaching the regular education kids - The North Shore moms in the community have been talking to each other about what a "game changer" he has been for their child. The reason he stuck with this job was the differential. Next year, if he does not have the differential he wants to move to general education. Doing the job of two people has worn on him and our family and it's unsustainable, not to mention at some point, the general education kids begin to lose attention. Please keep the differential so that amazing SPED teachers such as my husband will continue to be "game changers" for the community. Mahalo.

--

Kori Ann Harvey

Koriharvey@gmail.com
808.224.1953

Public Education Teacher - 12 years
Host of FLHI Girlz Surfing & Sports

Testimony BOE

From: Ida Kila <idak@hcapweb.org> on behalf of Ida Kila
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:56 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

PLEASE save our at risk SPED children. DO NOT cut needed funds and resources for these children's programs. Please provide and protect these teachers that give so much time, energy, love and care to our children. They also spend their OWN monies on their classrooms. To purposely take away needed monies to provide for these teachers and children is a disgusting and weak act and abuse of power!! You would punishing the meek and needy! Step up all of you and bless these people!
Ida Hokulani Kila

Testimony BOE

From: Jesse Hendrix <jessebenhendrix@gmail.com> on behalf of Jesse Hendrix
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 7:57 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To whom it may concern,

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A. Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

The lack of qualified programs and a coherent effort to educate the students in Hawaii is a sad state of affairs. Getting teachers into the classroom should be priority number one and I have seen how these differentials help get good people to places in need in only one year of teaching here. Please keep programs that are helping the students in hard-to-reach places and programs that are helping to keep the Hawaiian culture and language alive. This is essential and should be at the heart of everything the superintendent puts into place.

The CARES act can be put to great use and should be there to keep the teachers in the places they are, rather than hire tutors and other such things that will not impact the students at a high level. I am a new teacher and want to be of help to the students and people of these amazing islands. If the BOE cannot keep new teachers and established teachers alike, it is hard for any type of growth to occur.

I humbly ask that you please do what is best for the students, and put them and their families first and foremost in your minds with all the decisions you make. They are why we are in this profession after all isn't it?

Thank you and kind regards,

--

Jesse Hendrix
First Grade Teacher
Kapa'a Elementary School

"Be like water"---Bruce Lee

Testimony BOE

From: Calley Neva <calley.neva@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Calley Neva
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:01 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony--Action Item B

This testimony is for the BOE General Business Meeting Action Item B

Please prioritize certified teachers and other school employees over hiring tutors. This is a huge slap in the face to our hard working teachers and staff. Qualified teachers have the knowledge and skills to teach our students. By cutting positions students will be forced into bigger class sizes with significantly less support. This is going to affect the quality of education, and retention of good teachers. A state that doesn't prioritize it's teachers is not a state I want to work in. Taking a pay cut will leave me no choice but to leave the DOE and pursue work elsewhere. I urge you to keep as many teachers and employees in their positions as possible.

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Testimony BOE

From: K <tolaer@hotmail.com> on behalf of K
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:06 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony: Action Item A

Stop the differential pay cut! As a special education teacher, I have been directly impacted by this action positively and now, will be impacted negatively. I viewed the differential as an acknowledgement of the countless hours and effort spent on preparing for meetings, IEPs, evaluations, developing materials for my students and yes, the IMMENSE amount of additional paperwork due to COVID-19 required by DOE on top of the paperwork already required.

The pay differential also afforded me opportunities to purchase additional materials for my students and classroom such as PPEs like sneeze guards, barriers, wipes, etc. I felt more comfortable working with my students in-person with these materials on hand.

Teachers do not accrue overtime no matter how many additional hours we put in. We cannot build up "extra pay" to go towards retirement unlike every other government worker. This differential DOES count which will make a huge difference when I do retire so please, do NOT stop the differential pay.

Thank you.

Kathryn Inouye
Linapuni School
Special Education Teacher
National Board Certified Teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Thomas Graham <tgrahamonline@mac.com> on behalf of Thomas Graham
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:08 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY - Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind: Please DON'T CUT OUR DIFFERENTIALS!

Aloha!

I'm a veteran Deaf, Special Ed Teacher. One who was raised in Hawaii and has taught for our Hawaii DOE for 28 years - 25 of my years of service have been at the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB). During my 25 years at HSDB, I have taught in Elementary, Middle School, High School, Special Needs. I have served several years as our School Registrar and even a year as a TA Vice Principal.

After 25 years of watching our teachers sacrifice so much of their time and effort, I have finally seen them get paid a decent salary - due to the differentials as a Special Educator and as a Teacher at a Hard-To-Fill School. I have even seen a teacher who left us several years ago to become a free-lance sign language interpreter, return to HSDB to teach this year. If we lose our differentials, without doubt, we will lose teachers again and our keiki will suffer. Not only at HSDB, but statewide.

Please - do NOT cut the Special Education, Hawaiian Language and Hard-To-Fill Position Differentials. It has insured high-quality, licensed teachers in the programs that need it most.

Mahalo, Tom Graham

Testimony BOE

From: Teri Aviles <teriaviles@aol.com> on behalf of Teri Aviles
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:09 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony

Aloha,

My name is Teri Aviles and I am a parent of a special education student who attends Kalama Intermediate School. I am also a special education teacher who teaches at Maui High School. I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the special meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian Language programs.

Special education teachers have helped my child Adriana Aviles. Without them, she would not be able to succeed in school.

Special education teachers must carry out even more workloads than their gen ed co-workers. On top of lesson planning, grading, teaching, and professional development, they must also collaborate to create IEPs, hold IEP meetings, hold revision IEP meetings, hold re-evaluation meetings, hold behavior meetings, create individual progress reports, create individualized materials for student programming, create data collection systems, record and analyze data, and consult with various IEP team members for every single one of the students on their caseload.

When special education positions are not filled by certified special education teachers, those who are certified must carry the load of completing all of the aforementioned case coordinator tasks for students who they may not even be teaching in their classroom. This very common scenario creates unbearable caseloads and stress which contribute to teacher burnout, and eventually leads to a teacher's decision to leave the special education profession for a lighter workload.

The differentials were effective and reduced vacancies by 66 percent in only 1 year of implementation. During a time when many are questioning leaving the profession due to ever changing protocols, a decision to reduce an educator's pay by almost \$16,000 will drive many away. I urge you to continue the differentials to support our keiki who need more during these trying times.

Mahalo,

Teri Aviles

Testimony BOE

From: Dhalia Jennings <dhalia0513@gmail.com> on behalf of Dhalia Jennings
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:09 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony in SUPPORT to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A.

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

I write this testimony in **SUPPORT** to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A., with Chair Payne's proposed recommendation that the "Board direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval." In particular, I submit this testimony in support of kumu kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion teachers) as a mākuā (parent) with keiki that attended kula kaiapuni and based on my experience as the Parent Community Network Center (PCNC) for Ke Kula Kaiāpuni 'o Ānuenue. I appreciate and commend Chair Payne for her memorandum ("memo") dated February 18, 2021 to the Board of Education for this Special Meeting, and also add to key points she included in her memo.

As Chair Payne's memo notes, the DOE is Constitutionally mandated to provide Hawaiian medium education under the recent Hawai'i Supreme Court decision in Clarabal v. Department of Education. Kumu kaiapuni are a critical and necessary component to the DOE to fulfill its Constitutional mandate in providing Hawaiian medium education, and as Board Policy 105-8 states,

"The program's success is largely dependent on the capacity, capability and expertise of the program's professional staff. The Department will establish professional qualifications and develop training programs internally and/or in cooperation with stakeholder groups/universities. The goal is for program professionals to be qualified in both English as a medium of instruction and Hawaiian as a medium of instruction and **appropriately compensated for these additional qualifications.**"

Providing kumu kaiapuni with this needed pay differential will in-turn help the DOE to fulfill its constitutional mandate to provide Hawaiian medium education.

Expanding upon this Constitutional mandate, it is also the DOE's continued commitment to equity, as stated in its Strategic Plan and the 2030 Promise Plan that would be furthered with providing kumu kaiapuni this needed pay differential. In terms of equity, haumāna kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion students) are among the student group disparately impacted as a result of COVID-19. Not only was KĀ'EO testing not administered last year due to the pandemic, but also haumāna kaiapuni have experineced unique opportunity to learn impacts during this pandemic. See ['Aha Kauleo's meeting minutes](#) with survey results on opportunity to learn metrics.

Lastly, and this is likely the most obvious to you all, this pay differential was previously approved. As noted in Chair Payne's memo, Superintendent Kishimoto did not anticipate this to be a pilot program or to cease beyond 2021. Questions and discussion have been ongoing with regards to preparing for legislative budget shortfalls, even prior to the pandemic, and identifying funding sources. With all of the prior points mentioned, and in light of the anticipated budget shortfall from Governor Ige being 7.5% less than anticipated, the pay differential for kumu kaiapuni should not be where cuts are made.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. I urge members to **SUPPORT** the recommendation for the Board to direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

--

Mahalo,
Dhalia Jennings
808-838-9636

Testimony BOE

From: Lisa Moynihan <lmoynihan331@gmail.com> on behalf of Lisa Moynihan
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:10 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Lisa Moynihan and I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christine Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

As a teacher on the Waianae coast for the past 16 years, I have spent much of my own money on classroom incentives, supplies, snacks and breakfast for students. I have even bought clothing for students in need. After receiving the SpEd and hard-to -staff differentials this past year, this has been the first time I have been able to not live pay check to pay check and able to live comfortably without counting the few dollars in my bank account days before payday. As a teacher, I have seen many other teachers come and go, leaving the profession here for better paying job opportunities on the mainland or other professions. I love teaching the children on the coast. It is the most rewarding job to see the progress and growth of my students. These children need adults that are certified and willing to work out here.

These differentials will help keep good teachers in hard to fill positions. I have heard of many teachers transferring here to the coast this school year. Without it, I fear many teachers will not want to work here. Please consider what is best for the children who are in the most need.

Aloha,
Lisa Moynihan
Special Education Teacher
Waianae AC Program
(808)305-2985

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. -Proverbs 31:8

Testimony BOE

From: andrea kaneakua <andreakaneakua@yahoo.com> on behalf of andrea kaneakua
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:11 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

To whom it may concern:

I am submitting a testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A:

My name is Andrea Kaneakua. My son is Rylan-Tyler Rivera-Alesna and he attends Kapaa High School. Rylan was diagnosis with mild intellectual disability and fragile x syndrome. He will be 21yrs in June and will be attending Kapaa High school until he turns 22yrs old. Even if my son is 20 yrs. old when they tested him he is on a 2nd grade level. I am a very concern parent of a Special Needs Child. I am sadden to here about the budget cut for our Sped Teachers. Why are you even considering cutting the budget from our Special Ed Teachers? Can you figure something else out and take the money from somewhere else. Our teachers already are not getting paid enough for all what they do!! My son's teacher goes above a beyond for him my child along with all the other students in her class!!

I feel that if you plan to cut these teachers pay all the qualified sped teachers will leave and quit their jobs cause who can survive with a pay cut that big. What concerns me is that the school will be force to hire teachers that is not qualify in special education because they will be desperate and scrambling for someone to just stay in their class to babysit and not have the knowledge or qualification of what a sped teacher does. That will be dangerous to leave a teacher with my child that is not qualified!!! Where will that leave my child? He came so far already with the help of Ms. Carvalho and Mrs. Rowe at the Kapaa High School. The thought of a teacher that has no qualification teaching my child will be very scary!! Does any of you that attended the meeting and voted on this action have a special needs child of their own? Do you know what kind of teaching they need? Do you know how to calm them down when in there mind they feel like they are not good enough or when they are frustrated? Do you have the patients to stay with a child with disabilities for 7 hours a day? Will you have the heart to care for them like your own? Will you even give them the time of day that they need!!! If none of you have this first hand then I suggest you go to a special ed class everyday for a week or 2 if that is not enough and see how it is. I feel that everyone should have had a special needs child so they know how it feels and have compassion for them and their teachers that work their butts off to care for them. It's easy to say,"take funding from the sped teachers" if your not walking in there shoes.

I pray and hope that you will reconsider and change your decision and take the budget cut from somewhere else where is less needed. I can name a few but will pray that you have a change of heart for our AWESOME special education teachers!!! Please make the right choice for our children with disabilities!!!

Thank you,
Andrea Kaneakua

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

Testimony BOE

From: Ashley Katamoto <akatomoto13@gmail.com> on behalf of Ashley Katamoto
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:13 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Dear Board of Education,

This testimony is in relation to BOE General Business Meeting Action Item V, B. I am writing this testimony as a charter school visual art teacher, and would like to request that you use the federal funds to help stabilize the school budgets to prevent cuts. I understand that right now funds are set to be used to create tutor and coaching jobs rather than prevent teachers from losing their jobs. I don't agree with this action as Hawai'i is already in a teacher shortage and we cannot afford to lose more qualified teachers. I believe that highly qualified teachers can help to close the gap created by this pandemic better than tutors and coaches can. If we do not use the funds to stabilize the budget, teachers will lose their jobs and class sizes will increase. Not only that, but teachers like me who offer classes outside the standard "core" classes will be at risk. To me this will only increase the number of students falling through the cracks as teachers will have to even less time during their teaching for individual help with so many students in the classroom. And students will lose out on the opportunity to learn in different ways in classes like art, music, physical education, and other electives. I firmly believe that each and every teacher has gone above and beyond during this pandemic. It has by far been the most challenging year of my eight year teaching career. I think that we all know that there will be budget shortfalls and that even with the federal funding, it will be a long road ahead to recovery. That being said, I feel that hearing that the money we fought hard to get in congress will not be used to help to keep and maintain highly qualified teachers in the classroom is disappointing and an inappropriate use of funds.

Thank you for all that you do to help create a better public education system in Hawai'i and thank you for taking the time to read through and consider my testimony.

Ashley Katamoto

Testimony BOE

From: Jessie Garcia <melenae@gmail.com> on behalf of Jessie Garcia
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:22 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Dear Members of the Board

Thank you for listening to our testimony as we make our way through this very complex and difficult year.

I am writing about BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board action on Superintendent Christina Kishmoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am a teacher in a hard to staff area on Hawaii Island. I have seen how the constant change of teachers makes it difficult for a school to function. . The differentials were so valuable for not only getting enough teachers in our schools but keeping them! We need quality teachers to stay in Hawaii and the proposal to take the differentials away with the proposed pay cuts may make a situation where we are in a worse teacher shortage than we were before. How are we going to meet the needs of our children when we will have larger class sizes due to a shortage of teachers? How are we going to meet the needs of our children when we can't keep highly qualified teachers to teach them? Why is our superintendent dead set on spending money on tutors but not on keeping our teachers? I am lucky that I would be able to stay and teach here but I know so many who either cannot OR who are tired of being told by the actions of those in high up positions telling them they are not valued and are planning to leave the profession, or leave the islands. We need our teachers and one way to help keep our teachers is to keep the differentials.

Thank you for your time.
Jessica Lee Loy

Testimony BOE

From: Robert Strohl <robert.strohl@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Robert Strohl
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:16 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha BOE! My name is Robert Strohl and I am a middle school science teacher at Lana'i High and Elementary School.

This is my personal teacher testimony testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I was hired as an emergency hire teacher back in the 2016-2017 school year. I worked through it and got my teacher certification by the end of the 2017-2018 school year. When I was hired as a full time teacher it allowed me to gain independence and allowed me to move out of my parents house for the first time in my life. This was in part because of the tough to fill teacher bonuses of the past. Last year when the increased hard to fill teacher bonus has made it even more possible to keep my independence.

Lana'i High and Elementary School has had a chronic issue with keeping qualified teachers for more than a year. In part because it is really expensive to live on Lana'i, but having the tough to fill, Hawaiian teacher, and SPED teacher bonuses has helped out a lot in keeping more teachers. Despite the bonuses, we still were not able to fill all our teacher positions at our school.

If you remove the bonuses and stipends our school will see an exodus of teachers like never before as we will not be able to afford to stay in Hawaii. If you remove our funding we will not only lose amazing qualified teachers, we will lose most if not all of our superb EA's.

Use wisdom and follow the law. The federal funding has specific stipulations that you should and need to follow. The federal funding would keep teachers and EA's from losing their livelihoods.

Ultimately this will impact the students most of all. They need the teachers to guide them in their learning. They already have suffered with schools partially closing down and by having to be distance learning. The data has shown that most students do not effectively learn from distance learning.

If you fire teachers to hire tutors how will that help the students. Are you going to hire one-to-one tutors for every student in the state? How are these tutors more qualified than teachers? How is a tutor going to be more effective at distance learning with the students than a teacher? It simply is not feasible or effective.

The teachers union has given you all so much support that put and kept you in office and now you throw the teachers under the bus. A'ole that is wrong.

Our school if the budget cuts go through and teachers lose their jobs, the remaining teachers will have overly crowded rooms causing students to fall through the cracks yet again.

Our students are already at the breaking point mentally with the choices the BOE, DOE, and Governor have made. Students already feel isolated and desperate. If you cut the funding which in turn will kill teacher jobs, you will effectively be writing the epitaphs for many students who need the connection they have with the teachers they know. In my case, most students have known me for years as I teach 6th-8th grade.

There are many better ways to raise money without having to raise taxes or cut teacher funding. Open up the economy, let the tourists come back in! This will allow revenue into the state.

I pray you all will make the correct choice. Thank you for taking the time to see my testimony.

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

From: K <tolaer@hotmail.com> on behalf of K
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:17 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony: Action item V.B.

Ridiculous! Why use millions of dollars to pay for special tutors when that money could be used to pay to keep teachers in the classroom? Smaller class sizes, offerings of afterschool tutoring or summer school classes conducted by qualified teachers would help to address the concerns of those students who have been negatively impacted by COVID-19. If parents (and students) are reluctant to return to in-person instruction, how will hiring tutors help? Use that monies to keep teachers and help with classroom size and instruction. Do you know how difficult it is to conduct in-person AND online lessons at the same time? Do you know how much more time and effort teachers are working to develop lessons for in-person and online instruction?

Don't use the monies for tutors--keep the teachers!

Thank you,

Kathryn Inouye
Linapuni School
National Board Certified Teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Eleanor Garcia <eleanor.garcia@wilsonschoolhawaii.org> on behalf of Eleanor Garcia
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:20 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To Whom It May Concern,

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting **Action Item A:** Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

As a Special Education Resource Room/Inclusion Teacher I feel it's really important that the extra compensation for special education teachers remain in place because it 1) entices new teachers to consider Special Education licensure and 2) it recognizes that Special Education teachers endure difficult working conditions/stresses on a daily basis.

Please reconsider the discontinuance of extra compensation.

Thank you,
Eleanor Garcia

To the Hawaii Board of Education:

I am testifying in support of Action Item A, for the Special Meeting regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Education was the only field I could imagine myself in; consequently I dedicated years to the study of education and will spend years paying it off with no regrets. Unfortunately, it is common knowledge, and our sad reality that teachers do not earn paychecks that reflect the dedication and hours they put into their craft. We put in the work for the love of our students and to make life-long connections.

In 2013 I completed my undergraduate degree, a bachelor of arts in special education and psychology. I went through the appropriate channels to become a dual certified teacher (general and special education) for elementary- aged children. At that time, the job market was not kind, so I was very thankful to be recruited straight out of college and move to Hawaii for work.

I am now in my eighth year as a special education teacher at Kapunahala Elementary School. I am also fully aware of how hard it is to staff special education positions. Of my 14 college classmates that moved here to teach special education, I am one of three that has remained on the island; of the three, two of us chose to remain with the DOE.

COVID-19 has brought personal and professional challenges to everyone. When school facilities shut down, for every success with distance instruction, I was rewarded with three more obstacles, easily working until at least 8pm every night so my students had access to their Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). In the midst of teachers working harder and longer than ever, we were threatened with losing 20% of our salary, keeping in mind, teacher salaries in Hawaii are already the lowest in the country when you consider the cost of living. This summer I felt low, defeated and alone in my work. The financial turn of events would have forced me to leave the island. I already make too little to afford the "affordable housing." What kind of example does that show? Work hard, go to college, struggle, or in this case, fail.

The irony of the situation: the state is in greater need of special educators than ever! Back in 2018, Hawaii reached a settlement of over \$10 million with 500 former students. The case alleged that the DOE violated federal laws. Even more recent, April 2020, the DOE was again sued on behalf of special needs students who were allegedly being denied FAPE. The lawsuit filed in April 2020 will surely not be the last as we continue to navigate the issues brought about by COVID. Losing pay will cause teachers to retire and the new teachers will not be invested long enough to stay. I am on the verge of being vested, but preparing to return to the mainland. Moving forward, how will the DOE staff these positions? Most likely with unqualified people who are not familiar with educational law.

This summer I decided it was time to go back to school and finish my masters. I wanted to be more marketable for mainland employment. I am currently enrolled in the Educational Administration program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Through my studies, I am gaining a deeper understanding of the social injustices that have influenced Hawaii. I am even more proud to work with the "vulnerable" and "at-risk" students of Hawaii who do not necessarily know how to use their voice or fight for their rights. I work hard to develop strong relationships with the families of my students; they know I am on their side and will do all that I can to support them. It is my kuleana.

How does social injustice tie into the loss of differentials? The differentials filled the positions that people did not want, they prevented lawsuits that caused economic deficits for the state because we had qualified staff in those positions, and the shortage of special education teachers was at the lowest that it has ever been. With the removal of the differentials, the proposition of a 9% salary decrease, and a proposal to remove professional development, I think it is pretty obvious what will happen to the number of special education teachers. Professional development

gives all teachers an opportunity to learn about inclusive practices. Schools are the only place where we have some control of equity in our society. Hawaii does so little to support the public education of its own people and it is so blatantly obvious that the public chooses private education time and time again, provided they can afford it. Removing the differential will create an even larger financial divide. Hawaii's check engine light is on. Know that it is your kuleana to address the problem before it and the bill spiral out of control. We need to support our local, most vulnerable keiki for a better future. How do we accomplish this? We support those who teach them, show malama, and laulima. The differentials are going to have a direct impact on the social equity, the financial, and legal well being of our Hawaii.

With Respect & Aloha,

Chelsea Unger
Grade 5 Special Education Teacher
Kapunahala Elementary School
Kaneohe, HI

Testimony BOE

From: Curen Ohama <curenmohama@gmail.com> on behalf of Curen Ohama
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:27 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Written testimony for Pay differentials for Kula Kaiapuni

Aloha e Board of Education ,
I'm writing in support of the Pay differentials for Kula Kaiapuni Kumu, the pay differentials were working , more people were being motivated to do the hard work they needed to do in order to receive the proper certification to become qualified as Real teachers for Hawaii's children. I've come to truly respect teachers, particularly Hawaii teachers, and even more so Kula Kaiapuni kumu. Being that there over whelmed with society that generally doesn't appreciate them for what they do for our children, Hawaii's education system needs building up Not tearing down, in this age consciousness we would be fools to let the masses of children down as adults. We need to show them we know how important their education Not that their education is expendable. " In hard times " You say? You will only make our future harder by taking away the Pay differentials.

Reconsider putting back the Pay differentials, empower our children, empower yourselves as decision makers, this overload of Tourism obviously doesn't work and our children can be the ones to bring balance, but only if Board of education believes in them.

Sincerely- Curen Ohama

Testimony BOE

From: Melissa Lee <melissa.s.w.lee@gmail.com> on behalf of Melissa Lee
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:29 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony

I am testifying in support of Action Item A, for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I have taught special education at Kaneohe Elementary for 7 years In my 4th year of teaching, I was the most "senior" special education teacher In 7 years I have worked with 24 different special education teachers
11 of those teachers were not highly qualified
7 of those teacher were not even certified teachers
3 of those teachers were long term subs

Our students deserve better. Our students deserve teachers who will stay.

Testimony BOE

From: Melissa Lee <melissa.s.w.lee@gmail.com> on behalf of Melissa Lee
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:30 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am testifying in support of Action Item A, for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I have taught special education at Kaneohe Elementary for 7 years In my 4th year of teaching, I was the most "senior" special education teacher In 7 years I have worked with 24 different special education teachers
11 of those teachers were not highly qualified
7 of those teacher were not even certified teachers
3 of those teachers were long term subs

These are number for only ONE school.

Our students deserve better. Our students deserve teachers who will stay.

Testimony BOE

From: Jeannie Camacho <jeannie_camacho@hotmail.com> on behalf of Jeannie Camacho
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:32 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To the Board of Education:

I am testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Jeannie Camacho. I am a Special Education Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (VI) in Honolulu District. I urge you to continue funding the teacher shortage differentials. The differential has been effective in retaining me in my position, which is in a highly specialized and nationally hard-to-fill field. The shortage differentials made a difference in recruiting and retaining teachers in special education and at hard-to-staff schools. Teachers who would not have otherwise transferred switched to these hard-to-fill positions because of the approved shortage differentials. The differential encouraged me to remain in my job teaching students who have blindness and visual impairments.

I have been a licensed and highly qualified teacher of students with special needs for 22 years. I hold licenses in multiple teaching fields: Elementary Education, Special Education – Blind/Visually Impaired, Special Education – Orientation and Mobility, and Special Education – Mild/Moderate. I am a special education teacher who provides two services for the visually impaired: Special Education – Vision and Orientation & Mobility (O&M).

The work of a special education teacher has always been demanding and has been especially taxing during this pandemic. Special educators have always spent extra time outside of contract hours to comply with IDEA deadlines for each student: planning and attending focus team, eligibility, and IEP meetings; conducting assessments; developing individualized programs; and collecting data. As a VI teacher, it takes 10 to 15 hours per week to prepare braille, tactile and audio materials for ONE braille student, so that the student has access to general education, special education, braille, VI assistive technology, and Orientation & Mobility curriculum.

This school year we continue to meet special education service time through in-person, and/or virtual instruction for families who have opted for virtual lessons. Special education teachers were the first educators to go back into the classroom to provide federally mandated IDEA instruction

to our students. We also have additional meetings to discuss COVID-19 Impact Services and to formulate distance learning plans in case of school closures.

The differentials were successful in addressing the shortage of teachers in special education and in hard-to-staff schools. The differentials are necessary to retain us. In my specific area of special education, the fields of visual impairment/blindness and Orientation & Mobility, there is a critical labor shortage. Nationally, the number of vacancies exceeds the number of qualified teachers available. Our positions are difficult to recruit and retain because there are no college preparation programs in the state of Hawaii for these positions. Even with the differential, by the end of this school year, two or three of the twenty Visual Impairment teachers in our state will leave or will have left: one retired this school year, and one plans to relocate to the mainland. In Honolulu district, a VI teacher position was recently unfilled for 3 years. Only two qualified VI teachers applied in a 3-year period.

If the DOE ends the differentials, many teachers will leave special education positions or hard-to-staff schools. How would the DOE fill these already hard-to-staff positions? How would our state attract qualified teachers? Why would a teacher consider moving to a state with the high cost of living, the lowest salaries, and an excessive workload? How would the DOE provide federally mandated IDEA services? The lack of qualified teachers would be devastating to Hawaii's most vulnerable students.

Please stop Superintendent Kishimoto's plan to end the shortage differentials. Our vulnerable students need and deserve to be taught by qualified teachers who are committed to education. Thank you for your support.

Much Mahalo,

Jeannie Camacho

Honolulu District, Oahu

Testimony BOE

From: J T <tamajej@gmail.com> on behalf of J T
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:32 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Hello,

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.

As a DOE teacher of 21 years, I do not feel that my service is appreciated when federal funding is being used to hire personal tutors rather than support the much needed funding for the public schools. Now more than ever we need to support our public schools and teachers if we want to provide the quality education that our keiki deserve. How does it make logical sense to use resources for an outside source rather than use the trained professionals within your own organization? To make matters worse, public schools are struggling with the fact that there will be budget cuts ahead and the possibility of letting go of teachers. This will have a drastic impact on the entire school community for the sake of hiring private tutors. Please consider the broader consequences of these actions when making your decision.

Thank you,

Jacob Tamaye

Testimony BOE

From: Tracy Deshield <tracy.deshield@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Tracy Deshield
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:33 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: re: Testimony!

To Whom it Concerns,

Could you please explain to me why the HIDOE released a revised plan explaining how it proposes to use \$183.6 million in federal funds from the most recent COVID-19 federal relief package and approved by Congress at the end of last year. If the federal funds could be used to end all layoffs and pay cuts while restoring school-level funding, why won't this happen? Why is the HIDOE planning on using it to aid tutoring and academic coaching? Plus, add to those services while budget cuts for next year will result in 1,00 school employees, including 700 teachers, losing their jobs, from various school programs being slashed.

The superintendent appears to be targeting teachers for discontinuing the shortage differentials. What about the other HIDOE employees who receive shortage differentials?

I'm a special education teacher. This is an area that has been in need of teachers for as long as I've been teaching (23yrs) in Hawaii. The differential has closed the gap on the number of special education teachers needed! For too long, our special needs students have gone with non-qualified teachers in the classroom because the positions were hard to fill. The pay differential has made a huge impact in filling those hard to fill places. It has also taken the burden off the already burdened special education teachers in the classrooms trying to carry the load because of the lack of special education teachers.

According to data, these differentials have made a huge difference and have decreased vacancies in shortage areas by 66% in just the last year alone!!!

How is the superintendent taking a 10% cut to the HIDOE's budget when on 1/21, Gov. Ige restored a great majority of the HIDOE's cuts, reducing the original 10% reduction to a 2.5% reduction. It doesn't factor out if you're looking at \$100 million in cuts to the HIDOE's budget this school year. The cuts next yr rise to about 8.6% which is still not the 10% she referred to in her memo!

If Kishimoto really cares about Hawaii's Keiki and the school system, she will rethink what she's proposing. Let's just see how she really cares!

Mahalo,

Tracy (Special Education Teacher)

Testimony BOE

From: Jessica LeAnne Huggins <tennison@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Jessica LeAnne Huggins
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:33 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I URGE THE BOARD MEMBERS TO HAVE THE SUPERINTENDENT RETRACT THE MEMO TO DISCONTINUE PAY DIFFERENTIALS.

In the short year the pay differentials have been in effect, data shows the differentials rapidly reduced shortages! For once in the state of Hawai'i. The number of teachers transferring into special education positions for the 2020–21 school year increased by **29 percent over the previous school year!** while the number of teachers who left SpEd positions decreased by 57 percent.

Nearly twice as many educators transferred into hard-to-staff schools for the next school year compared to last, while the differentials led to a 41-percent decrease in those leaving hard-to-staff locations. You can not turn your back on this kind of data. The students deserve quality hard working teachers.

We understand Hawaii faces an unprecedented financial crisis due to COVID-19, but while ending differentials may help to balance budgets, **it will absolutely devastate our dwindling supply of qualified teachers for our most vulnerable students.** As a special education teacher, we have already suffered budget cuts in our classroom and our students in need are not receiving the quality programs, 1:1 they deserve.

Superintendent Kishimoto took this action without approval from the BOE. **CARE ABOUT YOUR TEACHERS KISHIMOTO!**

Jessica Huggins

Special Education Teacher, FSC

Windward, James B. Castle High School

Testimony BOE

From: Julia Peterson <petersonjuliaann@gmail.com> on behalf of Julia Peterson
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:34 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for Action Item A

Aloha BOE members,

I have been an educator on Molokai for over 25 years. I have held the position of registrar for the last 12 years. In my time as registrar, I have experienced how hard it has been to secure HQT teachers on Molokai. Many times I have witnessed either teachers staying briefly and then returning to Oahu or the mainland. I have also witnessed not even being able to have a pool of teachers to interview for positions and having to resort to long term subs to teach our keiki. These differentials have been crucial to reversing this pattern. Our teachers are staying and there is a movement of personnel beginning to pursue degrees to get licensed to fill needed positions as HQT teachers. We have had an increase of teachers from off island to apply for our open positions.

As a single parent, this differential has made it possible for me to support my family while working for the school I love. Expenses are much higher here on Molokai from gas, groceries, utilities to even being able to access basic services. Our residents regularly have to fly off island for medical services, and other needed products. This adds the cost of airfare and car rentals to whatever business needs to be conducted.

Our students deserve and need high quality teachers. This differential program is creating that reality. This program is a necessity to maintain the teaching staff we have. Without it, I fear the effect will be devastating to our schools in hard-to-staff locations and SPED and HLIP programs. Please maintain this critical program for the sake of our students in the hard-to-staff, SPED, & HLIP areas.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Julia Peterson, M.Ed., NBCT
Registrar
Molokai High School

Testimony BOE

From: Jay-Dee Kuaana <jaydee.kuaana@hotmail.com> on behalf of Jay-Dee Kuaana
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:35 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Jay-Dee and I am a parent of a special education students who attends Kahului school Headstart. I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the special meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian Language programs.

My child's special education teacher has helped my children by constantly keeping me updated and involved in their growth of their academic progress.

Special education teachers must carry out even more workloads than their gen ed co-workers. On top of lesson planning, grading, teaching, and professional development, they must also collaborate to create IEPs, hold IEP meetings, hold revision IEP meetings, hold re-evaluation meetings, hold behavior meetings, create individual progress reports, create individualized materials for student programming, create data collection systems, record and analyze data, and consult with various IEP team members for every single one of the students on their caseload.

When special education positions are not filled by certified special education teachers, those who are certified must carry the load of completing all of the aforementioned case coordinator tasks for students who they may not even be teaching in their classroom. This very common scenario creates unbearable caseloads and stress which contribute to teacher burnout, and eventually leads to a teacher's decision to leave the special education profession for a lighter workload.

The differentials were effective and reduced vacancies by 66 percent in only 1 year of implementation. During a time when many are questioning leaving the profession due to ever changing protocols, a decision to reduce an educator's pay by almost \$16,000 will drive many away. I urge you to continue the differentials to support our keiki who need more during these trying times.

Thank you,
Jay-Dee Kuaana

Testimony BOE

From: carol W <cnyabokeongera@yahoo.com> on behalf of carol W
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:36 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

My name is caroline Wilhelm and I am a parent of a special education student who attends Kamali'i. I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the special meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian Language programs.

My child's special education teacher has helped my child Naya Wilhelm. We really appreciate her hard work and dedication to all her students. She goes over and above daily for our kids.

Yes Special education teachers must carry out even more workloads than their gen ed co-workers. On top of lesson planning, grading, teaching, and professional development, they must also collaborate to create IEPs, hold IEP meetings, hold revision IEP meetings, hold re-evaluation meetings, hold behavior meetings, create individual progress reports, create individualized materials for student programming, create data collection systems, record and analyze data, and consult with various IEP team members for every single one of the students on their caseload.

When special education positions are not filled by certified special education teachers, those who are certified must carry the load of completing all of the aforementioned case coordinator tasks for students who they may not even be teaching in their classroom. This very common scenario creates unbearable caseloads and stress which contribute to teacher burnout, and eventually leads to a teacher's decision to leave the special education profession for a lighter workload.

The differentials were effective and reduced vacancies by 66 percent in only 1 year of implementation. During a time when many are questioning leaving the profession due to ever changing protocols, a decision to reduce an educator's pay by almost \$16,000 will drive many away. I urge you to continue the differentials to support our keiki who need more during these trying times.

Mahalo,
Caroline Wilhelm

Testimony BOE

From: David Kaniaupio <david.kaniaupio@hawks.k12.hi.us> on behalf of David Kaniaupio
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:36 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov; Kristin Kaniaupio; Kay Lana
Subject: "Testimony"

Name: David Kaniaupio, Secondary Social Studies Teacher and Teacher Lead for the Academy of Design and Technology at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School.

Meeting: Finance

Agenda Item: The Board of Education ruling and Teacher Differentials

Position: We cannot have a democracy without an informed population. By removing teacher differentials we increase teacher shortages and the quality of teachers. Research shows that this results in a less educated population ([PISA, Power, and Policy: the emergence of global educational governance](#)). Removing teacher differentials in an attack on our democracy, please vote against it.

David Kaniaupio
Academy of Design and Technology
Nanakuli High and Intermediate School
10th Grade US History
9th Grade World History

Testimony BOE

From: Kevin Huggins <kwhuggins@yahoo.com> on behalf of Kevin Huggins
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:36 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

My name is Kevin Huggins and I am a 7th grade general education teacher at Samuel Wilder King Intermediate School. I am submitting testimony for the [BOE Special Meeting Action Item A](#): Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I have been teaching at my school for 7 years and each year I have seen special education teachers come and go. This past year was the first year that I didn't see one special education teachers leave their position. This is so important for this high-risk group of students. This remarkable change was not just happening at my school but all over the state. The numbers don't lie. 57%! That is the decrease in the number of teachers who left SpEd positions! 39%! That is the increase in teachers transferring into SpEd positions. Additional increases were seen in teaching positions at hard-to-staff schools and language immersions schools.

Our students have been left in the dark for too long during this pandemic, and we can not allow them to return to classrooms without qualified teachers. These are the students that are most in need and this is the time to meet those needs.

Thank you for your time,

Kevin

Testimony BOE

From: Kawika Ho <kawika632@gmail.com> on behalf of Kawika Ho
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:42 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Don't Cut Differentials Testimony

To whom it may concern:

My name is Kawika Ho and I've been a special education teacher for eight years. I have my masters in special education and also have a certification to teach general education K-6. I absolutely love my job and have a strong passion to help the special education population. This job can be stressful and challenging at times. It can also be the most rewarding job on earth. I didn't consider what my pay would be when I decided to get my teaching degree from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. I was also in my late teens and early twenties. My biggest stressors at that time were getting good grades and trying to survive on the \$20 a week my mom gave me.

Fast forward almost a decade, I am a father and husband with a mortgage. With the high cost of living in Hawai'i, both my wife and I have to work to maintain our lifestyle. The cliché that teachers don't get enough pay has been something I've mentally grappled with my entire career. There have been many times I've considered changing careers despite my passion and enjoyment as a special educator. There is a conflict between doing what I love and making a decent income to be a provider for my family.

There's also an emotional component to this job. As a teacher, we experience so many opinions from our community. There is a section of the community that constantly supports us in all aspects of our job. On the other end of the spectrum, there's a section of the population that treats us like punching bags and think we should stop complaining about everything. We can be both the saviors and scapegoats of all the community's problems depending on who's point of view you're looking at.

The differential pay felt like a huge step in the right direction. Many of us special educators felt like we're finally being appreciated by not only the community, but by the BOE and government. The differential felt like an acknowledgement and thank you for our hard work. The boost in pay did not only benefit me financially, but boosted my confidence in my ability to do the job long-term. Then the pandemic hit. So many people lost their jobs and way of life. I am forever grateful that I was able to keep mine. I made sure I worked extra hard to make sure my students continue to learn during this pandemic and I don't take my employment for granted.

During this pandemic, we've had to deal with the constant talks of furloughs. The constant back and forth is a constant stressor for me. I have to constantly reevaluate my family's budget to account for the lost in pay. It not only affects my monthly bills, but my plans for the future (i.e. preschool for my kids, buying a bigger family vehicle, saving for a "rainy day"). Now the differential pay is on the chopping block. That initial thank you for our hard work now feels like the BOE is telling us, "Nah, just joke."

The differential was not only a thank you to existing teachers, but it is also accomplishing its purpose of filling vacant special education positions. This initiative is working and now it's being put on the chopping block for budgeting purposes. At the same time, I drive under the rail on my daily morning and afternoon commutes to and from work. I can't help, but wonder where did the money go for the rail? When is the investment made in the rail going to start paying off? The investment in special education teachers are paying off. I go to work daily and put my all into my job. How many community members (not including rail workers) has the rail taken to work? Just some food for thought.

Testimony BOE

From: Allan Lowe <amlowe29527@gmail.com> on behalf of Allan Lowe
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:43 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony - Differential Pay

Aloha Board Members,

My name is Allan Lowe. I am a special education teacher at Hilo Intermediate School on Hawai'i Island. I am writing concerning the differential pay that is proposed to be cut from SpED, Hawaiian Immersion, and Hard-to-staff teachers. These differentials are very important to maintain, both for student success and personal reasons.

It is well-known that Hawai'i has long faced teacher shortages in all three areas, but specifically for teachers who work with students with disabilities. State data has shown that SpED differentials have significantly closed the teacher shortage in this area. In my school, which has maintained about half of its SpED positions fairly continuously, while the other half has had high turnover, we lost only one member of our SpED department going into this year. This is pretty much unheard of. Our students are reaping the rewards of continuity that come with this.

Hawai'i has had a long history of using Emergency Hiring privileges to ensure that classrooms have an adult in place, whether qualified or not for the position. This has been true in Special Education as well. This year, many more students are being serviced by certified, qualified teachers than compared to last year. In my school, several teachers have finished SpED licensing programs that would not have chosen to do so without the promise of the differential pay.

This differential has had a positive impact on my family as well, especially during this time of pandemic and shut-downs. It has enabled me to not just survive, but to actually work towards paying down student debt and consider going back to school. However, the possibility of losing the differential pay and having a pay cut also could be a deciding factor for me to leave the islands. I have been here since 2014 and have put roots down here. I'm saving to buy land and build a home. Losing the differential pay and a pay cut would make it impossible for me to meet my minimum monthly obligations. I would have no choice but to leave. Talking to my comrades at work, I know personally of at least two other teachers that would be in the same situation.

I hope that you heavily consider the positive impact that the differential pay has had on our haumana. I also hope that you consider the stability it has brought to our schools, staff, and teachers personally. It is an investment in our future that we are only just beginning to see the fruits of. Mahalo for your time.

Sincerely,

Allan M. Lowe

Testimony BOE

From: James Atkins <james.atkins@k12.hi.us> on behalf of James Atkins
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:44 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Differentials

BOE Members,

Re: BOE Special Meeting Action Item A

In the past, I have not felt compelled to submit testimony to the BOE, but this time I feel it is necessary. The school at which I am a teacher, Honoka'a High and Intermediate, will be harmed by the changes proposed by the superintendent. We are a rural, hard to staff school. In the past, we have suffered from high turnover, which has caused uncertainty, instability, and "re-inventing the wheel." Since the hard to staff differentials became policy, our turnover rate has decreased, which has made us a better school for our students. We are saving lots of time, not having to mentor new teachers to the extent we did in the past. Another benefit is that as our teachers remain longer, they gain a deeper understanding of our students' culture. We also have a high percentage of special education students who would potentially be harmed if the special education differential was removed. I am sure this would result in the loss of some of our experienced teachers. Lastly, our Hawaiian Language and Culture programs are vital to our students so that education can remain culturally relevant to them. Please do not end the hard to staff differential.

James Atkins

Honoka'a High and Intermediate

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david.miyashiro@hawaiikidsan.org
hawaiikidsan.org

David Miyashiro
Executive Director

February 18, 2021

Hawaii State Board of Education
Special Meeting
Catherine Payne, Chairperson
Kenneth Uemura, Vice Chairperson

Aloha Chair Payne, Vice Chair Uemura, and Members of the Board,

Per Action Item A, **HawaiiKidsCAN strongly supports** the Chair Payne's recommendation that the Board direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and to refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

Founded in 2017, HawaiiKidsCAN is a local nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that Hawaii has an excellent and equitable education system that reflects the true voices of our communities and, in turn, has a transformational impact on our children and our state. We strongly believe that all students should have access to excellent educational opportunities, regardless of family income levels and circumstances.

HawaiiKidsCAN has been very supportive of the differentials from before they were announced, as they represent a smart and strategic approach to addressing one of the system's biggest needs. Our [poll from Solutions Pacific](#) in February 2019 showed that 81% of likely Hawaii voters agreed that public schools should be able to pay some teachers more than others if they work with students with special needs or learning disabilities. We also confirmed in our [February 2020 analysis of teacher compensation](#) that the differentials were in alignment with national best practices and research.

The Hawaii DOE's own analysis has shown the differentials have been a clear success. This should be cause for celebration and continued commitment, especially in light of statistics showing that the students served by these positions are suffering the most during the COVID-19 pandemic. This isn't the time to take the focus off, nor do we want to unintentionally further drive teachers away from these positions due to uncertainty about the sustainability of future differentials.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Miyashiro
Founding Executive Director
HawaiiKidsCAN

Testimony BOE

From: Julia Fernandez <juliafern0908@gmail.com> on behalf of Julia Fernandez
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:46 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am submitting testimony for Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

When the differentials first took place I realized how much I help my community by being a special education teacher. I felt validated in my role as an educator. I want to continue to feel this support.

Since the beginning of this school year our school has lost 3 special education teachers. It has been challenging to find people who want to stay as a long term sub and take on the role of special educator. It's a mindset that requires dedication and persistence. Our students deserve someone who is there for them. These teachers need the pay to feel they are worthy and important.

As a certified sped teacher I have taken over as care coordinator for the students that are not in my direct line of teaching. This is extra work added to my already challenging case load. I accept this added work knowing that I have the differentials to compensate for my time.

Please don't take away my differential pay. That would be a mistake for our students and community. Through COVID, we need to stand together in support of one another and to let the world know that we, in Hawaii, value education and we will do everything to keep our system in tack and working strong.

Mahalo for your consideration,
Julia Fernandez
Mokulele Elementary School

Testimony BOE

From: Sherri Martinez <sherrimartinez46@gmail.com> on behalf of Sherri Martinez
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:46 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am the only certified and licensed Orientation and Mobility Specialist in North Central Oahu District. I earned a Bachelor's Degree in both Elementary and Special Education. I earned a Master's Degree from the University of Hawaii in Educational Psychology. I earned a Master's Degree from the University of Northern Colorado in Special Education: Vision. I earned another graduate degree from the University of Northern Colorado in Orientation and Mobility. Less than one percent of Americans have this amount of education.

I had an Individualized Education Program meeting on 2/16/21 that went beyond the school day. Today, I have an Individualized Education Program meeting that starts at 3:00 PM, which is the end of the school day and is expected to last until 5:00 PM. Tomorrow, I have an Individualized Education Program meeting that will continue beyond the end of the school day. There is a scheduled Individualized Education Program meeting on 2/23/21, 3/2/21, 3/4/21, and 3/5/21. All of the meetings will either start or end after the end of the school day.

Please continue the differential for special educators! The extra boost in my paycheck helps pay for my son's college tuition as well as provide support for all the extra that is expected of special educators.

Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony!
Sherri Martinez

Testimony BOE

From: Amanda Seymore - Lacar <hstaseymore@gmail.com> on behalf of Amanda Seymore - Lacar
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:50 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony on Action Item II.A Special Meeting

Testimony on Action Item: II. A during Special Meeting
Aloha Board of Education Members,

My name is Amanda Lacar and I have been a Special Education teacher in the state of Hawai'i since August 2011. I am proud to be a Special Education teacher and I have been lucky in the sense that my schools have been able to get Long Term Substitute Teachers or Emergency Hires in our vacant Special Education positions. However, I know that many schools across the state are not lucky, in which they can't get a long term sub.

December 5, 2019 the Department of Education posted the memo "Board Action on Extra Compensation For Classroom Teachers in Special Education, Hard-To-Staff Geographical Locations, and Hawaiian Language Immersion Programs". In my limited knowledge, I have heard that this WORKED. We had more teachers applying for Special Education positions and applying for Hard to Staff locations.

I understand the financial situation our state, country and world is in right now. However, one thing should never change: the commitment to education. This is a commitment that has shown to be effective. Why stop something that is working to make it hurt again.

The words of the Superintendent at the press conference that was held with Governor Ige, her and HSTA. DOE Superintendent Christina Kishimoto told Tuesday's news conference, "We have a shortage in our state and we must take bold action to recognize Hawaii's exceptional public education system. Inaction is not an option. This is an equity issue."

Live up to the words of shortage in our state - take bold action - inaction is not an option.

Amanda Lacar
Special Education Teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Shelby Olofson <educshelbygreene@gmail.com> on behalf of Shelby Olofson
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:51 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Re: DIFFERENTIALS & UPCOMING BUDGET

Aloha Board of Education,

I moved to Hawaii in 2015 to begin my career as a teacher after completing both my BS Mathematics and MEd within 4 years of college. This time last year, my husband and I were looking to buy our first home here on the Big Island to get out from under our \$1450 rent each month.

Over my six years, the last year with the shortage differentials was the FIRST year that we have been able to begin paying down our debt instead of accumulating debt for living expenses, despite qualifying for food stamp benefits as a household. *This is despite me not even having student loans, because I was able to pay for school through ample scholarship opportunities and not yet having any children.*

With the prospect of furloughs mentioned last March, we put a pause on our home-searching for fear that we wouldn't be able to afford house payments and property taxes if I faced pay cuts or the possibility of being cut altogether. We were married this past summer and are now expecting our first child in August 2021.

We don't have room to raise a child in our studio apartment, nor can we make the commitment to purchase house with looming threats of pay cuts via cutting differentials and furloughs. Unfortunately, we have made the heart wrenching decision to move to Indiana with a much lower cost of living with greater employment opportunities for my husband. As a highly qualified math teacher, I will be able to find good work just about anywhere, so there is no point in enduring this mess here.

I submitted my Separation of Service form on January 26 to allow my school to post my line in hopes of finding a suitable replacement. I know I wasn't the first, and I surely won't be the last if you continue with this plan of "bait and switch" by cutting the promised differentials and continue to threaten livelihoods of teachers throughout the state.

When teachers are in survival mode and constantly facing these types of concerns, they cannot take care of themselves or students. I encourage you to put the health of your employees first.

Mrs. Shelby R. [Greene] Olofson
B.S. Mathematics, M.S.Ed. Secondary Mathematics Education
Kohala High School | Mathematics Department Chair & Educator
2021 Class Advisor | HSTA Kohala Chapter President
54-3611 Akoni Pule Highway/Box 279 | Kapaa, HI 96755 | (808) 889-7117 ext. 239

Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world. Nelson Mandela

Support My Students HERE: <https://www.donorschoose.org/olofson>

Testimony BOE

From: Aaron Tanimoto <aaron.tanimoto@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Aaron Tanimoto
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:51 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Differential Pay

As a teacher who teaches at a school that is hard to staff, I see the practical impact of establishing consistency for the students and community that we serve. The money is just the vehicle that addresses the issue at heart, which is that hard to staff schools are typically in underprivileged communities which are compounded by a rotating door of staff. Without the differential pay, you will concede to the fact that we will have a continuing education gap in hard to staff schools and communities.

Aaron Tanimoto
Honoka'a High School
Teacher

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Testimony BOE

From: Amy Naehu <amynaehu@gmail.com> on behalf of Amy Naehu
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:52 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

I am submitting a testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, & Hawaiian language programs.

While I understand there is need to address the budget concerns, please stop considering the pay differentials as an option. This differential has helped my family and me financially. We can finally pay our bills and living expenses on time. There's less worry for us because we were able to rely on the differential while my husband's jobs were canceled due to the pandemic. Also, the differential was a major factor in deciding to stay in the public school system. I work hard supporting students in sped and often stay beyond my contracted hours and work on weekends and nights to complete sped-related duties. The extra money motivates me to continue to push through all the extra responsibilities thrown on sped during this time and throughout the years.

Thank you,
—Amy Naehu

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: James Atkins <james.atkins@k12.hi.us> on behalf of James Atkins
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:54 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Budget Cuts

BOE Members:

Re: BOE General Business Meeting Action Item V, B

Using COVID relief funds to hire tutors at the expense of experienced, qualified teachers makes no sense. Like many schools in Hawai'i, my school is in a rural area. Given that, it would be quite difficult to even find tutors with enough knowledge in a content area to be effective. How would these tutors operate? Would it be via distance learning? Haven't students had enough of that? Why not allow teachers to use their expertise to teach our students? We are trained professionals. What kind of criteria would be used to hire a tutor? Again, it makes no sense. It would be bad for our students. Hawai'i has a teacher shortage. Using these funds to hire tutors instead of fairly compensating teachers will only make the situation worse. It is my understanding that the funds were supposed to be used to avoid budget cuts. Why would you use it any other way? The ones who will suffer the most will be our students.

James Atkins
Honoka'a High and Intermediate

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Testimony BOE

From: Ci HI <bileckic18@gmail.com> on behalf of Ci HI
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:56 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is **Cicily Bilecki**. I am a **special education** at **Kalaheo High School** in **Windward District** on Oahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I want to thank the Legislature for finding ways to revise the state budget and cover COVID-19 revenue losses without including any suggestions of pay cuts or furloughs for our educators in our public schools, including our charter schools, or any other state employees. As Chair Dela Cruz had previously said, "We don't want to have an additional negative effect on the economy that might make matters worse."

Over 15 years ago, I moved from the mainland to teach in Hawaii. At that time, I had immediately taken an immediate \$10,000 reduction in pay because, at that time, the state of Hawaii did not provide a pay differential for special education teachers. It took me nearly a decade and costly graduate school course credits to move up in teacher reclassification pay. Finally, after 15 years of teaching special education in Hawaii and recently earning a \$10,000 special education differential, I can finally cover my \$2,000 a month rent with just one of my paychecks. In my entire teaching career, I have never been able to do that, and it brought financial relief to my family. I no longer had to work side hustles (i.e. part-time, babysitting, or tutoring, etc) to make ends meet as a single working parent. I do not have a family to lean on for support, as they live thousands of miles away. I am the sole provider of my household and the reality we live paycheck to paycheck in Hawaii. Although I make a decent living, it is not nearly enough to cover our basic necessities, and I have seriously considered leaving Hawaii and the teaching profession as a whole.

With the constant reminder and prospect of being furloughed and teachers receiving a 30% pay cut PLUS losing my SPED differential, I do not know how I will survive living in one of the most costly cities in the United States. Honestly, if I am struggling as a veteran teacher, I cannot imagine what our younger teachers, who already make very little will do to make an honest living. What will happen to the future of teachers in Hawaii? Who would be motivated to become the next generation of teachers, knowing they would be struggling financially? Who will be left to teach our Keiki?

It seems convenient after Hawaii's Special Education teachers have been spending months holding double and triple the IEPs that have been mandated by the State of Hawaii to address the COVID19 Impact Closure meetings, so Hawaii DOE is not sued by all our students' families, that we get a professional slap in the face by taking away a portion of our pay.

Special education is called special education because it requires specific knowledge, experience and a highly skilled professional to provide specialized instruction. Yet, here we are AGAIN, begging to be paid for the work we have put into the DOE and our KEIKI.

Special education does not end when the release bell rings at 3PM. Do you know that I spend up until one or two in the morning writing IEPs, transition plans, analyzing student data, parent communication, etc. it cannot get done within our working hours with students.

The goodness of my heart DOES not pay the bills. As a single mom, I will need to look for a career field that values my professional talents and I do not have to live in constant anxiety that I will take a huge pay cut on the backs of special education teachers.

We don't want your applause. We don't want your, "Oh, what a noble profession!" We want to be paid our worth. We want to feed our own keiki. We want to afford to rent an apartment. We want to pay our student loans. We want to STOP living paycheck to paycheck in paradise.

Why do you think there has been this mass exodus of teachers of Hawaii. More than half of the teachers I started off with in my career have all left for greener pastures and higher pay in states who are genuinely sincere in not only their teacher recruitment goals, but retaining those teachers for the long term.

I am emotionally, mentally and physically tired of the apathy DOE has towards it's special education programs. Our kids always get slim pickings resources, now they will have slim pickings for teachers.

I love our students in Hawaii, but as an educational professional, I still need to provide for my family. I do not have a spouse or family to lean on during these difficult times. Our focus should be on how we can prepare our children for a future Hawaii, but not at the costs of its teachers. If teachers have to pay the price, there will be a mass exodus from the teaching profession and our Keiki will sadly be negatively impacted by the State of Hawaii's decision.

Mahalo,

Cicily Bilecki, Windward District, Oahu, Hawaii

Testimony BOE

From: Tui, Osa <otui@hsta.org> on behalf of Tui, Osa
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:56 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: 2/18/21 Special Meeting II. A. Testimony

Child: Can I stop doing this?

Parent: You will keep doing it.

Child: No, I'm not going to do it anymore.

As a parent, do you just let that go?

Superintendent: Can I stop funding differentials?

Board of Education: You will keep funding differentials.

Superintendent: No, I'm not going to fund differentials anymore.

This is INSUBORDINATE and CANNOT BE TOLERATED.

Osa Tui
McKinley High
HSTA Vice President

Testimony BOE

From: Pualani McKeen <pualanimckeen@gmail.com> on behalf of Pualani McKeen
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:01 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony
Attachments: BOE testimony 2-17.pdf

Hope McKeen
Kumu Kīnānā K-12
Agenda Item Special Meeting Differential Pay IIA

Aloha e nā lama na‘auao o Hawai‘i nei. Wahi a Hi‘iaka i kekahi Kumu Koa, “I ola ‘oe, i ola mākou nei.” He mana‘o kahiko loa kēia, eia na‘e, he ‘ike ‘oia‘i‘o a kūpono i kēia au. He hō‘ike kēia ‘ōlelo pōkole i ka pilina o ke ola kūpono o ka ‘āina i ke ola kūpono kānaka. A hiki ke ho‘opili i kēia ‘ano pilina i nā ‘ano wahi like ‘ole, e like me ka mālama kūpono i nā kumu i ola kūpono nā keiki. Ia‘u i no‘ono‘i ai i ke kākau hou ‘ana i ka palapala hā‘awi mana‘o no ia papa alaka‘i, kupu mai ka mana‘o i ko‘u hoihoi e kākau piha ma ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. ‘O ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i ka ‘ōlelo o nei ‘āina mai ka puka ‘ana o ka lā i Ha‘eha‘e a i ka welo o Lehua. A no laila eia au e hā‘awi mana‘o nei ma o ke kākau ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i wale nō.

He 2 a‘u mana‘o ko‘iko‘i e noi kāko‘o maiā ‘oukou i kēia lā. ‘Akahi, e ‘olu‘olu e ho‘omau i ke kālā uku keu no nā kumu ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i ma nā Kula Kaiapuni. ‘Alua, e ho‘omau pū i ke kālā uku keu no nā kumu kīnānā ma o ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i. ‘Akahi, ‘o ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i ka ‘ōlelo mua o Hawai‘i. Wahi a ke kumukānāwai ‘o ke aupuni Hawai‘o, ‘o ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i he ‘ōlelo kūhelu o Hawai‘i. Eia na‘e, no nā makahiki he nui, li‘ili‘i ke kāko‘o ‘ana o ke aupuni Hawai‘i i nā kula ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. Inā manawa a pau, ‘o nā kula ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i ka no‘ono‘o hope o ke ke‘ena DOE ma Hawai‘i. Ma ka wā i ho‘omaka ai ka hō‘ike aupuni o nā keiki Hawai‘i, ‘o nā keiki ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i nā mea i pono e hana i kekahi hō‘ike me nā hemahema a mana‘o huikau loa no kekahi mau makahiki ma mua o ka ho‘oponopono ‘ana. Ma ka wā i koho ai i kekahi papahana makemakika hou no ke aupuni, ua pono nā kumu ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i e mālama i mau hola ka‘awale no ka unuhi i nā ha‘awina makemakika no nā keiki, ‘a‘ole i kāko‘o iki ke ke‘ena DOE i ia ‘ano hana. Ua kāko‘o nō Ke Kula ‘o Kamehameha i ia ‘ano hana, eia na‘e, ma he ke kāko‘o mai ke aupuni? ‘A‘OHE!!! I kēia wā, ua hala 15 makahiki mai ka unuhi ‘ana i nā ha‘awina makemakika ma ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, a i nā kumu ‘ōlelo pelekania i hiki ke e‘e ma ka punaeweale a ho‘oili i nā ha‘awina like ‘ole mai ka punaeweale ma o ka ‘ōlele Pelekania, pono ke kumu ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i e haku i nā ha‘awina hou o kēia au no nā ‘ano mākau like ‘ole iā lākou iho. Ma hea ke kāko‘o o ke ke‘ena DOE no ia ‘ano hana nui? ‘A‘OHE!!!! ‘O ke kāko‘o keu wale nō a ke ke‘ena DOE i nā kumu ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i a no nā keiki ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, ‘o ia ho‘i ka uku koena no ka lilo ‘ana i kumu ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. ‘O kēia uku koena, he uku no ka ‘oi na‘auao o nā keiki Hawai‘i. Inā huki ‘ia, kēia uku koena no ka papahana ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, he like ho‘i me ka ‘uī ‘ana o ke koko mai ka pōhaku. Emi nō ke kāko‘o o ke ke‘ena DOE i nā kula ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, inā he emi hou, he minamina nō. ‘Oiai he kumu kula ho‘āmana au, ‘a‘ohe uku koena no ka lilo i kumu ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, eia na‘e kāko‘o piha au i ka ho‘omau ‘ana i ia uku koena.

‘Alua, ‘o nā keiki kīnānā nā keiki pālua ka pono o ke kāko‘o piha i hiki ke holomua a ola kūpono ma ko lākou wā o‘o. ‘Ike nō nā kumu kīnānā, hiki nō kēia mau keiki ke a‘o kūpono inā aia ke kāko‘o kūpono no lākou iho a no ko lākou nāwaliwali. ‘Okō‘a lākou pākahi a pau a no laila, pono nō lākou i ka papahana a‘o kūikawā i hiki ke ki‘i i ka lei o ka lanakila. Pono pū lākou i ke kānaka i hiki ke ‘ike le‘a i nā ikaika a lākou i hiki ke kāko‘o a ho‘oikaika i nā nāwaliwali o lākou. A ‘a‘ole ma‘alahi ka ‘imi ‘ana i ia mau ‘ano kānaka. He waiwai loa no nā haumāna i ke kumu ‘oi kelakela i hiki ke kāko‘o pono i nā keiki kīnānā. Inā huki ka uku koena, e ha‘alele hou paha ana nā kumu kīnānā a minamina nō no nā keiki a me ke kaiaulu o Hawai‘i. Makemake kākou e kāko‘o kūpono i ke keiki e lilo i mākuā kūpono i kūpono ko ke kaiaulu Hawai‘i.

Mana‘o hope:

If the DOE/BOE does not make a concerted effort to equitably fund programs that are already underfunded, students will be the only ones to really suffer in the end, putting them at an even greater disadvantage.

Na‘u nō

Hope Pualani McKeen

Testimony BOE

From: Mikaella Gowan <mikaella@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Mikaella Gowan
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:01 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

I would like to testify to support the appropriate compensation of Hawaiian Immersion teachers.

The BOE Policy 105-8 is already approved stating that Hawaiian Immersion educators shall be compensated for the extra skill set that is required to fill and maintain their position.

The 2020 differential has helped to decrease the amount of vacancies in Kaiapuni schools which allow schools to survive and allow us to provide a better education for our student population.

I understand that the state is in a financial crisis, but I do not feel it is ok to force one group of individuals to pay for the entire state's deficit. Especially when we have had to work even harder than before to support our students through distance learning formats. There are no online educational resources or programs available in the Hawaiian Language for us to support our students from a distance like our English classroom counterparts have (IXL, iReady, Wonders online, etc.) Everything we have done to teach our students throughout this pandemic has been created from scratch, by us.

Please do not cut or eliminate our differential.

Mahalo nui for your time.

Na'u,
Mikaella Kanoe Gowan
Hawaiian Immersion 1st Grade Teacher

Testimony BOE

From: N <nikki.lashelle.b@gmail.com> on behalf of N
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:02 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Restore the Budget

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to ask that you restore the budget. We know that a fully resourced school system, which also includes staff, is the best way for students to learn and thrive in order to reach their goals. I appreciate your time and for listening. I leave you with the quote that moved me to write in solidarity:

"Mahalo for all your hard work and dedication. We promise to fight for you and for the quality public education our keiki deserve."

Thank you,

Nikki Baker

Testimony BOE

From: Morgan Kāla'e Josephine Parker <mjkparker8@gmail.com> on behalf of Morgan Kāla'e Josephine Parker
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:03 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony , Special Meeting , Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Morgan Parker and I am the student services coordinator and early college counselor at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for the *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition of this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and a better state work force. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Testimony BOE

From: Kauai Angell <kauai_angell@anuenue.org> on behalf of Kauai Angell
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:03 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY for Agenda item II.A

Aloha,

My name is Kauai Angell, and I am a counselor at Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue. As a kaiapuni kumu we wear many different hats to support our school because there is a shortage of kumu qualified to teach at an immersion school. In our high school we have kumu teaching multiple grade levels different content. Although difficult at times, we continue to do our best to ensure we can provide the best education possible for our students.

It is unfair to take away the differentials from kaiapuni kumu who work beyond the 8am-3pm hours developing curriculum in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i especially since the Hawaiian immersion compensation has already been approved. I am not trying to say kaiapuni kumu work harder than other teachers because we all work hard. All kumu put in blood, sweat, and tears to ensure that our students get the best education. As we navigated through the challenges of distance learning, kaiapuni kumu have to find curriculum in the midst of our limited resources, translate it, and find a meaningful platform to present it. We don't not have the accessibility to resources as other kumu. Our pot is limited and we must use our creativity to develop lesson plans. Our goal as kaiapuni kumu are to ensure that we perpetuate our language and culture as well uphold the mission and vision of our schools. As we are blessed to have a job during these unfortunate times, we are also risking our health and safety educating our students during the pandemic.

We all have financial hardships and need to support our 'Ohana. Taking away from our livelihood is unfair and unjust. There are other areas that have been overlooked on closing the financial gap. Why are teachers always the first on the chopping block? We are already the most underpaid profession in the nation and now due to cuts we too will face a financial crisis and will struggle to support our families.

The differentials have decreased the vacancy positions in immersion schools and having qualified kumu is best for the kids. There are only 21 immersion schools across the state. Compensating kumu kaiapuni is only a small amount that does not affect the overall budget. I kindly ask that you reconsider your movement on removing the differentials from kaiapuni kumu and look for other solutions to the financial concerns. Mahalo for your time.

--

Kauai Angell
Counselor
Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue
Office phone: (808) 307-3031

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Testimony BOE

From: Julia Fernandez <juliafern0908@gmail.com> on behalf of Julia Fernandez
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:04 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am submitting testimony regarding 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.

It is absolutely ridiculous to cut teacher's pay and hire tutors. What you need to consider is to use the federal funds to stabilize the status quo. You need to keep teacher's pay for our economy to continue. You need to keep teacher's pay to educate our youth. You need to keep teacher's pay to support our community and show we are strong and can withstand anything. You need to keep teacher's pay for my son's sake.

Don't pivot and hire tutors. Doing this would create more work and headache for our community. We already have enough on our plate as parents and students. My child, a kindergartener, needs stability and consistency. He wakes up at 6:15 am every morning. He goes to school 2 days a week. The other days he goes to Kama`aina kids and has to log on to a Webex class by himself three days a week. This is a lot of pressure to put on a 6 year old. I do not want to deal with a tutor on top of all of this. I don't want to know in the back of my mind that my son's teacher has to work the same and her pay is cut. Absolutely not; this is unacceptable!!

My son's school schedule and placement has changed 3 times this school year. I don't want to deal with another change because now he would have to work with a tutor. That's one more person that he would have to get to know with more rules and procedures to follow. I like his teacher now. She's amazing. Pay her well with the federal funds.

Mahalo for your consideration,
Julia Fernandez
Mom of a DOE Kindergartener

Testimony BOE

From: Joshua Kamoani'ala Tavares <ktavares@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Joshua Kamoani'ala Tavares
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:04 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Kamoani'ala Tavares and I am the First Grade Kumu (Teacher) at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo,

Kamoani'ala Tavares

Testimony BOE

From: Mary Ryan <mary.ryan@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Mary Ryan
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:08 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Mary Ryan and I teach grade 1-3 Special Education at Ala Wai Elementary. I am testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for the classroom teacher in special education, hard to staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

This past year it seems I have written testimony on testimony about the unjust treatment of educators. Here I am again to share my concerns with you about yet another attempt to take from teachers.

The news of earning a sped differential was more than exciting, it felt like the recognition and treatment that we finally deserved after all the time and resources teachers have given outside of required duties without recognition or compensation. When this pandemic set in, Special Education teachers were the first to be asked to come back to campus and work with students. Receiving this differential was acknowledgment of the work that really goes into being a Special Education teacher.

The differential has made a personal difference for me in being able to support myself in the high cost living of Hawaii and work to end my student loan debt. All of the difficulties this year have made me seriously contemplate if I can continue teaching, and then to add a pay decrease just solidifies my doubts. I have seen colleagues be able to move into homes that support their family size and finally make ends meet. In addition, I personally have talked with several general educators interested in working with the special needs population and have known teachers who relocated in order to teach in hard to staff positions on other islands. The statistics are showing that the differential is working!

To take away this differential now not only affects us personally but professionally. With the budget cuts being made my school is losing 3 EA positions causing teachers to work harder and longer to plan and support our keiki. The demands seem to get larger and larger for less and less. Teachers are struggling. We deserve this differential and so much more.

Now is a time for us to come together to do what is fair and right for our educators. We must stop using educators and their livelihood as a disposable resource. Now is the time to support our educators, families, and keiki to bring a better tomorrow. I hope you will consider this with utmost urgency. Thank you for your time.

Mahalo,

Mary Ryan

Ala Wai Elementary School

Special Education Teacher

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Testimony BOE

From: Kahele Asing <Kahele_Asing@anuenue.org> on behalf of Kahele Asing
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:09 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha Kākou,

I hope this letter brings you a change of heart in your determination of my financial future. I am submitting this testimony for the BOE Special Meeting **Action Item A**: I am a Hawaiian Immersion teacher certified in Special education at Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue and this is my 20th year at this school. The differentials given to us at the beginning of year in 2020 was extremely beneficial to my family as well as my school. In the beginning of the COVID pandemic my wife was out of work for months while I was able to provide for my family (my wife and 4 children), juggling a mortgage as well regular bills. Honestly, I don't think we could've gotten through it without the differentials I was graciously provided.

As far as my school is concerned, as a 19 year veteran at Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue, there were exactly 3 certified sped teachers only 2 who could speak Hawaiian. One of these teachers went on to teach regular education at an English school and the other one passed away a 2 years ago. Since then it's been just me and a bunch of temporary hires who spent a semester or 2 in our department, ultimately leaving for another career. However, in light of the differentials being procured for us, this enticed a 15 year veteran regular education teacher to enter our department. She took the praxis test for Special Education and got Sped certified and is now in her 2nd year as a sped teacher at this school.

So the reasoning for providing us these differentials worked. It did its job and brought another certified Hawaiian language speaking sped certified teacher to my school whereas in the past, none came knocking at the door.

For our school, it is extremely important to have Hawaiian Language speaking teachers at our school, obviously, but it is just as important to have Hawaiian Language speaking, Sped certified teachers to retain our mission and goal of this school and to give the students the best opportunity to succeed.

Please, Please, Please.....take my thoughts or mana'o into consideration when making your decision on this matter.

Mahalo nui,

Kumu Kahele Asing

--

Kumu Kīnānā Papa M - 3
Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue

This e-mail is being sent by a student or employee of Kula Kaiapuni 'O Ānuenue.

Testimony BOE

From: Suzanne Olsson <suzanne.olsson@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Suzanne Olsson
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:10 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for BOE Special Meeting Action Item A

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony in regard to the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs..

Currently, I am receiving a differential as a Prob. 4 teacher and it has helped me tremendously. After graduating from UH Manoa with a post-bacc in Special Education and becoming employed with the DOE as a teacher in July 2019, it dawned on me that the pay I was receiving was just not going to be enough to continue living in Hawaii. My rent increased, and as you may very well have noticed, the cost of living is continually increasing. The price of food right now is outrageous! In addition, it is so difficult to find a place to rent on Maui that is affordable!

When the differential was given in early 2020, I was so grateful and elated that I would be able to just barely cover all of my expenses and continue my job as a special education teacher on Maui. The differential has definitely helped me to remain in my position. I absolutely love my job as a middle school special education teacher and the school that I work at. Before the differential was announced, it was apparent that after taxes and health insurance was taken out of my paycheck, along with my monthly rent increase, and rising cost of food, I simply did not have enough money to cover everything at the end of the month.

What many people don't realize is how someone that seems to have an okay pay actually falls through the cracks because after all of those expenses that I've mentioned, it really is not enough- you wouldn't even qualify for any additional support that is needed because your income is "too high". Taking on a second job when you are a teacher is also tough because let's face it, we do take our work home with us.

I am a qualified special education teacher. I love my students and my job, and I enjoy making a difference in the lives of students. It's not easy, but I give it my all every day, and it would be devastating to have the differential taken away. THIS WAS NEEDED!

If the differential is taken away, I may have to move away and I really don't want to do that. I have some friends who were born and raised here, and it's so heartbreaking to know that the only reason they are moving away right now is because they cannot afford to live here any longer. It is very, very expensive to live in Hawaii!

We need to retain all of our special education teachers that are currently working. It has been proven that the differential has made a difference in retaining enough special education teachers in Hawaii. Budget cuts and loss of positions will be devastating for our students. We cannot afford to have larger class sizes and less teachers. It will jeopardize the quality of our students' education. Anyone who has ever taught or worked in a classroom knows this. Our students need us! Please value our keiki and your special education teachers. Please do not take away this differential!!!

Mahalo,

Testimony BOE

From: Daniel Lewer <daniel.lewer@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Daniel Lewer
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:10 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Hard to staff

Aloha,

Last year I had decided to leave teaching to pursue my side business full time but then the \$7,500 differentials was provided to Honokaa High School where I have taught for 11 years now. The \$7500 convinced me to stay in the profession and it has made a considerable difference. I am a National Board Certified Teacher and last year was awarded the State of Hawaii History Teacher of the year. I love teaching with all my heart which is what makes it so very demanding.

After 11 years, I finally felt my compensation valued my effort. If the differentials were taken back, I am afraid I would not be staying in the profession.

Thanks for your time,

--

Dan Lewer
Honoka'a High and Intermediate School
Social Studies Department

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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
February 18, 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
Ms. Bernadette Lane
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

Catherine Payne Chairperson
Hawaii State Board of Education
P. O. Box 2360
Honolulu, HI 96814

RE: II. A. Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's
discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers
in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and
Hawaiian language programs

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) appreciates this opportunity to urge the Department and the Board to continue pay differentials for classroom teachers in special education as first instituted in January 2020. As you know, SEAC has testified three times previously in strong support of this extra compensation as a means of addressing a decades-long chronic shortage of qualified teachers for the most vulnerable student population.

It was not until the Department's January 21, 2021 presentation of its proposed plan for the use of ESSER II funds that SEAC noted a reference to the teacher differentials as a *pilot program*. This was clearly a surprise and disappointment to SEAC members, as we had been led to believe the pay differentials were permanent.

All evidence points to the fact that this program has been highly effective in recruiting and retaining qualified special education teachers in the past year. Given that the argument to discontinue the pay differentials is primarily budgetary, SEAC offers the counterargument that **reneging on these pay differentials, will be far more costly in the long run than maintaining them.** These costs will likely be evidenced by a reduction in qualified teachers, a significant cost to recruit and retain replacements, and a worsening of academic, behavioral and social-emotional outcomes for students with IEPs.

Teacher recruitment and retention. As evidenced by the data and many of the testimonies from teachers regarding the discussion today, the



additional pay differential was a major factor in motivating more teachers to fill vacant special education classroom positions (a 43% *increase* over the previous year). This past year also saw a 28% *decrease* in the number of teachers leaving special education for a general education position. No one doubts that these gains in recruiting and retaining teachers are likely to be lost when, and if, the extra compensation is withdrawn.

A February 2019 presentation by *Education Week* for National Public Radio shared a worrisome trend that the number of special education teachers nationally has dropped by more than 17 percent over the past decade. This will make it harder to recruit qualified teachers for vacated positions who are willing to take on the extra time and paperwork demanded in special education without the additional compensation. The likely outcome is what Education Week refers to as a “quality shortage” where a higher percentage of special education teachers in the state are not fully qualified.

Should Hawaii’s future recruiters be successful in finding new qualified teachers to fill vacated positions, the Learning Policy Institute cites research showing that districts spend on average \$20,000 per recruit related to separation, recruitment, hiring and training. SEAC believes it is likely to be more cost effective to maintain the pay differentials than to pay these hidden costs associated with failing to retain qualified teachers.

Student achievement. If recruitment and retention of qualified special education classroom teachers are negatively impacted by discontinuance of the pay differential, by far the greatest costs will be borne by the special education students themselves. High-quality teachers have the potential to provide substantially higher quality classroom education. A lack or shortage of qualified teachers will compound the already substantial achievement gap. Our special education students have arguably suffered greater academic losses than their peers during the pandemic. They need the stability of teachers who know their individualized needs and have the skills to help them back on the path to positive academic and functional outcomes.

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

From: Robson Silbanuz <rsilbanuz@gmail.com> on behalf of Robson Silbanuz
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:14 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha.

I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting regarding Superintendent Christine Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Robson Silbanuz and I am a Special Education teacher at Waianae High School. I have taught for 10 plus years. I have worked on the Leeward Coast for all my teaching career and seen the negative effects of teacher shortage, unqualified teachers, and lack of classroom resources.

I have been shocked, concerned and depressed in regards to the caliber of education provided to our students with special needs. The turn over of teachers on a yearly basis undermines the quality of education that is provided to the students who are most in need, not only due to their disabilities, but due to the environment in which they live. These students deserve the best teachers who commit to stay and establish relationships with them. What they get are the least experienced teachers who come for a two year holiday.

The BEST decision that I have witnessed was the Board of Education's decision to increase the differentials provided to special education teachers, Hawaiian language teachers and those teachers who serve students in hard to place areas. I have witnessed the positive result of that decision. Qualified teachers have remained in their positions, good teachers that were here previously have returned, and teachers that were considering leaving have remained. Money matters!!! Teachers from our community are more likely to remain in their challenging teaching positions if they are compensated for their tireless efforts. Please, please, please show respect to the students we serve and to the teachers who serve them.

I am asking that Superintendent Christine Kishimoto rescind her memo stopping the shortage differentials. That would be extremely detrimental to the students who need quality support and teaching. The board did not expect or intend for the differentials to end in 2021 and did not instruct Christine Kishimoto to unilaterally discontinue the differential pay.

I am counting on you to see the wisdom in continuing the payment of differentials. It is a move in a long overdue positive direction. Thank you.

With respect,

Robson Silbanuz

Testimony BOE

From: Cyrilla Manuel <c.manuel@seariders.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Cyrilla Manuel
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:16 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha.

I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting regarding Superintendent Christine Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Cyrilla Manuel and I am a Special Education teacher at Waianae High School. I have taught for 17 years at Waianae High School. I first started working here at Waianae High School as an Educational Assistant in 1991 and I realized that there was a need for teachers in general. I wanted to make a difference in my students' lives. So I went to college to become a teacher. I am grateful for this opportunity to teach here at Waianae High School and in my community which is very dear to my heart.

I have been shocked, concerned and depressed in regards to the caliber of education provided to our students with special needs. The turn over of teachers on a yearly basis undermines the quality of education that is provided to the students who are most in need, not only due to their disabilities, but due to the environment in which they live. These students deserve the best teachers who commit to stay and establish relationships with them. What they get are the least experienced teachers who come for a two year holiday.

The SMARTEST decision that I have witnessed was the Board of Education's decision to increase the differentials provided to special education teachers, Hawaiian language teachers and those teachers who serve students in hard to place areas. I have witnessed the positive result of that decision. Qualified teachers have remained in their positions, good teachers that were here previously have returned, and teachers that were considering leaving have remained. Money matters!! The mainland provides teachers to the islands and they need to be paid a respectable amount in order for them to stay! Teachers from our community are more likely to remain in their challenging teaching positions if they are compensated for their tireless efforts. Please, please, please show respect to the students we serve and to the teachers who serve them.

I am asking that Superintendent Christine Kishimoto rescind her memo stopping the shortage differentials. That would be extremely detrimental to the students who need quality support and teaching. The board did not expect or intend for the differentials to end in 2021 and did not instruct Christine Kishimoto to unilaterally discontinue the differential pay.

I am counting on you to see the wisdom in continuing the payment of differentials. It is a move in a long overdue positive direction. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Cyrilla Manuel
Master of Education
Special Education Teacher
Waianae High School



ReplyReply allForward

Testimony BOE

From: Kulia Llanes <klanes1@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kulia Llanes
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:20 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Body of email: Aloha Kākou, My name is _____ and I am the _____ at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino. I am writing to provide testimony for Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra

Aloha Kākou,

My name is **Kulia Llanes** and I am the **IT Coordinator at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.**

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo

--

Kulia Llanes

IT Coordinator

Ke Kula 'O 'Ehunuikaimalino

Email: klanes1@ehunui.k12.hi.us

Testimony BOE

From: Kaulu Llanes <kllanes@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kaulu Llanes
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:21 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Kaulu Llanes and I am the 3rd grade teacher at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Me ke aloha ha'aha'a,

Kaulu Llanes

Ke Kula 'Ehunuikaimalino

3rd Grade Teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Deborah Anderson <Deborah.Anderson@waiakeai.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Deborah Anderson
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:22 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony supporting shortage differentials

- **[For 11 a.m. Special meeting](#)** (shortage differentials)

Our Special needs students have benefited from shortage differentials, which have made a substantial impact on our meeting federal requirements. To walk backwards from this commitment financially and for maintaining and recruiting quality personnel would be detrimental. Please continue the differential to support students with special needs.
Mahalo!

Testimony BOE

From: Kaleo Perry <kperry@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kaleo Perry
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:23 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Kaleo Perry and I am the 4th grade Hawaiian Immersion teacher at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement. Lastly it is very difficult to live in Hawai'i these days and this differential pay has help my family survive through these difficult times. Mahalo for your understanding

--

me ka ha'aha'a,
na Kumu Kaleo Perry
Papa 'Ehā
Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino

Testimony BOE

From: Chadd Engel <chaddwilliamengel@gmail.com> on behalf of Chadd Engel
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:24 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony: BOE Special Meeting Action Item A

BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Testimony:

Aloha, I am Chadd Engel, and I am a Special Education Teacher at Kihei Elementary School. Personally, I would lose about \$16,000.00 in annual income if the proposed cuts were enacted.

This past year my wife and I worked multiple jobs to do our best to save money to buy a home for our two sons, and thankfully, we did so successfully. However, this did not come easy, and one of the things that really made me angered and sad was that our loan officer was questioning my income from teaching because of the threats made by our state leadership to cut pay. For further context, I am in lane 7 and have the credit equivalency of a doctorate. This means for my time in the district, I have essentially maximized my earning potential, and loan approval still required dual incomes to purchase a home.

My wife is from Maui and has a large extended family. We decided to raise our kids here over where I am from, Chicago, because of the large family and rich culture. I strongly believe this was the right decision, but it is hard to ignore that I would be making 30,000 to 40,000 more in Chicago, depending on my teaching line because of my credentials and experience. It is also well documented that the cost of living here is the highest in the country, so when included, the income gap is even greater.

To be clear, I have no intention of leaving the Hawaii Public Schools, and I love almost everything about working here. The students are awesome, my teaching colleagues are awesome, our support staff is awesome, our custodians are awesome, and my administration team is awesome. The only negative is this constant conversation about funding and paying for qualified people. Not just teachers, but qualified people in every area of our school. It is well documented that funding cuts to public education are never a solution and will ultimately hurt all of us involved and our students the most. We must fund our schools and pay for the most highly qualified personnel because our students simply deserve the best.

Mahalo for your time,

Chadd Engel

Testimony BOE

From: Dorothy Hatori <dhatori@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Dorothy Hatori
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:25 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: hawaiian immersion

I am in support of appropriate compensation for the Hawaiian immersion teachers. The already approved Policy 105-8 is very important in order for the Hawaiian immersion schools to survive. Please help to save this important part of the Hawaiian culture.

Mahalo nui.

Dorothy Leina'ala Hatori

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to you about the upcoming bill that addresses salary compression, removal of teacher positions, elimination of step pay increases, tenure bonuses, cost of living yearly increases, assistance with EUTF, to name just a few of the financial impacts for Hawaii state teachers and Special Education teachers.

In 2014 I became a teacher on Kaua'i. I was originally hired as an Emergency Hire, my gross salary at the time of \$30,000 a year, a huge pay cut for me moving from California. This amount just barely covered some food. I had to hold a second job to pay for my insurance and living expenses. I could not afford to pay rent, to rent a room was more than I could afford, so I lived on the beach. Once I was licensed and my salary increased to \$45,000. I was able to rent a room. With the opportunity to further educate myself I was able to increase my salary via step increases. I still hold a second job to cover my living expenses. Thankfully my children are grown, as a single parent there is no way I could ever afford to support and raise a family on a teacher's salary. I struggle providing for myself as an individual as the cost of living continues to increase but our salary does not compensate to meet inflation.

At the time of my licensure there was a desperate need for Teachers and Special Education teachers on the island. I am passionate about education and the basic value it provides to an individual. I chose to live and have a life on Kaua'i but it has not been easy. The revolving door of teachers that are contracted from the mainland barely make it within the first few months or the first year due to the cost of living, the lack of support, and the lack of education students have received on the islands. As a teacher I am very concerned with the lack of education our students receive. We have high school students that cannot read, write, or do basic math. Our education problem is systemic and not something tutors or a quick fix can address.

With the **No Child Left Behind Act** the idea was to promote an education for our students that would not just give them personal opportunities in life to survive independently on their own, but also to be competitive within the global economy. The State of Hawaii is failing to follow through with this Act, especially since education is not valued within the local community and we have educators and bureaucrats making decision that will continue to increase the gap of ignorance and illiteracy.

As an educator I am passionate about what I do. I feel a basic education is what our children need to survive in this ever changing world. Compressing our income and preventing opportunities as educators is a punch in the gut. When will education in Hawaii be valued, when will our teachers be valued? Our income should equate to an economy similar to ours. In the state of California ([www. transparentcalifornia.com](http://www.transparentcalifornia.com)) which is just as expensive, teachers are making \$96,000 to start and teachers who have been working for at least 20 years are making \$200,000 plus. When will we as educators have competitive salaries that are comparable to our cost of living, and our worth.

It is my understanding that the monies being received through the CARES Act has a budget held for education to support teacher positions and salaries. Why are these funds not being utilized as they are meant to be. I think as stakeholders you would be honored to continue to support and educate this community properly and with integrity.

I want my students to feel honored knowing that have received a quality education. That they can make proper choices to advance in careers, education, and global opportunities. This will only happen if there is a shift in how we view education and know the worth of our teachers. I know that I speak for a myriad of teachers, please do the right thing and dignify my profession, our community, and our future generation.

Respectfully,
Heidi Alvarez
Special Education Teacher
Kapaa High School
Cell # 707-483-0655

Testimony BOE

From: Kulia Llanes <kulia.llanes@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kulia Llanes
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:25 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is **Kulia Llanes** and I am the **IT Coordinator at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino**.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo

--

Kulia Llanes
IT Coordinator
Ke Kula 'O 'Ehunuikaimalino
Email: kllanes1@ehunui.k12.hi.us

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

From: Laiana Kanoa-Wong <likanoaw@ksbe.edu> on behalf of Laiana Kanoa-Wong
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:26 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Support Hawaiian Immersion Teachers

Aloha e ka 'aha BOE,

My name is Lāiana Kanoa-Wong. I am writing testimony to support the differential pay for our Kula Kaiapuni Hawaiian Immersion teachers. These teachers put in work above and beyond the normal day to day of teachers in the english track. This is due to lack of resources and support for Hawaiian language based materials and resources for our teachers. Please reconsider and supply our Hawaiian immersion teachers with their differential pay.

Mahalo,

Lāiana Kanoa-Wong M.Ed

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Testimony BOE

From: Hōkūlani Reyes <hokulanir@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Hōkūlani Reyes
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:26 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs
Attachments: Opposition.pdf

Aloha,

I have attached my testimony below.

Na‘u nō,
Hōkūlani

Mai ke kai kuwā e nū ana i ka ulu lā'au o Kea'au ā ka 'āina kā'ili lā o lalo o Waikū'auhoe, ke aloha nui iā kākou.

My name is Hōkūlani Reyes and I am the CTE and Arts and crafts of Hawai'i teacher at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino. Not only am I a teacher here at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino but I am also a product, an alumni of this kula kaiapuni.

I am writing to provide my testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 18th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Aloha kāūa e ka mea heluhelu,

My name is Edward “Kumu Pīkī” Hayward and I am the Hawaiian Language Arts teacher grades 6-12 here at Ke Kula ‘o ‘Ehunuikaimalino in South Kona, Kealahakua, Hawai‘i.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

‘O wau iho nō me ka ‘ōia‘i‘o,

na‘u, na Edward “Kumu Pīkī” Hayward

Testimony BOE

From: Pekelo Richmond <prichmond@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Pekelo Richmond
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:26 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony Pay Differentials
Attachments: Testimony Pay Defferential Cut.pdf

Aloha,

Please confirm this letter was received and read.

Mahalo nui loa,

Kumu Pekelo

Aloha Kākou,

The Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs would target a sector of Hawai'i's population that has been marginalized and treated without respect for years. Kishimoto's and the BOE's budget reduction scenarios do not recognize equality and it also fails to repair historical trauma. There are no other language programs in the DOE targeted in the budget proposal scenarios. I would ask the BOE and Kishimoto why are they specifically targeting Hawaiian language and no other languages provided in Hawai'i schools? The BOE should know that Hawai'i is a recovering language, spoken no other place on earth, this is Hawai'i, the Pae 'Āina of Hawai'i, and is defined by this language, why would they continue the historically trauma of 'ōlelo Hawai'i and the specific targeting of Hawaiians and their culture? Secondly why is the BOE focused on cutting funding for sped teachers? Has the mental health crisis in Hawai'i been cured? Again these policies feel as though the BOE and Kishimoto target the sectors of our society that are struggling the most. As an educator for 10 years, the poor and disenfranchised are always targets when it comes to funding. The disenfranchised in American society has always taken the brunt of cruelty. If the BOE and Kishimoto do not want to continue the pattern of holding the weak, sick, and vulnerable down they need to completely rethink their budget reduction scenarios.

Malama Pono,

Kumu Pekelo

896-7866

Testimony BOE

From: Cindy Cruse <clcruse4@gmail.com> on behalf of Cindy Cruse
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:27 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: BOE Special Action Item A

First of all, thank you BOE for standing up for our teachers when our superintendent was working against us. I have worked for 5 different superintendents on the mainland and typically it is the superintendent fighting against the BOE. Never have I worked where a superintendent would work against the people that they were hired to work for. That being said, it breaks my heart that a superintendent would work against the pay differentials that are so obviously needed to help departments and locations that are hard to fill.

I'm speaking from experience in SPED as I've been a SPED teacher on the mainland for 4 years. The extra differentials help compensate for time away from your family as I spent many nights working on instructional manipulatives for multiple groups, IEP's, looking at data, and other maintenance things that had to be done and that one hour of planning did not cover. In addition to that, if you have never been in a SPED classroom then you should just drop by and see what all goes on in there. We often call the "extra compensation" for being a SPED teacher hazard pay. In my 4 years of being a SPED teacher, I have been slapped in the face, spit on, kicked, had my hair pulled, bitten, had desk thrown towards me, dealt with poop from being smeared on the walls to various other places including myself. I have chased runners who broke away from their support staff, restrained kids that were trying to hurt themselves or others, stood between students who were coming to blows and I could go on and on.

People ask why anyone would want to be a SPED teacher and I can give you that too. It is for the first time a non-verbal student says your name, makes the first circle when they haven't done anything but scribble for years, makes the sign (sign language) that you have been working on for months, and when they can walk independently after being a "runner" for months. It is for the first time that they can put on their shoes independently, learn the sound and letter that you have been working on for months, blend a word together after the 5th time of teaching it a different way, and most importantly when that light bulb that you were sure would eventually light begins to shine ever so dimly. That is why we do what we do.

SPED teachers are underpaid, underappreciated, and often taken advantage of. They get the discipline problems that everyone wants out of their room and are expected to teach them and the multiple others that are in their room all at the same time. Please, BOE continue to show your support so that more students will receive the help that they need and SPED teachers will receive the pay that they so rightly deserve.

Thanks again for your support,
Cindy Cruse
Kapaa Elementary
Kindergarten

Testimony BOE

From: Babā Yim <baba_yim@anuenue.org> on behalf of Babā Yim
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:27 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for Agenda item II.A

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

I am submitting this testimony in **SUPPORT** of Agenda Item II.A, with the proposed recommendations made by Chair Payne to direct Superintendent Kishimoto to refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval. Specifically, I write this testimony in support of Hawaiian Immersion teachers.

As the Principal of O‘ahu’s only K-12 Hawaiian Immersion site, I see first hand the difficulties in recruiting as well as retaining teachers who are qualified not only in content area knowledge but also the very unique skill to prepare lessons and teach through the Hawaiian Language. Every year our school goes through the challenge of trying to fill positions with qualified candidates and keep them from leaving us for greener pastures in private institutions that are willing to compensate them adequately for their unique skillset to teach through ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i.

The exodus of Kumu Kaiapuni from the DOE due to the lack of fair compensation has been a huge factor in Kaiapuni schools across the State being unable to provide adequate staffing and equitably serve their respective communities. It has even led to some schools hiring non-Hawaiian-speaking long-term substitutes to fill vacant positions. That has harmed the Hawaiian Immersion Program. This compensation was long overdue when it was finally given to Kumu Kaiapuni and it would be a shame to take it away now.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony. I strongly urge the members to **SUPPORT** the recommendations of the Board and direct the Superintendent to refrain from taking action on any teacher differentials without prior Board approval.

mahalo,

Christopher Yim

Po'okumu (Principal)

Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'O Ānuenue

"He oia mau nō ka pono o ka lāhui kānaka i ka na'auao Hawai'i"

This e-mail is being sent by a student or employee of Kula Kaiapuni 'O Ānuenue.

Testimony BOE

From: Gordon Piianaia <heulup@yahoo.com> on behalf of Gordon Piianaia
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:28 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony

My name is Gordon Piianaia, I am a teacher at Keaau Middle School(7th grade Social Studies). I humbly ask that you do your very best to make sure that teachers continue to be funded. We are all working tirelessly to not only teach via distance learning, but we are already bringing students back to school. This is all being done with little to no support from the DOE! We are doing this on our own and the leadership from our DOE has been inadequate at best. Many of the supplies we are using to "reopen" to support our students is being paid for from our own wallets and now we're being told that we'll be given even less \$. Where has Kishimoto been throughout the decision making process to decide whether or not to bring back students? Are those making these decisions to fund our schools and deciding our fate even concerned that they've completely left our schools without guidance? Never as a DOE teacher(16 years) have I ever felt so unsupported by our state leadership. I get it, times are tough financially(even though the Fed has given significant support), but if our schools and DOE is working together and united for our State, then why are our leaders walking out of the room and leaving teachers, who let's face it, are really the front liners alongside of all school staff and personnel, being left unsupported. As teachers we don't sit behind a desk in some office tucked away from the realities of sitting in a class of 10-15. We don't have that freedom of choice. What we do have though is a Superintendent who not only believes it is fair to pass the buck and let schools decide for themselves what's best(which is incredibly divisive) and let it be known that you'll also be paid less, even though the funding is there. We're going back to face to face and many haven't even been vaccinated yet! But we're doing it anyway because that's what we've always done, bare the brunt of the decisions that our leadership makes and feel unsupported and left to pay for things ourselves yet again, this time with just less \$. Mahalo for being board members and making decisions that will hopefully impact our students, and school communities for the better.

Testimony BOE

From: Kalaniakea Wilson <kupaa iwialoha@gmail.com> on behalf of Kalaniakea Wilson
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:28 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Genocide continues!

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Kalaniakea Wilson and I am a teacher at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda item.

The main point is Hawaiian language was targeted for extinction by implementing Americanization policies that tortured and brainwashed Hawaiian children and all other public school children who spoke Hawaiian in public schools. This genocidal program was implemented by the Board of Education in 1906. The Hawaiian language has never recovered since then. To deny Hawaiian language teachers this compensation will only further your complicity to this 128 year genocide systemic policy on the Hawaiian people and Hawaiian language.

The next three points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Testimony BOE

From: Kelii Valeho <holopono80@gmail.com> on behalf of Kelii Valeho
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:33 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Kākou,

My name is _Kelii_ and I am a Parent at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

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Testimony BOE

From: kamalanig001@hawaii.rr.com
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:35 AM
To: 'Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov'
Subject: Testimony for Agenda Item II.A, 2/18/21 11:00 am Special Meeting

Aloha nui e nā lālā hanohano o ka Papa Ho‘ona‘auao,

I am writing to express my support for continuing the differentials for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and the Papahana Kaiapuni. I am the Title I / Curriculum Coordinator at Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue, and as a non-classroom teacher, I do not receive the differential myself but am still 100% in support of the differentials.

Every year we struggle to fill our classroom teacher positions and every year we end up filling teacher positions with long-term substitutes and not Hawaii-Qualified teachers, which is not ideal. For this 2020-21 school year, we saw the differentials bring us one Hawaii-Qualified teacher who transferred from a non-Kaiapuni school. To me this is a testament that the differentials work! It wouldn't be right to end the differentials especially if they are working. It would be like breaking a promise to all those teachers who transferred into special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Papahana Kaiapuni positions because of the differentials.

I also support continuing the differentials for Kaiapuni teachers because they "appropriately compensate" Kaiapuni teachers for their additional qualifications as called for in BOE Policy 105-8. Kaiapuni teachers need to be HQ like all other teachers and also need to be able to teach in Hawaiian. Being able to teach in Hawaiian means more than just being fluent in Hawaiian, it means that you need to create your own curriculum, translate lessons and books, and integrate language acquisition objectives into all lessons.

Mahalo nui for your service on the Board of Education and your support for the keiki and public schools of Hawai‘i.

Me ke aloha a e ka mahalo nui,
Gail Leilani Kamalani
Title I / Curriculum Coordinator
Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue

Testimony BOE

From: Keōhi'ilani Ruedy <kruedy@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Keōhi'ilani Ruedy
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:37 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Keōhi'ilani Ruedy and I am the Secondary Math teacher at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

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Kumu Keōhi'ilani Ruedy



‘AHA KAULEO

STATEWIDE COUNCIL FOR KA PAPAHAHA KAIAPUNI

Pepeluali 18, 2020

Board of Education, Special Meeting

II. A. Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto’s discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs

Aloha e ka Papa Ho‘ona‘auao (BOE),


The ‘Aha Kauleo, is a council of parents, teachers, and administrators of Kaiapuni or Hawaiian language immersion schools across the state. We advocate for increased and improved support of Kaiapuni schools and work closely with our school communities, the State Department of Education through the Office of Hawaiian Education, the Board of Education and the University of Hawai‘i through its Hawaiian language and studies programs.

We, the ‘Aha Ho‘okō (‘Aha Kauleo Board), **oppose** the discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in Hawaiian language immersion programs and urge the BOE to **reject** the proposal. In December 2019, we testified in support of the Hawai‘i Department of Education’s proposal to the BOE to provide an annual shortage differential of \$8,000 per each qualified and licensed Hawaiian language immersion classroom teacher, which we know has bolstered this critical, teacher shortage area. We would also like to recall the discussions highlighted by the BOE in board meetings over the past two years that distinguished the extra compensation for classroom teachers in Hawaiian language programs as an implementation of Board policy 105-8.

Furthermore, while we recognize that there are currently nineteen (19) Department operated Hawaiian language immersion programs, we also recognize and continue to advocate for the inclusion of funding for the qualified classroom teachers in the additional six (6) Hawaiian language immersion public charter schools.

We acknowledge that throughout Hawai‘i, we continue to experience extraordinary challenges due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), which certainly includes financial and budgetary impacts. Nevertheless, we advocate in support of the Hawai‘i Department of Education and the BOE honoring their commitment to all qualified and licensed teachers in the shortage differential category of Hawaiian language immersion, which is a key implementation of BOE policy 105-8. Our kumu are being asked to continue their most honorable work in these extraordinary times and they deserve the full annual shortage differential that they have earned.

Me ka ‘oia‘i‘o,



Kamo‘e Walk

‘Aha Ho‘okō (Executive Board)

‘Aha Kauleo

Membership Nā Kula Kaiapuni o Ānuenue, Hau‘ula, Kualapu‘u, Maui ma Pā‘ia, Maui ma Kalama, Maui ma Kekaulike, Nawahōokalani ‘ōpu‘u, Nahi‘ena‘ena, Nānākuli, Pū‘ōhala, Waiau, Ke Kula ‘O ‘Ehunuikaimalino, Ke Kula ‘O Samuel M. Kamakau, Ka ‘Umeke Kā‘eo, ‘O Hina I Ka Mālama, ‘Aha Pūnana Leo, Brigham Young University, Hawai‘i, Hale Kuamo‘o, Hawai‘i Department of Education, Kamehameha Schools, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, University of Hawai‘i at Hilo-Ka Haka ‘Ula o Ke‘elikōlani, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa-Hawai‘i inuiākea & University of Hawai‘i Maui College-E Ho‘oulu Lāhui

Testimony BOE

From: Noe Moku <noemoku@gmail.com> on behalf of Noe Moku
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:39 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Noe Moku and I am a Parent at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupun schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo,

Noe Moku

Testimony BOE

From: Priscila Leal <p.leal@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Priscila Leal
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:40 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Aloha mai kakou,

Please consider this testimony to be included in "Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A."

I am the mother of two children who attend Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Anuenue in Palolo, Oahu. They are in 4h grade and have attended this school since kindergarten.

I am writing in support of Hawaiian immersion teachers and appropriate compensation based on the already approved BOE Policy 105-8 which states Hawaiian immersion will be compensated for the extra skillset that is required.

Also, the 2020 differential has helped to decrease the number of vacancies in kaiapuni schools which allows schools to survive.

Lastly, the amount of money needed to comply with this BOE Policy is not a lot and affordable.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at p.leal@hawaii.edu or 808-373-6227

Mahalo,

Priscila Leal

Testimony BOE

From: Andrea Kekipi-Aurio <pilialoha@mac.com> on behalf of Andrea Kekipi-Aurio
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:42 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Aloha,

I am writing in support of Kaiapuni teachers that deserve appropriate compensation for all the tireless work they contribute for the benefit of Kaiapuni schools, students and the community. BOE policy 105-8 that has been approved and helped to reduce the number of vacancies in Kaiapuni schools should see continued funding in order to properly compensate these teachers. My children attend Kaiapuni schools and I appreciate all the devotion that their teachers have to the program and the students.

Thank you for your time and continued support of the Kaiapuni program and it's teachers.

Humbly submitted,
Lehua Kekipi-Aurio,
Kaiapuni parent

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone



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

TESTIMONY

1 message

Seppelfrick Diana <dseppelfrick@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 4:00 PM

Dear Board Members:

I am testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Please help and cease the superintendent's plan to discontinue shortage differentials.

As a teacher who is receiving a hard-to-staff differential, I can attest that the differential has helped me in creating a teaching career where I am able to survive in our ever-changing economy. If this is retracted after recently acquiring it. This will negatively impact me and my students. Currently, I am also avidly committed to my students through teaching 3 different preps daily as well as being a Club Advisor and a Co-Advisor for another Club as well as being a school leader belonging to our HSTA Representative Assembly. I do this because I am passionate about my, students, faculty, staff, administrators, school, and community.

To avoid the abyss of nonqualified teachers, we must work to keep the qualified teachers in our public schools. We shouldn't have a goal of pursuing tutors to teach our students during the summer or having non-qualified teachers teaching our students when there is an alternative to save our qualified educators. With qualified educators who all have their Bachelor's degrees and many who have their Masters and PhDs teaching our students, we are setting a standard that we believe in our students to get the best education they deserve so they can succeed in our society.

Sincerely,

Diana Lynne Curammeng Seppelfrick

Waianae High School, Teacher



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

Testimony

2 messages

Ka Lahui Hawaii <klhpoliticalactioncommittee@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:17 PM

Aloha,

Testimony attached.

Mahalo nui loa.

Healani Sonoda-Pale

**DOE Hawaiian Language Classes.pdf**

137K

Ka Lahui Hawaii <klhpoliticalactioncommittee@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:19 PM

CORRECTED testimony please use this version. Mahalo, Healani Sonoda-Pale

[Quoted text hidden]

**DOE Hawaiian Language Classes.pdf**

185K

KA LĀHUI HAWAI'I

KŌMIKE KALAI'ĀINA

BEFORE THE STATE OF HAWAI'I BOARD OF EDUCATION

FEBRUARY 18, 2020

AGENDA ITEM IIA. "Board action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard to staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs."

Aloha Chair Payne, Vice Chair Uemura, and Members of the Committee,

Ka Lāhui Hawai'i Kōmike Kalai'āina submits the following written testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** for the Board of Education to direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and for her to refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

The children of Hawai'i are surviving something adults in Hawai'i never had to face, growing up and attending school in the midst of a pandemic. According to last quarters' report cards 21% of all elementary students are failing English Language Arts, 10% of all secondary students are failing some core subject, and 18% of all high school students are off the track to graduation. These statistics speak to the academic and social-emotional struggles students are experiencing in Hawai'i due to distance learning and pandemic related isolation and anxiety. The stressful situations of students are often compounded by the loss of employment of a household member and/or a reduction of income due Covid-19 related situations including mandatory quarantine.

The public schools system serves nearly 179,000 children approximately 50,000 of them are Native Hawaiian or Kanaka Maoli. Our public school system is unique in that it was created by King Kamehameha III and utilizes stolen lands free of charge that were once government and crown lands of the Hawaiian Kingdom. In fact Hawai'i has the oldest public school in the US west of the Rocky Mountains, Lahainaluna School. Because of its roots in Hawaiian history and culture there is no reason why the Hawai'i public school system should not be doing everything in their power to ensure that Hawaiian language is offered at our schools especially since Hawaiian language is one of the two official languages of the State of Hawai'i. Studies have shown that Kanaka Maoli children do better in schools that have culturally responsive curriculum like Hawaiian language classes.

Instead of cutting back on education we should be investing more, especially because we do not know what long term effects the pandemic will have on the overall well-being and future success of the children of Hawai'i. The youth are missing out activities and interactions that are critical to their cognitive and social-emotional development. The actions of the Superintendent Kishimoto undermines the future of Hawai'i public school students especially those that seek to learn Hawaiian, have special needs, and are in under served areas.

Me ka oiai'o,

M. Healani Sonoda-Pale, MEd
Public Affairs Officer, Ka Lāhui Hawai'i Kōmike Kalai'āina



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

Testimony

1 message

Uluhani Waialeale <uluhani_waialeale@kualapuu.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:19 PM

I am testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Uluhani Waialeale (Hawaiian Language Immersion Program - 1st Grade)
Kualapu'u Public Conversion Charter School/Ke Kula Kaiapuni O
Kualapu'u
Moloka'i, Hawai'i

Welina ke aloha e ka Papa Ho'ona'auao o Hawai'i,

'O au nō 'o Uluhani Waialeale no ka 'āina wehiwehi o Moloka'i nui a Hina. He kumu au ma ke kula kaiapuni o Kualapu'u a a'o au i ka papa 'ekahi. I am testifying today in support of continuing the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

As a Hawaiian language immersion teacher living in a hard-to-staff geographical location, I have witnessed the many challenges and struggles of teacher shortages in our own Hawaiian language immersion program as well as throughout the entire island. We have 1 Hawaiian language immersion program on Moloka'i and still it has been very difficult to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers for our students. I have taught many years of combination classes with classroom sizes of up to 31 students.

Teaching in a Hawaiian language immersion program can require double or even triple the workload of your average teacher in a regular English

classroom. We spend countless hours, days, nights and weekends translating curriculum, books, resources, and prepping many other resources that are not always readily available in Hawaiian language. The amount of time, work and energy we put into our Hawaiian language immersion program can feel so overwhelming, burdensome and endless. We continue to do what we do because of our aloha, commitment and passion to perpetuate our mother tongue here in Hawai'i. E ola ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i!!! The work is hard and the days are long, but we love what we do and we will continue to do whatever it takes to provide quality instruction and education for our keiki in the Hawaiian language immersion program. The shortage differential was the first time that we have ever been compensated or recognized for doing any additional duties, responsibilities and time worked. This extra compensation has been a blessing and answered prayer to help us in our financial struggles in order to make ends meet for our families. Ending this extra compensation would be devastating to all of us who are already working 2 or more jobs to support our families.

Moloka'i has one of the highest cost of living in the state of Hawai'i and we pay double or even triple the price of goods, services and other important necessities. Paying almost \$5.00 for gas or over \$12.00 for milk can leave a huge hole in your pocket and the struggle is very real for many families on our island. Our stores have raised the price many times for products and groceries due to the rising cost of the shipment and the barge. Without any extra compensation for living in a hard-to-staff geographical location, it will be almost impossible to end teacher shortages on our island.

In closing, I humbly request your support to continue funding our teacher differentials so we can continue the quality of education our keiki deserve and to help us end our teacher shortages in these special programs and hard-to-staff geographical locations. Mahalo palena 'ole i ko 'oukou ho'olohe 'ana mai i ko'u mau mana'o kāko'o i kēia lā. A hui hou kākou ma ka wā kūpono a ke Akua pū.

‘O wau iho nō me ka ha‘aha‘a a me ke kāko‘o mau,
Uluhani Waialeale

Kualapu‘u Public Conversion Charter School
Ke Kula Kaiapuni O Kualapu‘u
Moloka‘i, Hawai‘i

--

Mahalo a nui!

Kumu Uluhani Waialeale

Papa ‘Ekahi
Kula Kaiapuni O Kualapu‘u, Moloka‘i HI
PO BOX 260, Kualapu‘u, HI 96757
(808) 567-6900 ext. 277
uluhani_waialeale@kualapuu.k12.hi.us



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

Testimony

1 message

Uluhani Waialeale <uluhani_waialeale@kualapuu.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:19 PM

I am testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Uluhani Waialeale (Hawaiian Language Immersion Program - 1st Grade)
Kualapu'u Public Conversion Charter School/Ke Kula Kaiapuni O
Kualapu'u
Moloka'i, Hawai'i

Welina ke aloha e ka Papa Ho'ona'auao o Hawai'i,

'O au nō 'o Uluhani Waialeale no ka 'āina wehiwehi o Moloka'i nui a Hina. He kumu au ma ke kula kaiapuni o Kualapu'u a a'o au i ka papa 'ekahi. I am testifying today in support of continuing the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

As a Hawaiian language immersion teacher living in a hard-to-staff geographical location, I have witnessed the many challenges and struggles of teacher shortages in our own Hawaiian language immersion program as well as throughout the entire island. We have 1 Hawaiian language immersion program on Moloka'i and still it has been very difficult to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers for our students. I have taught many years of combination classes with classroom sizes of up to 31 students.

Teaching in a Hawaiian language immersion program can require double or even triple the workload of your average teacher in a regular English

classroom. We spend countless hours, days, nights and weekends translating curriculum, books, resources, and prepping many other resources that are not always readily available in Hawaiian language. The amount of time, work and energy we put into our Hawaiian language immersion program can feel so overwhelming, burdensome and endless. We continue to do what we do because of our aloha, commitment and passion to perpetuate our mother tongue here in Hawai'i. E ola ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i!!! The work is hard and the days are long, but we love what we do and we will continue to do whatever it takes to provide quality instruction and education for our keiki in the Hawaiian language immersion program. The shortage differential was the first time that we have ever been compensated or recognized for doing any additional duties, responsibilities and time worked. This extra compensation has been a blessing and answered prayer to help us in our financial struggles in order to make ends meet for our families. Ending this extra compensation would be devastating to all of us who are already working 2 or more jobs to support our families.

Moloka'i has one of the highest cost of living in the state of Hawai'i and we pay double or even triple the price of goods, services and other important necessities. Paying almost \$5.00 for gas or over \$12.00 for milk can leave a huge hole in your pocket and the struggle is very real for many families on our island. Our stores have raised the price many times for products and groceries due to the rising cost of the shipment and the barge. Without any extra compensation for living in a hard-to-staff geographical location, it will be almost impossible to end teacher shortages on our island.

In closing, I humbly request your support to continue funding our teacher differentials so we can continue the quality of education our keiki deserve and to help us end our teacher shortages in these special programs and hard-to-staff geographical locations. Mahalo palena 'ole i ko 'oukou ho'olohe 'ana mai i ko'u mau mana'o kāko'o i kēia lā. A hui hou kākou ma ka wā kūpono a ke Akua pū.

‘O wau iho nō me ka ha‘aha‘a a me ke kāko‘o mau,
Uluhani Waialeale

Kualapu‘u Public Conversion Charter School
Ke Kula Kaiapuni O Kualapu‘u
Moloka‘i, Hawai‘i

--

Mahalo a nui!

Kumu Uluhani Waialeale

Papa ‘Ekahi
Kula Kaiapuni O Kualapu‘u, Moloka‘i HI
PO BOX 260, Kualapu‘u, HI 96757
(808) 567-6900 ext. 277
uluhani_waialeale@kualapuu.k12.hi.us



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

Testimony

1 message

Lori Lolotai <lmlolotai@aol.com>
Reply-To: Lori Lolotai <lmlolotai@aol.com>
To: "testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:29 PM

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

I am a Special Education teacher and have been for the past 13 years. As you know, we have dealt with a shortage of qualified special education teachers for decades, and this is nationwide. Though this pandemic has brought on so many uncertainties, our economy has definitely suffered tremendously as a result of COVID-19. With that said, I understand that monies are short and changes need to be made, but my question to you is When is it going to be enough? Our kids across the state has given up so much. They continue to struggle and sacrifice and that is not fair to them.

Since the differentials, it has shown that more teachers stayed in the field, quite a bit returned to special education, and others has jumped on board for the ride. A ride that is so rewarding, yet so taxing with the paperwork, timelines, ongoing cuts to services, resources, just to name a few. I am asking that you consider how eliminating the differentials will be a detriment to our kids with disabilities once again.

Please don't allow the superintendent to rescind our differentials.

Thank you for your time and heartfelt consideration.



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

Testimony

1 message

Katherine Brown <katherine.brown@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:28 PM

Dear Board of Education members,

In support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting

It is reported that there is a plan to discontinue the shortage differentials in Special Education. As a Special Education teacher, I'm very concerned about this because there have been severe shortages of qualified and certificated Special Education teachers. These differentials have made a good difference for myself and my students. I don't think Superintendent Kishimoto's idea to discontinue the shortage differentials is a good plan. It is concerning that I even have to write this letter; it takes away precious time that I could be planning for my students and writing beneficial Individualized Education Programs for our most vulnerable students. Writing IEP's is something that is detailed, and can not be done within the normal school day hours. That is why prospective teachers do not enter the field of Special Education; hence the differential. It is an incentive to work in a field that requires kindness, patience, strategies, informative practice, and long hours.

My students were not expected to communicate verbally, and now they do. I have exited many students back into general education. Superintendent Kishimoto is not looking out for these students if she is proposing the above plan. I'm not certain what her motivation is. I can tell you my motivation is to put the students first, so that they can obtain a future with an enviable way of life.

Sincerely,

Katherine Brown

--

Katherine Brown, M.A.
Special Education Teacher
Wailuku Elementary School
(808) 727-5545

To love at all is to be vulnerable.
- C. S. Lewis

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:

1 message

Robin Van Eps <r.van.eps31@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:42 PM

BOE members and Superintendent Kishimoto:

My name is Robin Van Eps. I am an Educational Assistant III at Maunawili Elementary School. I am also a parent to a SPED teen at Molokai High School and a "typical" Maunawili Elementary student. I urge you to reconsider and not discontinue the differentials offered to SPED educators and hard to fill positions. I have worked closely with SPED teachers for over 15 years as a parent and colleague. You will never meet a more dedicated bunch of teachers willing to work for so little. In truth they work for our students and accept what little payment they receive to just get by. Since the beginning of the COVID pandemic, these educators have worked tirelessly to support their students. Students who receive SPED support were the first to receive in person instruction, because of these educators. We have finally stopped losing these hard to fill positions because of the differentials. If you were to stop them, we would begin to lose these special teachers once again. They are already under extreme stress, producing superhuman results with little support. This would be a slap in the face. Cutting the differentials tells our most vulnerable students you don't care about them. Lacking a teacher that cares about them will be devastating and affect the entire state. Inevitably followed by rise in unwanted pregnancies, crime, drug abuse, domestic and child abuse as these kids grow up and have no moral compass to guide them. Many colleagues would finally give up and quit and you will not find replacements. Being in SPED takes a special selfless kind of person that you will not find again. Remember that you are elected to your positions. I know that this would have long lasting irreversible damage to our entire educational system in Hawaii. You are hurting our kids, our teachers and our staff if you follow through. Whatever your decision is, we won't forget that you chose to stand by them or throw them under the bus.

Sincerely,
Robin Van Eps



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

Testimony

1 message

(Kalelani Ogata) <kaleko76@aol.com>

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:39 PM

Reply-To: "(Kalelani Ogata)" <kaleko76@aol.com>

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

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOE

RE: I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the special meeting regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

THURSDAY, February 18, 2021

1:30 p.m.

Dear Board of Education,

I am back here again providing my testimony on a topic that is so important to our educators and the keiki we teach. When both the BOE and DOE came together to provide differentials for the teacher shortage areas (SPED, Hawaiian Immersion, hard to staff areas) I finally felt that I, as a special education teacher for over 20 years, was being looked at as the professional I am and was ecstatic that I would receive the pay I deserved for the service I provide and the credentials I hold.

When I thought all was settled and my decision to remain in teaching was swayed because of the SPED differential now I find out I have to STILL keep fighting for something teachers deserve and were already promised. Enough is enough! I am one of the veteran teachers affected by both the special education differential and the salary compression but my focus today is on the differential that will affect many educators and the keiki they service.

I love what I do; I do it well. Teaching special education is not easy. As in all special education classes you are not just dealing with the academics but the whole child, including negative behaviors which can be very volatile. I have had my share of bites, scratches, punches, kicks, sprained fingers, and being spat at which now in COVID times completely pushes the boundaries of safety. Special education as a whole is NOT getting easier. Ask any sped teacher who has taught as long as I have. There are more demands from district, more paperwork to complete to get the services my students need, more meetings to hold and attend to address student needs. And the students who are entering school now have needs that are more demanding and involved than those in the past yet as a sped teacher I am expected to meet all of their needs without the appropriate staff or support and without the appropriate pay. I fortunately have 20 years of

teaching under my belt to support me but despite that, before it was announced that special education teachers would be getting a pay differential, I was researching to change my career. Why should I stay in a job that doesn't pay me for what I am worth, for the work that I do, and for all that is expected of me? This does not support teachers as the professionals we are. I love teaching kids which is what makes me love my job but with all of the demands placed on teachers, and added demands for special education teachers, it was no longer worth continuing. The announcement of a special education differential pay couldn't have come at a better time. It made me pause and decide to stay in teaching. It is simply time teachers are paid what they deserve. By promising the differential you kept me in and brought many others back into the shortage positions (SPED, hard to staff, Hawaiian Immersion) but we will not stay if you take it away. You need to keep the pay differentials otherwise you will lose great teachers and losing great teachers will hurt the children of Hawai'i. **Bottom line, the differential is needed now more than ever.** Do not renege on your promise to support us. I passed up on a job that would have paid me a lot more because I was promised the differential. I have a family to support, kids in college, and bills to pay. I am very blessed to have a job during this time but that does not mean I want to be sold short either. Please continue to support teachers, especially through these times. By not supporting us you WILL lose us. I will not pass up another job again if this differential is taken away.

Thank you for your time.

Kalelani Ogata

Lincoln Elementary, Special Education Teacher



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

Testimony (HSTA)

1 message

Sarah Davis <sarahcdavis09@gmail.com>

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:42 PM

To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

To whom it may concern, my name is Sarah Davis and I am 5th grade teacher from Kapaa Elementary. I am very disappointed to hear that you are planning to take away the 21 hours that we teachers work and earn for PD credit. Recently, I have discovered that I am eligible to reclassify in which nine of my credits come from 21 hours. Without earning these credits from 21 hours, I would not be able to re-classify to receive higher pay and move up the pay scale. Yes, I know I can take PD credit classes, however, I am unable to afford the \$150 cost it takes to attend each class. And to remind you that there is an extensive portfolio that needs to be completed and having to devote 3 to 4 Saturdays is not worth \$150. Teachers have families to raise and taking a whole Saturday morning and afternoon to attend a class is not feasible and the only way for them to earn PD credits is through the 21 hours. Therefore, PD credit classes should be free for teachers to take to enhance our learning. We already went to college and most of us have to lay student loans. Please do not take away the 21 hours.

Thank you.



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

TESTIMONY: BOE Special Meeting Action Item A

1 message

Robin Van Eps <r.van.eps31@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:44 PM

On Feb 16, 2021, at 5:42 PM, Robin Van Eps <r.van.eps31@gmail.com> wrote:

BOE members and Superintendent Kishimoto:

My name is Robin Van Eps. I am an Educational Assistant III at Maunawili Elementary School. I am also a parent to a SPED teen at Molokai High School and a "typical" Maunawili Elementary student. I urge you to reconsider and not discontinue the differentials offered to SPED educators and hard to fill positions. I have worked closely with SPED teachers for over 15 years as a parent and colleague. You will never meet a more dedicated bunch of teachers willing to work for so little. In truth they work for our students and accept what little payment they receive to just get by. Since the beginning of the COVID pandemic, these educators have worked tirelessly to support their students. Students who receive SPED support were the first to receive in person instruction, because of these educators. We have finally stopped losing these hard to fill positions because of the differentials. If you were to stop them, we would begin to lose these special teachers once again. They are already under extreme stress, producing superhuman results with little support. This would be a slap in the face. Cutting the differentials tells our most vulnerable students you don't care about them. Lacking a teacher that cares about them will be devastating and affect the entire state. Inevitably followed by rise in unwanted pregnancies, crime, drug abuse, domestic and child abuse as these kids grow up and have no moral compass to guide them. Many colleagues would finally give up and quit and you will not find replacements. Being in SPED takes a special selfless kind of person that you will not find again. Remember that you are elected to your positions. I know that this would have long lasting irreversible damage to our entire educational system in Hawaii. You are hurting our kids, our teachers and our staff if you follow through. Whatever your decision is, we won't forget that you chose to stand by them or throw them under the bus.

Sincerely,
Robin Van Eps



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

Testimony

1 message

eden monteilh <edenmonteilh@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 4:43 PM

Dear BOE,

I'm writing about the **BOE Special Meeting Action Item A**: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard to staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I'm an emergency hire in SpEd at Pohakea Elementary, first year teacher and first year UH student in the Special Education Post-Baccalaureate for mild/moderate K-6 program. I attended the teacher recruiting expo 1.5 yrs ago in my quest to investigate teaching opportunities in SpEd after subbing for a year in public and private schools. I was ready for a career change and this expo provided me the information that brought me to the path I'm on today. It was not a choice made lightly.

There were two main components that helped me make the decision to change my career path; UH would pay for my schooling with a 3 yr commitment to the DOE and the pay differentials (I planned to also teach on the west side) would provide a livable income as a single parent/single income household. I knew I wanted to be involved with the special needs population given my previous experience but I wasn't sure in what capacity. The expo provided the tools for me to make a solid decision for myself and my family or so I thought.

Upon receiving the discontinuance letter, I have already spoken with my Principal and my Muse that I will be looking to pull out of the UH teaching program. I can not and would not commit myself to this position and all of the stressors and complexities that come with being a special education teacher that this teaching year has clearly revealed to me, at the current and agreeably low pay scale that is now being offered. On top of that, there is the looming proposed budget cuts in talks for all teachers that equates to another \$6,000+ reduction. This pay scale puts me below my original pay before I made the career change and there is absolutely no way I can provide for a family of 4 on the proposed starting salary.

It was never mentioned by any speakers or representatives at the Teachers Recruiting Expo that the differential had a potential of being pulled. This would have been important information to share so I could have made a more informed decision. I feel beyond frustrated that I've left a former job, exhausted myself with 60 hr weeks to be in the UH program while learning an incredibly hard job during Covid-19 times. On top of this, exposing myself with face-to-face teaching for very little emergency hire pay, only to be told, the differentials are gone. The differentials are vital! I'm absolutely disheartened that this decision would be made so carelessly by our superintendent. It lacks vision and responsibility to all involved. Please reinstate the differentials to keep all of the valued teachers you've recruited and retained.

Thank you for your time.

Eden Monteilh



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

TESTIMONY

1 message

Shantell-Tiare Tom <shantell.h.tom@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 4:53 PM

Memo: I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting **Action Item A:** Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Shantell-Tiare Tom, I'm an educator and alumna of Wai'anae High School - where I have been teaching for the last 6 years. When I first started as an educator I was a loud advocate to fight for homegrown educators to teach our Leeward Coast students. Living and working on this side of the island comes with struggles, especially now with the idea floating in the air that our Special Education Teachers, Hard-to-Staff locations and Hawaiian language programs! WE WILL LOSE EDUCATORS! ESPECIALLY Special Education EDUCATORS!! That's a fact! Sure, you'll have your die hard educators who love the students be willing to be paid peanuts to stay...but soon we will be burnt out.

Why is it that the educators are the first to be thrown under the rug/bus and then turn around and say, 'I believe the children are our future,'? We already know that we're the lowest paid State employees with hardly much chances for step growth in pay. We need a contract that will allow us to not have our finances be burdened.

I'm grateful for the extra compensation that I receive to support my mother and my special needs brother. Without it, we will be struggling to make payments on household bills and transportation. Not to mention being the breadwinner for my family. This will become a great burden on all of us.

It's easier to decrease the net pay of a 12-month DOE employee (STARTING AT THE TOP - Dr. Kishimoto) to 10-month than to risk losing more DOE educators. Why is it that a VP can make 6 figures and an educator with a doctorate degree make 5 figures? What do 12-month DOE employees do more during the 2 months to help educators during the 10-months. It seems as if they're on vacation also! And with this pandemic, they're sitting prettier than we are. We're the front line workers of the education system. We need protection. Financial Protection, period!

Shantell-Tiare Tom



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

Testimony

1 message

Allison Kohlhepp <akohlhepp@hanalei.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 4:57 PM

I am a special education teacher at an Elementary School. We have had a revolving door with respect to finding and retaining special education teachers at our school.

Each year we have to interview candidates and struggle to find those teachers willing to work for substandard pay. So many candidates are incredulous at the starting teacher salaries for special education teachers. It has only been recently with a differential that we can hope to attract suitable and qualified candidates. Training of new special education teachers, even if they are certified, does not translate into being able to effectively complete the required and often onerous paperwork. Every year teachers at our school leave the special education department to find a less stressful teaching position. I myself, will transfer out of special education if there is no longer a differential. It is the only incentive that I can justify the hours of after school meetings and paperwork that goes uncompensated if a differential is not provided. It would seem Hawaii's political leadership does not share the history of lawsuits brought against this State for not having certified special education teachers. The social injustice that special education students face across Hawaii is a serious concern and will continue if this State does not seriously make an effort to retain certified special education teachers.



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

Testimony

1 message

Kelly Tanimura <kelly.tanimura@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:13 PM

Hi my name is Kelly Tanimura from Holomua Elementary School and I am a special education teacher. I am testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

It is important to retain qualified teachers in the classroom at this most difficult time. With everything going on in the world, and students wanting to feel a belonging to their friends and school, for these students with special needs their special education classroom and teacher is their foundation and their constant. Since students with special needs require even more support and assistance with attending school virtually or face to face and it is imperative that qualified teachers provide appropriate and individualized support for these students.

Budget constraints are also affecting our grade level next school year. This means class sizes will be larger and there will be less support for students when we start the new school year with probably more face to face instruction. With all of the CDC and DOH guidelines, it is important to keep the amount of staff on campus to ensure the safety and wellbeing for all students with and without special needs.

With so much going on in the world and as we push for students to return to campus we need to maintain the amount of teachers and supports in the school to keep all of our students safe.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony,

Kelly Tanimura



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

Differentials

1 message

Leah Joseph <leahjoseph2020@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 5:16 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

I am one of the many teachers that currently receive The Board of Education ("Board") approved differentials for licensed teachers to fill vacancies in the areas of special education ("SPED") effective January 7, 2020. Although I realize that there is a pandemic occurring and that there is a shortage the place to make up this shortage is not with the differentials for Sped teachers. I currently have a caseload of 20 students that I am care-coordinator for and could easily foresee additional students being added to my care-coordinator list. I also teach 2 Sped classes and co-teach 4 gen Ed classes. I have absolutely no time to prep for my classes, do my grading, do progress reports, teach students online and F2F at the same time, prepare IEP's, prepare ESR's, prepare distance learning plans and hold IEP and Covid Impact meetings. Not to mention all the phone calls to/from parents and guardians and the constant emailing to/from parents and guardians.

The differential was the only reason that I stayed as a Sped teacher this past year. If it is taken away I do not foresee myself continuing to do the massive amount of work that is required of a Sped teacher. The workload is too much. I truly love teaching Sped students and would miss them but if the differential is removed I will be looking to transfer to a straight Gen Ed line.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my testimony.



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

Testimony - Don't Cut Differentials!

1 message

Andrea Nance <andrea.nance@aol.com>

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 6:01 PM

Reply-To: Andrea Nance <andrea.nance@aol.com>

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

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing testimony regarding the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

With the cut of this compensation, you will see a decrease of teachers in the given positions. These positions are the ones that need teachers the most. There's a reason why the extra compensation was initiated in the first place. Cutting the compensation for special education teachers will cause a bigger discrepancy in the gap for qualified teachers. Special education requires qualified teachers. We are doing a disservice to our students by allowing highly qualified teachers walk away from special education due to a lack of extra compensation. These teachers spend more time running individualized educational planning meetings, running interventions with students, and adjusting instruction to best fit the needs of every single student they work with. This is what the general education teacher doesn't always have time for. Special education teachers are the reason why our students who struggle turn into our student's find their own succeed. Alongside them are their educational assistants. Personally, my students this year would not be getting the full support they are now without my current special education assistant. She is my right hand, my partner to bounce ideas off of, and my co-teacher. Our educational assistants and special education teachers do not only serve the special education population, they take care of every student (and teacher) in their classroom.

Hard-to-staff locations are labeled as such because it is increasingly difficult to keep teachers in the position. You will see an increase of teacher shortages with the removal of the extra compensation because the schools are as they are labeled, hard to staff. The compensation allows for educators to justify the long commute and the extra hours to their day. I know of two teachers who are going to transfer out of a hard-to-staff location if the discontinuance is approved. If the schools are hard-to-staff even with an extra compensation, how do you expect teachers, who make some of the lowest across the country and who live in the state with the highest cost of living, to adjust? They won't. The teacher shortage will continue. Our students need qualified teachers.

It's truly heart-breaking seeing that Hawaiian language programs is in this action item. Hawaiian language is dying alongside the knowledge our students have of their culture. Cutting compensation for Hawaiian language programs is going to continue the death of the Hawaiian language. There are so few people who can teach Hawaiian language programs effectively and this compensation may have inspired them to teach our keiki an important part of their ancestral history. We cannot allow the cutting of this compensation for it will have ramifications on our community that we all don't want to see. We need to continue the education of the Hawaiian language and Hawaiian culture. Without those teachers, we are doing a disservice to our community and to our 'ohanas.

Thank you for your time and for reading my testimony.

All the best,
Andrea Nance



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

testimony

1 message

Tasha Wong <tasha.wong@eles.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 6:05 PM

Aloha,

My name is Tasha Wong, and I am a third grade teacher at Enchanted Lake Elementary School in Kailua. I am testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. Please count my voice as support for continued extra compensation, or we will lose teachers to the mainland.

Thank you,
Tasha Wong



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

Testimony

1 message

Sharyn M <sbuchi7077@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 6:21 PM

Aloha,

My name is Sharyn Miyabuchi and I am a parent of a special education student who attends Maui High School. I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the special meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian Language programs.

My child's special education teacher has helped my child Raife.

Special education teachers must carry out even more workloads than their gen ed co-workers. On top of lesson planning, grading, teaching, and professional development, they must also collaborate to create IEPs, hold IEP meetings, hold revision IEP meetings, hold re-evaluation meetings, hold behavior meetings, create individual progress reports, create individualized materials for student programming, create data collection systems, record and analyze data, and consult with various IEP team members for every single one of the students on their caseload.

When special education positions are not filled by certified special education teachers, those who are certified must carry the load of completing all of the aforementioned case coordinator tasks for students who they may not even be teaching in their classroom. This very common scenario creates unbearable caseloads and stress which contribute to teacher burnout, and eventually leads to a teacher's decision to leave the special education profession for a lighter workload.

The differentials were effective and reduced vacancies by 66 percent in only 1 year of implementation. During a time when many are questioning leaving the profession due to ever changing protocols, a decision to reduce an educator's pay by almost \$16,000 will drive many away. I urge you to continue the differentials to support our keiki who need more during these trying times.

Mahalo,

Sharyn



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

Differential Testimony

1 message

Ms. Conroy <mconroy@phes.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 6:23 PM

Here is my testimony for the differential cut.

--

Ms. Madilyn Conroy
Pearl Harbor Elementary School
Special Education Teacher

 **Sped Cut.pdf**
39K

Dear Superintendent Kishimoto and Board of Education,

I am writing this letter as a concerned special education teacher with the cutting of the differential for school year 2021-2022. I am concerned for many reasons beyond the money portion of why this is so important to help with special education, Hawaiian immersion and geographical locations. These areas listed are areas schools already have trouble not only staffing but funding to support the education of the students in those classrooms. This year at my school in particular we had to cut 2 special education teachers and combine grade level classrooms in the special education setting which means 1 teacher and their educational assistant (if they even have one since I share one currently with 2 teachers). You also have a rise in the number of students being referred and qualified for special education which makes the teachers in those classrooms jobs harder to make sure every child receives the best FAPE. The money that is in the differential not only helps to entice teachers to stay in their position with the increasing changes and difficulties, but also support their students since we teachers make a lot of the individualized resources for our classroom and students. It comes out of our pockets, our time, and our commitment to the students. So, with that being said this should be your commitment to the teachers that are harder to staff and in harder working conditions than the typical teacher. Not that general education isn't in hard working conditions considering the pandemic, but with behaviors, safety and academics all coming into play this would be something the board of education could continue for its teachers.

So, I ask that when you truly consider the pandemic and the reasoning for lack of money is it really at the cost of cutting your teachers pay?

Sincerely,

A concerned special education teacher



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

Testimony for Action Item A in Thursday's "special meeting" on Shortage Differentials

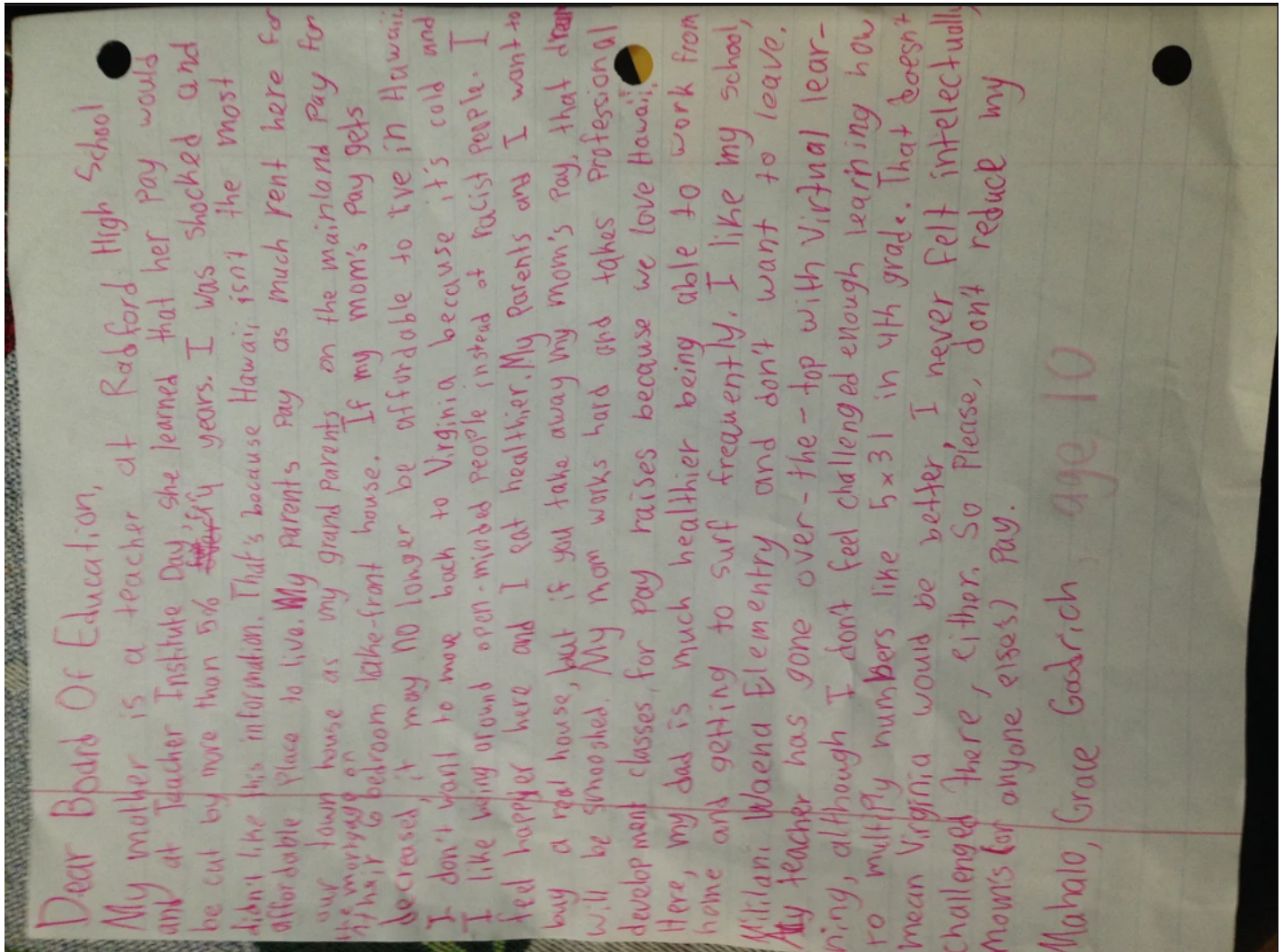
1 message

Erik Goodrich <erikbgoodrich@gmail.com>
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Feb 16, 2021 at 6:30 PM

Dear Board of Education:

I am the husband of a veteran special education teacher in the Central district who would like to submit our daughter's testimony on **Action Item A**. We are requesting that you do not approve Superintendent Kishimoto's proposal to terminate shortage differentials for the remaining portion of the 2020-2021 school year. Special education teachers work extremely hard to serve an at-risk population, and throughout the pandemic they have worked tirelessly to meet the ever-changing requirements while upholding state-mandated legal precautions. To renege on what has been contractually offered to these educators in the middle of the year seems unwise and unfair. Our daughter is enjoying her public schooling in Hawaii and becomes worried when she thinks that a change to our family income may force our return to the mainland due to financial stress.



We appreciate your having taken the time to read this testimony and we truly hope you will keep us in mind with your decision making. Please choose to continue funding the much needed compensation for classroom teachers in special education and hard-to-staff geographical locations for the 2020-2021 school year.

Sincerely,

2/17/2021

Dell Marketing LP Mail - Testimony for Action Item A in Thursday's "special meeting" on Shortage Differentials

Erik B. Goodrich LEED BD+C

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Misty Figueira, and I am currently finishing my Master's in Education of Teaching. I am also an emergency hire seventh grade English Language Arts special education teacher. I am writing in support of continuing the pay differentials for special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs.

I was born, educated, and graduated from Pāhoa High and Intermediate School. Throughout my thirteen years of receiving public education from Keonepoko and Pāhoa High and Intermediate School, I saw a high turnover rate of teachers. We would have a Social Studies teacher one year that would be gone and replaced by a long term substitute teacher the next. The turnover rate and the unqualified teachers deeply affected our quality of education and the relationships we were unable to build. The hard-to-staff pay differential helped to negate this problem. The pay difference means that high quality effective teachers are placed into schools such as the one that I am a product of, instead of emergency hire teachers that are unqualified who leave the school in a few years.

Currently, I am in my last semester of my graduate program. I am currently pursuing my Master's of Education in Teaching: Dual Licensure, Secondary English Language Arts and Special Education: Mild/Moderate. My cohort began with ten students. Currently, we have seven left. Of the seven of us, only two of us are on Hawai'i island. That means that this May, there will be two new Special Education teachers graduating with their Master's of Education in Teaching for the Big Island. Two. I am the only one born and raised here. Of my cohort, I am the only local teacher who will enter the hiring pool as a special education teacher for the Big Island. There are thousands and thousands of students with disabilities on the Big Island.

With the pay differentials, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa saw a huge increase in the amount of people wanting to become Special Education teachers. To go from a cohort of seven to having to turn away teacher candidates... That's incredible and because of the pay differentials.

It would be a devastating mistake to cut these pay differentials. To cut these pay differentials is to deliberately refuse to invest in not only our students and teachers, but Hawai'i. You are telling our students that they are not worth it. You are telling teachers that not only is our work in these difficult fields not worth it, but that we should move somewhere else where teachers do get paid what they are worth. Please do not cut these differentials. Please, continue investing in our teachers and in our students. Please invest in Hawai'i's future.

Mahalo,
Misty Figueira

Testimony BOE

From: Kilihea Inaba <kiliheainaba@gmail.com> on behalf of Kilihea Inaba
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 1:21 PM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Kilihea Inaba and I am a firefighter with the County of Hawaii, and a former student of Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 18th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition.

1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required.
2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy.
3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

In addition, to those important points above, I find it crucial to explain how necessary it is to fund these positions in order to have teachers able and willing to serve the kaiapuni population. Knowing the foundation that the kaiapuni system has provided for myself, siblings, family, and community, I see that we MUST compensate these kumu appropriately.

Mahalo for your time,
Kilihea Inaba
No Kaloko, Kona, Hawaii

Testimony BOE

From: Susana Román <namoranasus@gmail.com> on behalf of Susana Román
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 1:20 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha Board of Education members,

My name is Susana Román, and I am a Special Education teacher at Kailua Intermediate School. I am testifying in support of BOE Chair Catherine Payne's action item on the agenda, which calls for the Board of Education to direct Superintendent Kishimoto to "rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and to refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval."

For Superintendent Kishimoto to attempt such a bait-and-switch at the expense of teachers is not only dishonorable, but also unrealistic. Qualified educators will not tolerate having our pay unjustly reduced, and will not ignore the insulting injury of being expected to do so in the middle of a pandemic. As much as many uninformed voices are repeating the popular refrain to "open our schools," the reality is that schools are already open, and have been for some time. Before vaccines were even on the horizon, teachers and service providers were working with children face-to-face in Special Education classrooms across Hawaii, at great risk to our health and safety. Failure to recognize and compensate the effort and sacrifice such educators have already made will result in the State's loss of many of those teachers, and the resulting staffing shortfalls and vacancies will negatively impact our communities and the most vulnerable children for whom schools have been open. Please resist the political temptation to be so short-sighted about our communities' future.

Respectfully,

Susana Román

Testimony BOE

From: Kristin Lindquist <k.lindquist@seariders.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kristin Lindquist
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 1:20 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Fwd: Testimony

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kristin Lindquist** <k.lindquist@seariders.k12.hi.us>
Date: Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 8:20 AM
Subject: Testimony
To: <testimon.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Aloha.

I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting regarding Superintendent Christine Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Kristin Lindquist and I am Special Education teacher at Waianae High School. I have taught for 31 years and began teaching in California. I taught at Molokai High School for four years and have been at Waianae High School for fourteen years. I came to Hawaii as a result of the Felix Consent Decree and was initially employed by Columbus Educational Services. I was one of a handful of teachers who transferred over to work for the Department of Education.

I have been shocked, concerned and depressed in regards to the caliber of education provided to our students with special needs. The turn over of teachers on a yearly basis undermines the quality of education that is provided to the students who are most in need, not only due to their disabilities, but due to the environment in which they live. These students deserve the best teachers who commit to stay and establish relationships with them. What they get are the least experienced teachers who come for a two year holiday.

The SMARTEST decision that I have witnessed was the Board of Education's decision to increase the differentials provided to special education teachers, Hawaiian language teachers and those teachers who serve students in hard to place areas. I have witnessed the positive result of that decision. Qualified teachers have remained in their positions, good teachers that were here previously have returned, and teachers that were considering leaving have remained. Money matters!! The mainland provides teachers to the islands and they need to be paid a respectable amount in order for them to stay! Teachers from our community are more likely to remain in their challenging teaching positions if they are compensated for their tireless efforts. Please, please, please show respect to the students we serve and to the teachers who serve them.

I am asking that Superintendent Christine Kishimoto rescind her memo stopping the shortage differentials. That would be extremely detrimental to the students who need quality support and teaching. The board did not expect or intend for the differentials to end in 2021 and did not instruct Christine Kishimoto to unilaterally discontinue the differential pay.

I am counting on you to see the wisdom in continuing the payment of differentials. It is a move in a long overdue positive direction. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Kristin Lindquist
National Board Certified Teacher
Master of Education
Special Education Teacher
Waianae High School

Aloha Board,

I am writing to add in my testimony in regards to the Feb. 18th General Business Meeting scheduled for this Thursday. I am an inclusion kindergarten and first grade teacher at Nanaikapono Elementary and I have been teaching on the Leeward Coast for 5 years. Of the 5 years, I devoted myself to climbing the teacher ladder. I started as a long term substitute for my first two years while going to school and have worked as a full-time special education teacher for the remaining 3.

We received a very upsetting email last week stating that the differential bonus for all Highly Qualified and Special Education teachers bonuses will be discontinued for next school year. But unfortunately due to the economic situation, the educators of Hawaii are being stripped of these differentials. The differentials have created such a great impact in Hawaii for teachers, especially on the coast. At Nanaikapono alone, we have seen almost all teacher lines filled for the 2020-2021 school year. That has not happened in so long. Luckily, we have a very supportive principal who has tried to create a great community here at Nanaikapono and with the same teachers, our school morale has grown immensely.

I understand that I did not become a teacher for the pay outcome but the differentials have made me feel like my work has finally been compensated. During this pandemic, our workload has almost doubled. I find myself bringing more work home than I have ever expected. I have been overworked and overwhelmed from my work life and now my homelife. But, I am still here putting 110% effort into my teaching career while our differentials are on the verge of being taken away from us. I can't start to imagine when my qualifications for the hard-to-staff differential and special education differentials will be taken away. That's \$18,000 from my paycheck. That's opportunities that will be taken away not only from myself but also my family. Some things that will be at stake for me are school and sports opportunities for my children, continuing with quality medical due to the rising medical monthly payments, but more importantly, continuing to live in my home state and away from my family members.

Please, I ask you to fight for us and remain on our side. If we do not have your support now, it will be our keiki who will eventually suffer from this horrible decision of taking these well deserved differentials away. We deserved these differentials and we should be able get these differentials in the coming future. We have worked hard to get to the point. The data shows the benefits of these differentials SO WHY TAKE IT AWAY? Even the Board did not expect or intend for the differentials for SPED, hard-to-staff, or Hawaiian language immersion teachers to end in 2021 and it did not instruct Superintendent Christina Kishimoto to unilaterally discontinue the differentials. Please figure out a way to continue these differentials and fight for us.

A frightened teacher,

Jalen Lee

Nanaikapono Elementary, K-1 Inclusion
(808) 305-7800

Testimony BOE

From: Gigi Goochey <gigigoochey@gmail.com> on behalf of Gigi Goochey
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:57 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Retract meemo about differetnials

Aloha,

I am writing to ask that the differential pay continue, clearly that data supports the expenditure and our schools have shown clear improvements since the beginning of the differential program.

Mahalo

Gigi Goochey

Kealakehe High School CTE Medical pathways

Testimony BOE

From: Heather Tyrrell <hty9@yahoo.com> on behalf of Heather Tyrrell
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:53 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony for pay differentials

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in response to 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 a special education teacher on the windward side of Oahu. I have been teaching special education for twenty years. I love my job and have invested in learning as much as I can about how to do it well, earning a Master's Degree from Teacher's College at Columbia University. When the pay differential was first introduced, I was contemplating switching to a general education classroom. I was feeling overwhelmed by my caseload, the abundance of meetings and the sheer volume of paperwork and mandates. I came to school an hour early and left on average two and a half hours after school ended each day. I am an efficient worker and most of that time was spent in front of a computer report writing or making materials. I began thinking about my dual certification (general ed/special ed) and the reality of switching to a general education classroom. I was ready to switch. The pay differential kept me from following through, it kept me in the special education classroom.

Now we are opening schools during a pandemic. Once again, special ed teachers are being asked to do more. We are being asked to put our own health and the health of our families on the line to work face to face with students, students who sometimes refuse to wear masks and keep socially distant. We are told we will be provided with PPE and trainings, but I have not seen any evidence of it. In addition to asking us to risk our health, now the HDOE wants to take away the pay differential and risk our livelihood. The job does not pay enough to live off of without the differential. I am back to contemplating a general ed job so I have the time for a second job or a new career altogether. I have felt so much love and appreciated many things about teaching special ed the past twenty years and it would be sad to leave. Twenty years is a long time to be dedicated to something.

The pay differential was put in place to ensure we retain and attract special education teachers and it was proven effective. Taking it away will no doubt create a greater need at a time of uncertainty and put a greater burden on those who decide to stay in the position.

Sincerely,
Heather Tyrrell
special education teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Chazlynn Takaki <tchazlynn@gmail.com> on behalf of Chazlynn Takaki
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:54 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Fwd: TESTIMONY for Agenda Item A

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Chazlynn Takaki and I am a Parent of a Student at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The

Chazlynn Takaki
808-365-2061
tchazlynn@gmail.com

Testimony BOE

From: John Holaday <john.holaday@k12.hi.us> on behalf of John Holaday
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:53 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

February 16, 2021

Good Afternoon Honorable Board of Education,

I am testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. I have been a dedicated Special Education teacher for over fifteen years providing quality commitment and educational values toward my students over these years at Waikiki Elementary School. I am disheartened to hear that the Superintendent is considering this decision to discontinue the differential pay for my professional special education colleagues. Like many families of educators during the Covid-19 pandemic events, my own personal family took a financial hit when my wife a flight attendant in the airline industry for over eight years in Honolulu was phased out of her employment due to downsizing at the Honolulu Airport, in addition she was left with caring for our Kindergarten-aged son who was only offered weekly virtual instruction as his elementary school remained closed due to safety. However, I myself have been diligently on school frontline as an essential educator since June whereby I taught (ESY) Extended School Year for our special education population at Waikiki Elementary School. Then, when August came and our school decided on their A/B hybrid model which placed students beginning their year in a virtual learning model of which we have just recently transitioned to the two-days a week of face-to-face beginning in February. Though, from the month of August, I have been in my class face-to-face engaged with our special education community sharing a space with multiple other special education educators and service providers accommodating our student's minutes and services as a considered essential worker while my general education colleagues were safely in their protected settings. I also put in many hours after school beyond the regular school hours for IEP meetings, prepping for instructions, and collaboration within our department for adjustments for the varied and unique population of our students. This dedication of time and commitment should merit some consideration by the Superintendent and Board of Education to seek continued funding of the deferential play for special educators and the other hard-to-fill positions which tend to have a high turnover rate among educators. Yet the greatest concern and the challenge for myself moving forward this ongoing year is the financial stability alone as the single provider for my family which has been vital having the additional differential pay to offset the cost of our living expenses and wellness during the pandemic adjustment. My honored years of commitment and dedication to the field of special education has been well rewarded with extraordinary memories. The small differential of pay for the many years I have invested to the special education community and the ability to provide for my family's wellness would be sincerely appreciated. I request your humble consideration and mindful decision throughout Thursday's special meeting regarding Action Item A and the Superintendent's plans.

Thank You,
John Holaday
Waikiki Elementary School
(16 years of service)

Testimony BOE

From: Alakai Fernandez <alakai42@hotmail.com> on behalf of Alakai Fernandez
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:46 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: BOE Testimony

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

Thank you for this opportunity to advocate on behalf of myself, my colleagues and our students. I am a special education teacher at Hilo High school and am currently in my 8th year. I am a Probie 6 teacher and have my BA in Psychology and Certificate in Mild/Moderate Special Education. So many of us teachers struggle to earn degrees, PD credits and extra certifications because that's the only way we could increase our pay. I love my job and my and yet we know that all the extra time we sacrifice for our job doesn't pay the bills. Recently credit unions been working with HSTA members for mortgage loans to buy homes. The differential, incidentally NOT a pilot program as Superintendent Kishimoto declared, allows me to *finally* feel financially secure and able to move forward with my application to get a home here on the Big Island. In addition, due to the differential our Special Ed dept also has NO unlicensed teachers and long-term subs. The differential has been a win-win for our students AND teachers. What's good for teachers is good for students.

Through her words and actions, Superintendent Kishimoto clearly does not value Special Education students and teachers. She is comfortable knowing that if the Board agrees to cancel the differential, many Sped students will go back to having an unlicensed teacher or long-term sub. The day to day life of a special education teacher is tough. Our jobs require large amounts of specialized training and we don't get a commensurate level of respect or pay. But regardless of how tough our jobs can be, our students have it even tougher. They face adversity every day. Having special needs of any kind, in a society that glorifies achievement and success through competition is not for the faint of heart. They are heroes to me and if they have made it this far they can continue to succeed in their own way with the right amount of love, support and challenge. Sadly, Dr. Kishimoto's actions devalue these students by disrespecting their teachers. ALL students deserve a well-trained and well-paid teacher regardless of their background or needs. We are highly educated professionals who love our jobs and our students but also need financial stability and security. The pay differentials offer the stability we need at this time of crisis. If the differential is cut I don't know how it will be for me and payments for the house. Please show special education teachers that you care about them and the students they teach by keeping this differential. Mahalo.

Drew Fernandez
Hilo High School

17 February 2021

E. Seese-Paterson

elizabeth.seese-paterson@k12.hi.us

808/927.6858

To whom it may concern,

It astounds me that, in these troubling and challenging times - particularly through the last eleven months as time and again - it has been demonstrated that educators are vital and essential to the well-being of our community's present as well as to our society's future, that I, as parent, educator and community member, find myself offering testimony to underscore the need for our local educators to maintain their current salaries and benefits including the incentives for SPED and hard-to-staff locations teachers.

I am the parent of a 15-year-old who attends Kalani High School, involved civic member who is concerned about having an educated and prepared work force as well as fellow citizens that are able to think independently and critically and I am a secondary ELA teacher at the Olomana School - Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility, which serves our incarcerated youth. In all of these realms, I see our desperate need to support and ensure that our educators are being paid a deserved wage that explicitly demonstrates our society's respect for the role that educators play in our communities.

Educators are tired of and should not be the pawns of the political and economic landscape any longer. These last eleven months have emphasized how teachers are a cornerstone to a healthy and functional community; not only are we the ones who are providing educational opportunities and support to our children, we also are the first line of defence for awareness of what is happening in our families and communities - what needs and gaps exist as well as what seems to be going well. We are providing structure and support for the academic development of our students, but also their physical well-being, social and emotional growth and mental health. As a parent, I am a constant witness to how our educators function in the personal development and awareness of our child beyond the walls of our home and the boundaries of our family. We KNOW that educators are valuable and necessary. You, as the Board of Education and the Department of Education - both entities which should be the most vocal and determined advocates of educators - constantly tout our value but

then undermine our worth with the consistent offering up of DOE faculty and staff taking incentive and salary cuts as a way to solve the economic crisis that our state is in.

We, more than anyone else, understand that we are in a pandemic and that there will be long-lasting effects. In fact, I suspect that many a veteran teacher in the state of Hawaii is likely contemplating or planning their departure through retirement and other teachers will likely consider resignation with this constant struggle for us to maintain the current salary structure which, already, is not reflective of what highly-qualified educators should be paid. In these times of education crises and teacher shortages, salary and incentive cuts should not even be a possible discussion point. Our BOE and DOE leaders should be responding with a fervent, "NO! We will not disenfranchise our educators even more!"

Please, BOE members and DOE leadership, we understand that these times are difficult and hard decisions need to be made. We understand this because we are doing that every single day with our students. But we should not feel threatened and endangered by the very entities that should have our backs, we should be able to vocally state that, as educators, we are valuable and deserving and we know this to be true as our leadership, through their actions, consistently and emphatically demonstrate their knowledge of our value and worth. Be true for us. Be vocal for us. Execute your kuleana with honor. Stand for us as we cannot stand for ourselves.

Mahalo and be well,

/s/ Elizabeth Seese-Paterson

Testimony BOE

From: Hawaiian Libra <kauwilamahina@gmail.com> on behalf of Hawaiian Libra
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:44 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony: Tutors vs.Teachers

Aloha no e Hawaii Board of Education:

My name is Kaylene Sheldon and I am very concerned about our teaching positions. As island teachers we give the best and most appropriate education in a wide variety for our students. We are different from the continent. We are asking the board to prioritize keeping teachers and other school employees on the payroll instead of using federal stimulus to hire tutors. Another solution could be to hire teachers over the summer by using the federal stimulus and other sources. There are many teachers who are overly qualified above a tutor that can give the best education for our children.

Hawaii needs its educators and staff to stay on board for the betterment of our keiki. Last year from my district, at least over 50% of our students have attended vocational school or college online. If you take a really good look, you are going to see teachers who have the strength to take creative ideas during a pandemic and turn their online platforms into a success. Other staff workers such as educational assistants, custodians, office clerks, technicians, cafeteria workers, administrators, nurses, aides, are all the functional body parts to make a school and community a healthy working mechanism and with this working body comes a healthy home, a well adjusted family and a safe place. By cutting positions, it leaves very little room for a healthy community especially for a rural community that has been impacted by a pandemic. I ask that the BOE spend their money wisely because teachers and staff work hard and deserve to keep their positions.

Respectfully,
Kaylene Sheldon
Ka'a'awa, Hawaii

Testimony BOE

From: Sanoë Marfil <sanoem@inpeace.org> on behalf of Sanoë Marfil
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:39 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Sanoë Marfil
Kaiapuni Parent
Special Meeting Agenda

II.A. Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

I oppose the above proposed agenda item and recommend the Board direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and to refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

As a mother of three Hawaiian Language program students, I feel that it is important to continue to provide the compensation for these teachers because they work extra hard translating and creating language curriculum.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Aloha,

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.

I am sending in my testimony against the HIDOE's plans to use federal funds for tutors and academic coaching. I am baffled by the decision to put money towards this temporary solution instead of using the funds to retain current teachers. To let go of qualified, dedicated, and experienced employees and replace them with new employees who will have a short-term role in the system seems illogical. This decision is demoralizing for the thousands of teachers who have taken on so much daily, doing face to face, online learning, or both to bring some sense of normalcy to Hawaii's keiki, while also juggling the personal effects of the pandemic. What Hawaii's keiki need and deserve are qualified teachers for their whole educational journey; not temporary tutors to get them through a few months.

My household consists of 5 people – my partner, his elderly mom, and our two daughters. Me and my partner's income not only supports our two daughters' livelihood, but also his moms who has a few underlying health conditions and is hard of hearing, and is not able to work. My partner who works in the restaurant business has had hours that fluctuates each week because covid-19 has made the restaurant industry unstable and unpredictable. My salary is the only stable factor in our household, and a pay cut would put my family in a terrible and uncertain position. My family relies on my full income to make ends meet on a monthly basis.

I stand in support of HSTA and all of its members who have been working tirelessly this school year and last, to continue to do the job they have signed up to do, despite the difficult and numerous challenges that have changed teaching so abruptly during this pandemic. I hope the Board of Education can understand that by preventing layoffs and salary cuts you are acknowledging that teachers are important and matter. The decision to support education supports the livelihood of your employees along with the wellness of keiki across the state, not just for today but for years to follow. Board of Education and HIDOE has the power to support and empower, to bring positive outcomes even during these dark and uncertain times. Please reconsider the use of funds to provide financial support to the schools and retain employees who can make a difference for Hawaii's keiki.

Akiko Miyata
Pre-K Teacher at Palolo Elementary School

Testimony BOE

From: Kim Link <kimlink96748@gmail.com> on behalf of Kim Link
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:33 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha Board of Education,

My name is Kim Link and I am a 5th grade teacher at Kualapu'u Elementary on Moloka'i. I am testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

This is my 17th year on Molokai in the same school and I have truly enjoyed my time with my students and families. After 17 years in the same school, I am seeing former students walk the hallways dropping off their own children. These relationships with families build trust and familiarity to bridge relationships with current students. Longevity and maintaining teachers are important.

We know the cost of living is already high in Hawaii, but it is even higher on the smaller, neighbor islands such as Moloka'i and Lana'i. **Please consider keeping the hard-to-fill differentials.** They make a **significant difference** in our lives for both me, my husband, also a teacher at the same school, and our nine-year-old son.

My husband and I are both originally from Seattle and know our teacher friends working there earn over six figures, keeping up with the high cost of living in Seattle. Even though the **differentials** do not make up the difference to the Seattle salary, they **do make a difference** to us and help with the added cost of living and working on Molokai. We all know money isn't everything, but it surely is something. Making these cuts would force us to seriously consider other teaching options outside of Hawaii, our home for 17 years. Time will tell...

Thank you for your time and consideration for keeping these differentials in place.

-Kim Link

Testimony BOE

From: Jai Me <kapualani_22@yahoo.com> on behalf of Jai Me
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:32 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Position

To Whom It May Concern,

Kuhio Elementary School (KES) principal informed me on 1/5/21 that my full-time counselor position would be cut to a half-time position due to, "budget cuts." I was notified by phone although we were both working on campus at the time. Principal stated that the decision was made by the SCC and later told me to check the faculty meeting minutes. No dates were given and I didn't recall any prior discussion of position losses since the administrator eliminated 5 full-time teacher positions, 1 ELL coordinator, and 1 tech coordinator last SY 19-20. This SY 20-21, the 10 month academic coach position was converted to a 12 month position with the stipulation of additional duties including Title 1, ELL, and Tech. The understanding amongst faculty and staff was this new 12 month position would be responsible for all of those duties mentioned.

In February 2021, an ELL teacher was hired to teach ELL students, while the, "academic coach," would remain the ELL Coordinator. Reasons for unexplained appearance of funds include special education and Title 1 funds. To my knowledge, no updated budget was shown to faculty members and when principal was approached she claimed that the SASA shared the document. To date, no document was shared or no further information provided to locate said budget.

According to KMR HSTA Uniserv and DOE guidelines, KES projected enrollment for SY 21-22 (according to principal) requires a full-time counselor on campus. I informed principal in-person and she stated that the SASA didn't receive the same information from Honolulu Personnel Officer, Gabriel Townsend. I asked principal to find out if that statement was accurate and to date she has not gotten back to me, except for a written Summary of Conference dated 2/11/21. SASA has been out on leave. Grievance filed on 2/12/21. My response to her Summary of Conference inaccuracies were placed in her box on 2/16/21. Prior attempts for further clarification were made to principal via email and in-person meetings.

In addition, although asked I'm expected to "help" supervise recess, lunch, and all day "hub" classroom five days a week. Counseling intern is also placed on this schedule to assist with supervision. No duty free lunch breaks are allowed on a regular basis. Inconsistent coverage is provided, despite a written schedule (administrator request) when advance requests are made to principal for alternate coverage due to student meetings, trainings, or other. Administrator and other adults on campus text my personal phone to complain about lack of supervision knowing that I'm covering the area discussed. Repeated requests have been made to administrator and others to contact me via radio, school phone, email, or in-person versus my personal cell phone. The understanding is to contact me via cell phone for emergencies only and since I don't carry it around and look at my cell phone throughout the school day like they do.

Thank you,

Jaime Lee
Kuhio Elementary School Counselor

Testimony BOE

From: Bea Arendale <hanabay17@yahoo.com> on behalf of Bea Arendale
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:27 PM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: End of Differentials

To Who it May Concern,

I am writing you because as a veteran teacher who has survived the 2001 strike and the 2009 furloughs, I want to share my concerns about the end of the differentials for the hard to staff positions. Currently, at King Kekaulike High School we have 5 positions without special education teachers to aide regular education teachers in the classroom. I am afraid the number of vacant special education positions will increase if the differentials are cut for special education teachers.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Beate Arendale

Testimony BOE

From: lynn zinsius <lynnzinsius@gmail.com> on behalf of lynn zinsius
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:24 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimomy

Aloha Members of the the board,

I am writing to plead with you to keep shortage differentials in place. I am a special education teacher at Kaohao PCS. Receiving this differential last January was greatly appreciated. I was under the impression that this was not a temporary solution. We will not be able to retain and hire qualified teachers if this differential is eliminated. Special educators have a responsibility to support our most vulnerable students. There are countless hours beyond the school day that go into preparing Individualized Education Programs and ensuring that we meet all of the legal requirements that go along with these Programs. Not to mention meetings with parents, teachers, and service providers during and after the school day. We need QUALIFIED teachers !! Thank you for hearing my concerns,

Sincerely,
Lynn Zinsius

Testimony BOE

From: Mahina Komeiji <mahina.komeiji@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Mahina Komeiji
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:15 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

You are going to lose many teachers in Hawaii if we cut the differentials and don't prioritize teachers. I'm currently looking at leaving teaching because it doesn't make sense to stay in a profession where you are not valued for your work, let alone with the push to be face to face, your life is not valued at all. We've had to make so many changes and we need all of our staff so desperately. I feel there are better ways of handling this situation.

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Testimony BOE

From: tysha freitas <tyshaf93@gmail.com> on behalf of tysha freitas
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:14 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Our Keiki Deserve More Testimony

Dear Superintendent Kishimoto,

My name is Tysha Freitas and I am a special education teacher in our Hawaii schools serving our keiki.

Let me start by thanking you for taking the time to read my email and concerns regarding the discontinuation of pay differentials.

I truly believe that following through with the proposed action of discontinuing pay differentials will have a grave impact on Hawaii's keiki, who should be kept at the forefront of this decision.

The pay differentials that were implemented in January of 2020 was given as a way to bring in and keep highly qualified teachers to our beautiful aloha state. This was given because of the colossal shortage of teachers in special education positions, Hawaiian Immersion schools, and hard to fill schools was finally acknowledged and action was taken. I understand that the pay differentials as an incentive last school year was likely a decision that was not made lightly, but I implore you to look again at why the decision was made in the first place.

The issue has not been resolved. There is still a wide-spread teacher shortage in Hawaii, and if the pay differentials are to be taken away so soon after implementation, how effective would it have been in the ongoing struggle of our teacher shortage?

These pay differentials were given to specific positions because it is common knowledge that being a special education teacher is HARD WORK. It is common knowledge that teaching in a Title I school with low SES is HARD WORK. It is common knowledge that teaching in a Hawaiian Immersion school with a shortfall in qualified teachers is HARD WORK. This is the reason there was an identified shortage in these positions to begin with.

The HARD WORK has not changed, and in fact, as I am sure you are aware, became MUCH harder. Taking away the pay differentials will not make any situation better. It will not help our keiki. Our keiki will continue to be in a classroom with someone who you have deemed as not being highly qualified. They will be in a classroom with too many students and not enough adult support and our keiki deserve more.

Please do what you know is right, please do what our keiki need and what our keiki deserve.

Mahalo for taking the time to read my testimony.

Aloha,
Tysha Freitas

Testimony BOE

From: Iris Kahaulelio <iris.kahaulelio@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Iris Kahaulelio
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:08 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

To Board of Education,

I have been a Science teacher at Kahuku High & Intermediate School for 25 years and being so geographically isolated it has always been difficult to attract and keep teachers.

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A:
Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am asking the BOE to direct the superintendent to rescind her memo ending teacher shortage differentials.

Mahalo for your service,
Iris Kahaulelio

--

IRIS KAHAULELIO
BIOLOGY, FORENSIC SCIENCE
SURF CLUB COACH
KAHUKU HIGH SCHOOL
56-490 KAMEHAMEHA HWY
KAHUKU, HI 96731
808-305-7300
808-293-8960 FAX
iris.kahaulelio@k12.hi.us

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Testimony BOE

From: Jenna Nihipali <jnihipa@yahoo.com> on behalf of Jenna Nihipali
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:03 PM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony 'A'ole Discontinuance of Extra Compensation Keep Our Kumu

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Jenna Aipia and I am a parent at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Aloha Kākou,

My name is _____ and I am the _____ at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo,

Jenna Aipia

Testimony BOE

From: Jessica Pelekai <kailiula84@gmail.com> on behalf of Jessica Pelekai
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:02 PM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Aloha,

I am writing this testimony in support of all Hawaiin immersion teachers. They play such a huge role within all of our communities, inside and outside of their schools. The amount of energy it takes for immersion teachers are much deeper because they CHOOSE to work in immersion for the sake of our keiki. They continue to perpetuate our language, culture, and way of life (including respect, sustainability, responsibility, etc) to our keiki. They have a huge impact on our keiki, they help to make them feel like they belong. Our keiki matter!

These teachers DESERVE to receive appropriate compensation for all they do, so that they may continue to do what they do. And in hopes that more Kaiapuni schools will become available to our keiki.

Please note the following:

- 1) Already approved BOE Policy 105-8 which states Hawaiian immersion will be compensated for the extra skill set that is required.
- 2) 2020 differential has helped to decrease the amount of vacancies in kaiapuni schools which allow schools to survive.
- 3) The amount of money needed to comply with this BOE Policy is not a lot and affordable.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Mahalo Nui,

Jessica M. D. Pelekai
808-542-0029
kailiula84@gmail.com

Testimony BOE

From: D Jennings <diiva0704@yahoo.com> on behalf of D Jennings
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:58 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony in SUPPORT to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A.

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

I write this testimony in **SUPPORT** to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A., with Chair Payne's proposed recommendation that the "Board direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval." In particular, I submit this testimony in support of kumu kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion teachers) as a mākua (parent) with keiki that attended kula kaiapuni and based on my experience as the Parent Community Network Center (PCNC) for Ke Kula Kaiāpuni 'o Ānuenue. I appreciate and commend Chair Payne for her memorandum ("memo") dated February 18, 2021 to the Board of Education for this Special Meeting, and also add to key points she included in her memo.

As Chair Payne's memo notes, the DOE is Constitutionally mandated to provide Hawaiian medium education under the recent Hawai'i Supreme Court decision in Clarabal v. Department of Education. Kumu kaiapuni are a critical and necessary component to the DOE to fulfill its Constitutional mandate in providing Hawaiian medium education, and as Board Policy 105-8 states,

"The program's success is largely dependent on the capacity, capability and expertise of the program's professional staff. The Department will establish professional qualifications and develop training programs internally and/or in cooperation with stakeholder groups/universities. The goal is for program professionals to be qualified in both English as a medium of instruction and Hawaiian as a medium of instruction and **appropriately compensated for these additional qualifications.**"

Providing kumu kaiapuni with this needed pay differential will in-turn help the DOE to fulfill its constitutional mandate to provide Hawaiian medium education.

Expanding upon this Constitutional mandate, it is also the DOE's continued commitment to equity, as stated in its Strategic Plan and the 2030 Promise Plan that would be furthered with providing kumu kaiapuni this needed pay differential. In terms of equity, haumāna kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion students) are among the student group disparately impacted as a result of COVID-19. Not only was KĀ'EO testing not administered last year due to the pandemic, but also haumāna kaiapuni have experinedced unique opportunity to learn impacts during this pandemic. See [‘Aha Kauleo’s meeting minutes](#) with survey results on opportunity to learn metrics.

understand the impacts of the pandemic and state and school closures on Kaiapuni students. Ten broad questions were asked about the type of learning that took place both in Spring 2020 and Fall 2020, and the impacts to curriculum, instruction, engagement and language proficiency. Poll participants included all willing members of 'Aha Kauleo that were present in the meeting and could have included parents, teachers, and administrators. The following are aggregate results that paint a broad picture of the landscape at Kaiapuni schools in Spring 2020 and Fall 2020 and should simply serve as a starting point for discussions and construct-building. The summary findings indicate:

- A majority of respondents (68%) indicated that their schools had 0 to 2 hours of synchronous instruction in the spring and all respondents reported less than 3 hours (table 1, figure 1).
- The majority of respondents reported that their schools used only online learning in the spring (92%) and fall (74%) (table 2, figure 2).
- Fifty-eight percent of respondents indicated that their students were less engaged over the last year (table 3, figure 3).
- Half of respondents indicated that their schools covered 25% or less of the curriculum in the spring, and only 45% of respondents indicated that their schools covered between 1% and 50% the curriculum in the spring (table 4, figure 4).
- Eighty-four percent responded that COVID-19 had disrupted their students' ability to learn and become proficient in Hawaiian language to a moderate or great extent (table 5, figure 5).
- Eighty-two percent of respondents indicated that overall their students received less instructional time (table 6, figure 6).²

These results highlight some of the impacts to learning that will need to be monitored in the coming year as



OTL results 12.2020.pdf

Lastly, and this is likely the most obvious to you all, this pay differential was previously approved. As noted in Chair Payne's memo, Superintendent Kishimoto did not anticipate this to be a pilot program or to cease beyond 2021. Questions and discussion have been ongoing with regards to preparing for legislative budget shortfalls, even prior to the pandemic, and identifying funding sources. With all of the prior points mentioned, and in light of the anticipated budget shortfall from Governor Ige being 7.5% less than anticipated, the pay differential for kumu kaiapuni should not be where cuts are made.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. I urge members to **SUPPORT** the recommendation for the Board to direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

Lola Goo

Testimony BOE

From: Abbey Palmer <abbey.palmer@gmail.com> on behalf of Abbey Palmer
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:58 AM
To: TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

My name is Abigail Palmer and I am a Special Education teacher. I am testifying on Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaii language programs. I writing to urge Superintendent Christina Kishimoto to reconsider taking away the differential. Teachers need the differential to help support what we do. I went into Special Education in order to help students, to make sure they never felt out of place for learning a different way. Not only do I teach six periods a day, but on top of that, I have an IEP caseload of 10-15 students. Managing my caseload and my teaching is not only difficult but also time consuming. The mornings are early, the nights are late. As SPED teachers, we work two different jobs and get paid for one. Does that stop us from giving our best 24/7? No. We do it because we love the kids and we know that every child learns differently. If you take away our differential pay, you are showing the world that you do not care about us. You don't care that we differentiate our lessons for every single student in our classroom, six times a DAY. You don't care that we are collecting and analyzing iep data constantly. You don't care that we spend hours reaching out to our sped parents, building connections, working together to develop and strengthen the goals and objectives of our students. If you take away our differential, many of us can't survive. So many teachers already work additional jobs in order to pay for the materials they need in the classroom to help the students. We already spend so much of our personal money even more so now buying curriculum, and modified it to help distance learning when covid started. We are buying educational materials, sanitizer, wipes, Lysol out of our own bank accounts because we know we need to keep our students and ourselves safe during the pandemic. With covid curriculum cuts, we are already using our own money to buy curriculum for our students. If you take away this differential, you are snuffing the life out of educators who have put our blood, sweat and tears into this profession. We are spit on by students, we are cursed at by students, we are not valued, yet we still come every day with a smile on our faces. We give 1000%. We won't be able to survive without our differential. If you do this, many teachers will be forced to leave Special Education because they will no longer be able to afford it. Please don't do this to us. Teachers deserve better than this. Please show us that you still care about us, before it is too late. It is not our fault that COVID happened and Special Education teachers shouldn't have to pay the price because of it. I am also 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. Educators are trained to help our students. Instead of eliminating trained teachers to hire outside tutors, give these opportunities to teachers. We've been working with our students, we know their strengths and needs. Give us the opportunity to continue to work with them over the summer to help strengthen their skills before returning to school. Teachers are qualified and we have the resources to help our students that tutors might not have. Plus we have the personal connections and background of the student and know exactly how to help their individual academic needs. Please keep the funding for teachers. Thank you.

Testimony BOE

From: Linda Ziegler <linda.m.ziegler@gmail.com> on behalf of Linda Ziegler
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:57 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Linda Ziegler's testimony
Attachments: Shortage Differential Testimony.pdf

Please find attached a letter of testimony for cutting the differential pay as well as using federal monies for private tutors, academic coaching, etc.

Wednesday 2/17/21

To Whom It May Concern:

Here are the facts about me:

- 1.) I was a special education teacher in Hawaii for 10 years (Aiea Intermediate School) after resigning due to lack of administrative support as well as feelings of being overworked, underpaid, stressed, anxious, & hopeless. With 10 years of experience AND a Masters Degree, I was only getting paid \$53K.
- 2.) I returned to a state position at the University of Hawaii - West Oahu, working for an early college program with Waianae High School, Campbell High School, & Kapolei High School (Here, I nearly met the qualifications for low income subsidies. If I didn't continue to work a second job as a server, I would have qualified for food assistance, etc.). Due to budget losses, the program ended after 2 years and I reapplied with the DOE.
- 3.) I began working at Olomana School, within the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility, in July 2019 and continue to work here. Approximately 40+% of students qualify for special education services. Nearly all have a disability. Approximately 10% of the students are English Language Learners. Nearly all of the students have had some sort of addiction. Needless to say, IT IS A DIFFICULT PLACE TO WORK but I LOVE IT!!!
- 4.) THE DIFFERENTIAL PAY HAS WORKED FOR ME!!!!

*With this extra pay, I was able to get myself out of debt. (I live on my own and pay for 100% of my rent, bills, etc.).

*After 8 years, I was able to quit my 2nd job as a server.

*I was able to continue contributions to my 403b.

*I was able to reduce the feelings of quitting, changing careers, anxiety, stress, hopelessness.

*I was able to take my first Professional development course (more time, no need for a 2nd job).

*I am able to study for the Praxis II to become Highly Qualified for Math (more time, no need for a 2nd job).

*I am able to plan more meaningful activities for my students.

*I was able to pay off my student loan.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE reconsider taking this differential pay from me, from us, from the hardworking individuals that are working face-to-face with THE MOST VULNERABLE POPULATION OF STUDENTS!!!!

If you take away the differential pay, if you take the federal monies and haphazardly give it to tutors, you're taking it from Hawaii's people. Our communities will 100% suffer. You are breaking trust and more teachers will quit!!! You will lose the hearts of many and we'll have no choice but to leave (again).

KEEP THE MONEY IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES!! DO NOT HIRE MAINLAND COMPANIES!!! Pay teachers what they deserve!!! Give the keiki what and who they deserve!!!!

Testimony BOE

From: Leonani Hussey Abril <labril@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Leonani Hussey Abril
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:57 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Cassandra Leonani Hussey-Abril and I am the Special Education Teacher for Grades K-12 at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. Teachers of kaiaupuni schools spend countless hours creating curriculum and resources for their students and classroom compared to other teachers at English-speaking schools. We kaiaupuni teachers do not have the resources or curriculum available to us, so we spend a lot of time outside school hours creating these. And I believe that should be compensated because we are now doing 2 jobs, being teachers and curriculum developers.

2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. As a special education teacher at a kaiaupuni school, I know finding kumu to fill positions like mine are few and far. Therefore, the differentials provide more incentives for students to become special education teachers, kaiaupuni teachers, or both. Also, we are seeing increasing enrollment in our kaiaupuni skills, and it's important that we have qualified teachers to fill vacant positions.

3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo nui,

Cassandra Leonani Hussey-Abril

--

Leonani Hussey-Abril
Kumu Kīnānā (Special Education Teacher)
Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino

Testimony BOE

From: info malamainspection.com <info@malamainspection.com> on behalf of info malamainspection.com
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:57 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony in SUPPORT to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A.

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

I write this testimony in **SUPPORT** to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A., with Chair Payne's proposed recommendation that the "Board direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval." In particular, I submit this testimony in support of kumu kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion teachers) as a mākua (parent) with keiki that attended kula kaiapuni and based on my experience as the Parent Community Network Center (PCNC) for Ke Kula Kaiāpuni 'o Ānuenue. I appreciate and commend Chair Payne for her memorandum ("memo") dated February 18, 2021 to the Board of Education for this Special Meeting, and also add to key points she included in her memo.

As Chair Payne's memo notes, the DOE is Constitutionally mandated to provide Hawaiian medium education under the recent Hawai'i Supreme Court decision in Clarabal v. Department of Education. Kumu kaiapuni are a critical and necessary component to the DOE to fulfill its Constitutional mandate in providing Hawaiian medium education, and as Board Policy 105-8 states,

"The program's success is largely dependent on the capacity, capability and expertise of the program's professional staff. The Department will establish professional qualifications and develop training programs internally and/or in cooperation with stakeholder groups/universities. The goal is for program professionals to be qualified in both English as a medium of instruction and Hawaiian as a medium of instruction and **appropriately compensated for these additional qualifications.**"

Providing kumu kaiapuni with this needed pay differential will in-turn help the DOE to fulfill its constitutional mandate to provide Hawaiian medium education.

Expanding upon this Constitutional mandate, it is also the DOE's continued commitment to equity, as stated in its Strategic Plan and the 2030 Promise Plan that would be furthered with providing kumu kaiapuni this needed pay differential. In terms of equity, haumāna kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion students) are among the student group disparately impacted as a result of COVID-19. Not only was KĀ'EO testing not administered last year due to the pandemic, but also haumāna kaiapuni have experineced unique opportunity to learn impacts during this pandemic. See [‘Aha Kauleo's meeting minutes](#) with survey results on opportunity to learn metrics.

Lastly, and this is likely the most obvious to you all, this pay differential was previously approved. As noted in Chair Payne's memo, Superintendent Kishimoto did not anticipate this to be a pilot program or to cease beyond 2021. Questions and discussion have been ongoing with regards to preparing for legislative budget shortfalls, even prior to the pandemic, and identifying funding sources. With all of the prior points mentioned, and in light of the anticipated budget shortfall from Governor Ige being 7.5% less than anticipated, the pay differential for kumu kaiapuni should not be where cuts are made.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. I urge members to **SUPPORT** the recommendation for the Board to direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

Mahalo,
Jayme Martin
Mālama Inspection, LLC
4354 Pāhoa Ave #160973
Honolulu, HI 96816
562-843-9182
www.malamainspection.com



Testimony BOE

From: pmitsis3@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:54 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Pay reduction

If you genuinely believe a pay cut for teachers will save our state, then you must do it. However, it won't save what progress in education that has been done. You will create a legacy along with the mismanagement and misinformation that this and other actions are providing. Many will be gone in a few years and the state pension funds will be in question as well. We have the solution, follow it. There's no super strategy, or a silver bullet...eliminating teachers isn't the answer. Any institution, academic or industrial will suffer the loss of employees when you cut their pay. Even in the long run, new teachers with less pay and turnover ratios (annual worker anticipation) won't make it through the decade. You must understand we are in a transition that is unsustainable with a pandemic, climate crisis, socioeconomic disparity that places Hawaii teachers in a precarious position.

We don't make cars or widgets, ours is a unique case study. The government is offering to bail us out, don't doubt for a minute what they understand and the expertise it has a hand that supports educators (it's not just the votes). Follow the lead and work for the teachers who work for the kiki.

Pete Mitsis, M.A. Educator Waimea High School

Testimony BOE

From: Anne Au <anneau@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Anne Au
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:52 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Hawaiian Immersion

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

I write this testimony in **SUPPORT** to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A., with Chair Payne's proposed recommendation that the "Board direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval." In particular, I submit this testimony in support of kumu kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion teachers) as a mākua (parent) with keiki that attended kula kaiapuni and based on my experience as the Parent Community Network Center (PCNC) for Ke Kula Kaiāpuni 'o Ānuenue. I appreciate and commend Chair Payne for her memorandum ("memo") dated [February 18, 2021](#) to the Board of Education for this Special Meeting, and also add to key points she included in her memo.

As Chair Payne's memo notes, the DOE is Constitutionally mandated to provide Hawaiian medium education under the recent Hawai'i Supreme Court decision in Clarabal v. Department of Education. Kumu kaiapuni are a critical and necessary component to the DOE to fulfill its Constitutional mandate in providing Hawaiian medium education, and as Board Policy 105-8 states,

"The program's success is largely dependent on the capacity, capability and expertise of the program's professional staff. The Department will establish professional qualifications and develop training programs internally and/or in cooperation with stakeholder groups/universities. The goal is for program professionals to be qualified in both English as a medium of instruction and Hawaiian as a medium of instruction and **appropriately compensated for these additional qualifications.**"

Providing kumu kaiapuni with this needed pay differential will in-turn help the DOE to fulfill its constitutional mandate to provide Hawaiian medium education.

Expanding upon this Constitutional mandate, it is also the DOE's continued commitment to equity, as stated in its Strategic Plan and the 2030 Promise Plan that would be furthered with providing kumu kaiapuni this needed pay differential. In terms of equity, haumāna kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion students) are among the student group disparately impacted as a result of COVID-19. Not only was KĀ'EO testing not administered last year due to the pandemic, but also haumāna kaiapuni have experineced unique opportunity to learn impacts during this pandemic. See ['Aha Kauleo's meeting minutes](#) with survey results on opportunity to learn metrics.

Lastly, and this is likely the most obvious to you all, this pay differential was previously approved. As noted in Chair Payne's memo, Superintendent Kishimoto did not anticipate this to be a pilot program or to cease beyond 2021. Questions and discussion have been ongoing with regards to preparing for legislative budget shortfalls, even prior to the pandemic, and identifying funding sources. With all of the prior points mentioned, and in light of the anticipated budget shortfall from Governor Ige being 7.5% less than anticipated, the pay differential for kumu kaiapuni should not be where cuts are made.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. I urge members to **SUPPORT** the recommendation for the Board to direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

Mahalo,
Navenna Au

Testimony BOE

From: Keolaokekai Balubar <keolaokekai.balubar@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Keolaokekai Balubar
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:52 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony by Kai Balubar Olomana School Teacher

February 16, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this testimonial to Superintendent Christina Kishimoto about the proposal to discontinue providing extra compensation for Special Education teachers and teachers in hard-to-staff locations.

My name is Kai Balubar and I am a Special Education teacher at Olomana School, a hard-to-staff location. I have taught at Olomana School for 15 years and have been a teacher in the DOE for over 20 years. I have always worked hard to be the best teacher for the students in my charge and have dedicated the bulk of my career to supporting our state's most vulnerable and at-risk students.

During my time as a teacher, I always held a second job at a hotel in order to provide my family with the extra money needed to afford Hawaii's high cost of living. While I gave my all to my students and school, I would often have to leave immediately after school to race to my second job. I worked nights and weekends at the hotel so that I was able to earn enough to provide for my family. This was a tremendous challenge and hardship. That changed in 2020, when differential pay was added to my DOE compensation.

Differential pay allowed me to turn all of my energy, time, and focus to my one job of teaching. Teaching is a demanding profession that requires skill, knowledge, and experience. Teaching SPED in a hard-to-fill location requires all these things and more. With differential pay as a part of my compensation, I was able to be that much better. My students benefited from my renewed focus and I, as a professional, found a renewed sense of pride and enthusiasm for teaching.

If differential pay is taken away, I will have to once again find additional employment positions to supplement my DOE paycheck or may have to leave the teaching profession entirely. I beg you to reconsider and see that taking away differential pay will have drastic consequences for Hawaii's teachers, students, families, and the educational system as a whole.

Mahalo nui for your consideration,

Kai Balubar
Olomana School
Keolaokekai Balubar
10005348@k12.hi.us

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

From: Anne Au <thunderlotus@icloud.com> on behalf of Anne Au
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:51 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Hawaiian Immersion Schools

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

I write this testimony in **SUPPORT** to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A., with Chair Payne's proposed recommendation that the "Board direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval." In particular, I submit this testimony in support of kumu kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion teachers) as a mākua (parent) with keiki that attended kula kaiapuni and based on my experience as the Parent Community Network Center (PCNC) for Ke Kula Kaiāpuni 'o Ānuenue. I appreciate and commend Chair Payne for her memorandum ("memo") dated [February 18, 2021](#) to the Board of Education for this Special Meeting, and also add to key points she included in her memo.

As Chair Payne's memo notes, the DOE is Constitutionally mandated to provide Hawaiian medium education under the recent Hawai'i Supreme Court decision in Clarabal v. Department of Education. Kumu kaiapuni are a critical and necessary component to the DOE to fulfill its Constitutional mandate in providing Hawaiian medium education, and as Board Policy 105-8 states,

"The program's success is largely dependent on the capacity, capability and expertise of the program's professional staff. The Department will establish professional qualifications and develop training programs internally and/or in cooperation with stakeholder groups/universities. The goal is for program professionals to be qualified in both English as a medium of instruction and Hawaiian as a medium of instruction and **appropriately compensated for these additional qualifications.**"

Providing kumu kaiapuni with this needed pay differential will in-turn help the DOE to fulfill its constitutional mandate to provide Hawaiian medium education.

Expanding upon this Constitutional mandate, it is also the DOE's continued commitment to equity, as stated in its Strategic Plan and the 2030 Promise Plan that would be furthered with providing kumu kaiapuni this needed pay differential. In terms of equity, haumāna kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion students) are among the student group disparately impacted as a result of COVID-19. Not only was KĀ'EO testing not administered last year due to the pandemic, but also haumāna kaiapuni have experineced unique opportunity to learn impacts during this pandemic. See ['Aha Kauleo's meeting minutes](#) with survey results on opportunity to learn metrics.

Lastly, and this is likely the most obvious to you all, this pay differential was previously approved. As noted in Chair Payne's memo, Superintendent Kishimoto did not anticipate this to be a pilot program or to cease beyond 2021. Questions and discussion have been ongoing with regards to preparing for legislative budget shortfalls, even prior to the pandemic, and identifying funding sources. With all of the prior points mentioned, and in light of the anticipated budget shortfall from Governor Ige being 7.5% less than anticipated, the pay differential for kumu kaiapuni should not be where cuts are made.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. I urge members to **SUPPORT** the recommendation for the Board to direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her February 9, 2021 memorandum and refrain from taking action on any teacher pay differentials without prior Board approval.

Mahalo,
Kaiolohia Maii

Testimony BOE

From: Torie avenue <torieavenue@gmail.com> on behalf of Torie avenue
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:51 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: URGENT TESTIMONY

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Torie Avenue and I am a parent of my 3 keiki that attend Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

Please take into consideration the importance of keeping Olelo Hawai'i and Kaiapuni schools throughout our islands. We as parents have a purpose for our children, ensuring our Hawaiian culture, education, and language stay alive and are thriving during these times of hardship. Should you take these away, what will we have left?

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Na Ohana Merola, Na Ohana Avenue, Na Ohana Kanaka'ole, Na Ohana Ahia, Na Ohana Kepilino

Testimony BOE

From: Tyler Winsor <tywinsor@gmail.com> on behalf of Tyler Winsor
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:48 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony in Support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. I am currently employed as a Special Education teacher at James B. Castle High School.

I am writing today to implore Superintendent Kishimoto to immediately rescind her memo dated the 9th of February 2021, regarding eliminating teacher pay differentials for the 'hard to staff', and immensely important, areas of Special Education, Hawaiian Language Immersion, and Geographically hard to staff locations.

As a Highly Qualified, Master's level, Special Education Teacher, recently deciding to transition from the Northeast to Hawaii meant a significant pay cut. The high cost of living coupled with the base average salary consistently puts Hawaii amongst the worst states to teach based on compensation in several national rating reports. The pay differential that was available to teachers in Hawaii in my field was a major factor in my decision to move.

Reneging on the differential pay would cause financial hardship for myself and my household. Consideration to relocate or change careers would unfortunately need to be on the table. In her own letter to Chair Person, Payne dated the 5th of December 2019, Superintendent Kishimoto herself, articulately outlined and provided compelling data for how differential compensation in hard to staff areas would greatly help to mitigate the dire teacher shortage and retention problem facing the state. Since adopted, these measures have been effective based on available data. The risk of regression in teacher retention and recruitment for Hawaii would be unnecessarily heightened in the event that the differentials are rescinded.

Beyond the personal financial challenges and the hypocrisy that rescinding the pay differentials would bring, I am most concerned about this proposal because it is our most vulnerable students who would be negatively impacted. Students in isolated locations and those with special needs would face losing Highly Qualified Teachers. Those same teachers, as well as many others, are actively reducing the achievement gaps facing these student populations across the state. Additionally, a pay reduction leading to a decrease in qualified Special Educators in Hawaii would open the door to the potential and extremely costly litigation through IDEA and FAPE.

The 'hard to staff' positions need to be held by qualified staff. The pay differential makes it viable for these professionals to work in Hawaii and reduce the achievement gap for the state. The evidence has shown that the differentials have been effective to mitigate the teacher shortage crisis. This short sighted cost cutting measure would be detrimental to student success and the long term goals identified by the department.

For all of the aforementioned reasons and many others, please rescind the memorandum dated the 9th of February 2021, from Superintendent Kishimoto. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, student's need more resources more than ever, not less.

Sincerely,
Tyler Winsor

Testimony BOE

From: Ayla Mossman <ktown143@hotmail.com> on behalf of Ayla Mossman
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:48 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Differential pay

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Ayla and I am a Parent at Keolu
'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographic locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and

Testimony BOE

From: Moses Magno <m.magno@seariders.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Moses Magno
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:41 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Shortage Differential Tesimony

February 17, 2021

Aloha Kākou!!!

I am submitting a testimony in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting regarding Superintendent Christine Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers who serve in various teaching positions in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Moses Magno, I am a Special Education teacher at my high school alma mater, Waianae High School. I have been employed in the Hawaii Department of Education since 2014 serving in various positions before taking on the role of being a licensed special education Teacher. I am born and raised in Wai'anae and have the utmost love for my community, children, and our families. I came into the teaching profession with the mindset of "imparting an influential impact and becoming a champion of education for all students at Wai'anae High School." However, like every hard working individual in the State of Hawai'i, We still have to live and pay bills to survive.

It is a concerning factor, and inhumane to hear and see on the new the unethical decisions about teacher salaries and differentials that our State Superintendent, Dr. Christina Kishimoto has been advocating for. It is a shame that she does not support the HDOE teachers who are working tirelessly hard day in and day out trying to make sure that all of our students are being given an effective, quality, and comprehensive education that will help our students to become career and life ready. If BOE does not recognize the detrimental effects of these differential cuts, it will create a bigger crisis on teacher turnover.

The unique and smartest decision that I have witnessed was the Board of Education's decision to increase the differentials provided to special education teachers, Hawaiian language teachers and those teachers who serve students in hard to staff and underprivileged places. I have witnessed the positive result of that decision and because of the implementation of the shortage differentials, I am able to survive and pay all of my bills and do recreational things.

I am asking that the Hawai'i Board of Education and Superintendent Christine Kishimoto rescind her memo stopping the shortage differentials. That would be extremely detrimental to the students who need quality support and teaching. The board did not expect or intend for the differentials to end in 2021 and did not instruct Christine Kishimoto to unilaterally discontinue the differential pay.

I am counting on you to see the wisdom in continuing the payment of differentials. It is a move in a long overdue positive direction. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Moses Magno III (MAGZ), AA, BAP, PBCE
Upper Academy
Community-Based Instruction Teacher
Senior Class Advisor (2020)
Proud Searider Alumnus ('08)
Wai'anae High School
Ph: (808) 697-9400
Fax: (808) 697-7018

Testimony BOE

From: Jill Jacobs <jillybean05@gmail.com> on behalf of Jill Jacobs
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:38 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Dear Chair Payne and Board Members,

My name is Jill Jacobs. I teacher third grade at Kealakehe Elementary School in Kona. This is my eighth year teaching in Hawaii. I am writing you today to plead with you that we continue to finds means to fund the shortage differentials that were put into effect December 2019. I will also be addressing my concerns with budget cuts.

I want to share with you all what it is like for a teacher with experience to move Hawaii to teach. I taught for seven years in Arizona. I also had a master's degree in education. Then I looked into moving. This was not a choice I took lightly. I looked in salary schedules, cost of living, cost of insurance, price of grocery, and much more. I wanted to make sure that I made the choice to move 2600 plus thousand miles away from my family that I would be able to survive on my teacher income. According to the salary schedule compared to my contract amount in Arizona I should have made more than enough survive, so in July of 2013 I moved to Kona to teach.

My savings was quickly drained buying a car, make deposits on an apartment, and utilities, buy furniture, and the daily supplies needed to lead a life. By the time July was ending my saving was nearly gone and I was in dire need of my first paycheck in Hawaii. Little did I know that new teachers in Hawaii are not paid until late August. I have heard stories of people who were hired late and paper be delayed not being paid for months. So as July closed and August drew near I did not have money to pay rent or put gas in my car to drive the 70 miles round trip from my apartment in Kona to my school in Waikoloa. So I called my sister and borrowed \$3000 to make it through August and until I got paid, think that with year increase from Arizona to Hawaii over almost \$8000 I would be able to easily pay my sister back and not have to stress about having enough money to survive. Well August 20th rolled around, and I received my first paycheck. I was shocked to see that my take home was only \$100 more a check than my take home in Arizona, because of all the additional deductions taken and now I was being paid twice a month instead of bi-weekly. I called my parents crying debating if I had made a good choice in moving to Hawaii. I struggle with making ends meet and my sister allowed me to wait to pay her back. However, I knew that I had to quickly increase my salary, so I enrolled in a second master's degree program and took the max amount on my student loans so that I would have a safety net.

Fast forward to August 2014, now working on a second master and receiving a step increase along the way (which only works out to about \$50 take home a check for teachers) I was still struggling greatly to make ends meet and had a rent increase. So I took on my first part time additional job as a teacher. This taking away time and energy that was already stretched so thin from teaching, working on a Master's, and commuting three hours daily for work.

Fast forward to August 2015, now completed a second master's and working a second job and still living paycheck to paycheck. Knowing that the fastest path to pay increase is more education I again started another master's program and again took out the max amount on my student loans because I had to again borrow money from my sister because the clutch on my car went out and then the engine went out so I had to purchase a new car. So master's program number three was start which would move me to a class seven. I thought surely this would allow me to no longer have to have a second job to survive in Hawaii. Boy was I wrong. Now with a car payment and another increase in rent I still was barely making it. So I added an additional part time job. Now as a teacher with two master's degrees, working on a third, I had to have three jobs just to survive in Hawaii.

Now fast forward to fall of 2017 now reclassified to a class seven, sitting on \$130,000 in student loans and I still had to work a part time job to make ends meet. I started driving ride share which was lucrative for me and allowed me to quick my other two part time jobs but greatly took from my time and energy for my students. I would have to work late on

weeknights which made me tired while teaching. I would drive pretty much all weekend which meant that I could not attend students sporting events or be involved in the community. However, for the first time in my teaching career in Hawaii I had enough money to not be stressed about money, but I had not extra time or energy.

Now when the differentials were announced in December 2019 I was over the money because finally after getting three master's degrees, and a roommate for my one-bedroom apartment I would not longer have to work a second job.

This board is what it truly looks like for teachers to move to Hawaii from other states. We struggle to make ends meet. While Arizona on paper seems to pay less than Hawaii does, there are so many more deductions here that teachers make less. This is a huge part of the reason that we can not retain teachers in Hawaii.

I beg of you to please not take the differentials. The thought of next year again having to have a part time jobs makes me sick. This school year has been the hardest year in my almost 16 years of teaching. The always changing situation in which we teach. The learning to teach and reach students in new ways. The never knowing what change will happen next or when it will happen. These all make teaching more stressful than ever. We as teachers know next year will be just as challenge, maybe even more challenging as we will be teaching students who have not had "normal" school in over a year. We know there will be new regulations and challenges to face. Please do not make any teachers have to take on additional work in these challenging times. Please keep the differentials. They have worked. Taking them away will only dramatically increase the teacher shortage crisis.

Now to talk about the proposed budget cuts to education. The plan that has been proposed at our school show a loss of almost all of our Educational Assistance in Special Education classrooms. The plan also show the loss of three teaching positions (all classroom teachers not non classroom positions, which is a battle for another day), the loss of almost all of our casual hires (classroom tutors, playground aid, cafeteria support staff, etc..), loss of a VP position, cut to the budget for classroom supplies, loss of many of the online resources that we as teachers use in our classrooms and much more. This will loses will result in higher class sizes in a year that will be very challenging. It also great increases the challenges of special education teachers having to meet the varying needs of students since they will not have support from EA's. I understand that the state is in dire economic situation. However, trying to justify taking money from an already struggling education system and the impact that will have on the future of Hawaii is sickening.

Thank you,

Jill Jacobs

3rd Grade Teacher Kealakehe Elementary

MSEd, MAEd, MAT

Testimony BOE

From: Ku'ulei Salzer <salzer@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Ku'ulei Salzer
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:36 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

TESTIMONY

Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A

Ku'ulei Salzer-Vitale. Makua (Parent) Kula Kaiapuni.

Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Position: SUPPORT

Statement

Aloha e Board Memebers,

I am writing in strong support to rescind the letter of Superintendent Kishimoto in their decision to discontinue BOE policy 105-8 without the Board's approval. I am appalled that Superintendent Kishimoto would decrease funding for immersion teachers. These positions require additional certification and criteria that not all license teachers in Hawaii have. Already approved BOE Policy 105-8 which states Hawaiian immersion will be compensated for the extra skill set that is required. It is the responsibility of the state to compensate teachers who meet these criteria. 2020 differential has helped to decrease the number of vacancies in kaiapuni schools which allow schools to survive. I understand that due to the global pandemic funding has become a serious issue, but to have one person discontinue extra compensation for Hawaiian language teachers is an act of racism. The amount of money needed to comply with this BOE Policy is not a lot and affordable. I would be happy to answer any questions the board might have for me. I can be reached at 808-268-5765.

I lā maika'i

Have a good day

Mahalo,

Ku'uleialohaonālani Salzer-Vitale

Testimony BOE

From: bonnie blake <bon2blake@yahoo.com> on behalf of bonnie blake
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:33 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Aloha Board of Education Members,

I am submitting my testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am currently a special education teacher in the Windward District in grades 7-12. I have been at this school for fifteen years and have seen many qualified licensed special education teachers leave to the mainland for better work because it was too difficult to live in Hawaii without the differential pay. Our school has had to fill SPED teacher positions with substitute teachers temporarily year after year. This has been difficult for our department having to have new teachers that have not been trained in understanding and working with students that have a variety of disabilities in the classroom. The year to year change of teachers does affect the students academic learning and the ability to provide for the special needs of these students.

Students are affected first of all by building relationships with teachers. At the secondary level, students continue to have domestic challenges that also affect their ability to focus in school. Teachers are the building blocks to help students especially with behavior or mental health issues. Without consistent special education teachers, these students don't find a reason or purpose to continue with their education. It's always the reward of seeing students as the first came in to the school and seeing how they have been molded into a life long learner and a contributing member of the community.

Although it may be difficult to have teachers who are both licensed and qualified in special education here on the north shore, I have continued to remain at this school. We could still get the help we need to have special education teachers here at our school if teachers were allowed to continue with the differential pay. I have been able to experience some assistance with family financial burdens this year with the differential pay. I have other immediate family members that had their jobs affected by the Covid 19 pandemic, which greatly affected our household. I am also still paying for my school loan that I had to take to increase my pay to a masters degree in education which increased by only \$4,000. However, my school loan is more than \$25,000. The differential pay has greatly help to lift some of the financial burdens this year.

Thank you for this opportunity to hear my voice as to the positive impact differential pay can have on special education teachers in the state of Hawaii. Please help our special education teachers and our students with special needs to keep the differential pay.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Blake

Testimony BOE

From: Kēhau Camara <Kehau_Camara@anuenue.org> on behalf of Kēhau Camara
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:31 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY - BOE Policy 105-8 Hawaiian Immersion Differential

Aloha,

My name is Kēhau Camara and I have been a Hawaiian Immersion teacher for approximately 25 years. I know first hand how this differential is so desperately needed and is essential to help with keeping teachers in our special field. I know first hand that the work load is double then that of an english teacher as there are limited resources for Hawaiian Immersion teachers and students. Besides the lack of materials, teaching in Hawaiian immersion takes dedication and commitment because of the long hours and underdeveloped curriculum available. In addition to this, our economy is so high most of us including myself cannot afford to live independently without multiple household incomes. We see how teacher shortage is already a general problem because of lack of compensation. Some teachers are forced to leave their profession or acquire other part time jobs because teaching does not provide sufficient compensation to take care of one's family here in Hawai'i. Please do not cut Hawaiian Immersion Differentials because for some of us it provides hope and reassurance to continue to do what we love for the future of our people and the host culture we call Hawai'i not to mention, Hawaiian is the language of this state. Once, you lose Hawaiian language, you lose identity and the essence of our home we call Hawai'i. Why then call us Hawai'i if you lose your culture and language as well as your identity.

Mahalo nui,
Kēhau Camara
2528 10th Ave.
Honolulu Hi, 96816

This e-mail is being sent by a student or employee of Kula Kaiapuni 'O Ānuenue.

Testimony BOE

From: Florence Langaman <flo_cads@yahoo.com> on behalf of Florence Langaman
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:22 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony

Dear BOE,

I have been an educator for 30 years. I am asking that you consider using the funding for teacher's salary. This is what we rightfully deserve. I am stuck in Class 7, step 13. Other teachers nearly make almost as much as me and yet I am unable to move up in Class or Step. It was already getting approved for teachers to receive this compression pay before the pandemic.

Teachers rightfully deserve this raise. I still have a mortgage and two college students. My husband recently was hospitalized and is unable to work. We are struggling. I will be getting a cut of nearly \$8500 a year. This is not ok. I am ready to retire, but with budget cuts in teacher's salary, this will negatively affect my retirement and my social security.

I will be turning 55 and strongly considering leaving or retiring from teaching due to the lack of support for teachers. I cannot even move up in steps. I strongly suggest you use the funding for teacher's compression pay and/or salary raises because we work tirelessly, especially now with the pandemic and accommodating families for virtual teaching/zoom meetings. We have learned so many online programs and platforms. We deserve a raise.

DOE will be negatively impacted when nearly 700+ teachers leave the profession due to retirement, frustration, no respect for all that we are expected to do.

Please consider giving us our salary raises/ compression pay or Hawaii schools and keikis will suffer.

Sincerely yours,
Florence Langaman

Iola Caldito Balubar
38 Keonaona Lane
Wailuku, HI 96793

February 17, 2021

Hawaii State Board of Education
Honolulu, HI
testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

SUBJECT: BOE General Business Meeting Action Item V.B.

Aloha, my name is Kumu Hula Aunty Iola Balubar of Halau Hula O Keola Alii O Kekai'i on Maui. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth as they are important to the future of our keiki.

My son, Keolaokakai Balubar is a special education teacher at Olomana School on Oahu. My son and his wife, Coral have two sons. If funds are not provided to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, my son will struggle financially. This would mean he will take two or three jobs to make both ends meet. If this happens he will compromise his health, time with family and would not be able to concentrate in teaching his special needs students.

I humbly request to provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers.

Should you need to contact me, you may do so at (808) 250-5938 or email iolabalubar@gmail.com. Mahalo nui loa.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Iola Caldito Balubar".

Kumu Hula Aunty Iola Caldito Balubar

Testimony BOE

From: Linsi Osland <linsi.osland@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Linsi Osland
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:21 AM
To: TESTIMONY.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Linsi Osland and I am a second year special education teacher at Kealakehe Elementary School. The purpose of this email is to address the direct impact removing differentials and increasing budget cuts will have on myself, our school, and our community.

It has been extremely disappointing seeing education funding being viewed as the first resort to get us out of our current financial crisis. I received my undergraduate degree in a state that is nationally ranked for their support for public education, and I took a significant pay cut in order to teach in Hawaii. I love my job and my students, but I will not be able to survive on Hawaii island if our salary continues to decrease.

If I am having to work additional jobs in order to survive and continue to teach in Hawaii, this means that I will be taking jobs away from those in equal need in our community. It is also noteworthy to mention the extreme social-emotional distress COVID-19 has placed on our students due to the lack of stability and uncertainty at home. School is a "safe space" for many of our students, and continuing to decrease pay for teachers and remove well earned and deserved differentials not only hurts us, but directly hurts our students as well.

Prior to the hard to staff and special education differentials going into effect, my take home pay was less than \$1,200 a paycheck. My base rent alone is \$1,000, and when additional bills are considered, I am spending a paycheck and a half just to meet my basic needs to live in Hawaii. This is not sustainable. Teachers should not have to work several jobs on a single income in order to make ends meet. It is insulting to be considered an essential worker but to not be treated/paid as essential.

Speaking specifically in regard to the SPED differentials, I am licensed in both special education and elementary education, and decreasing the pay differential for special education teachers would strongly influence my desire to stay in the field of special education as we move forward with hybrid and distance learning this school year. This past spring, general education teachers were expected to provide enrichment activities due to the lack of preparation and educational equity that we faced during these unprecedented times. However, special education teachers were required to log all contact attempts with families, meet virtually with students, collect data related to annual goals, revise/write annual IEPs, update quarterly progress reports, and provide evidence of instructional attempts and opportunities provided for students. This fall, in addition to servicing my students, I have had to hold School Closure Contingency Plan meetings, Total Distance Learning Plan meetings, meet the minute requirements for all of my students, and communicate with families daily, all while still attempting to follow the inclusion model and allow my students to have opportunities to interact with their non-disabled peers while still receiving specially designed instruction. If special education pay differentials will be eliminated or cut entirely, I will have to consider other options that may include leaving my role as a special education teacher to teach general education or relocating to the mainland due to financial limitations.

The need for special education teachers, and teachers in general, is already so high. Decreasing the special education pay differential will only continue to increase the need in this field, which simultaneously harms our

keiki who deserve a quality education. Ultimately, supporting our keiki and community needs to start with supporting education.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

--

Linsi Osland

3rd Grade Special Education Teacher

Kealakehe Elementary School

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

From: Ben Macklin <gb.macklin@gmail.com> on behalf of Ben Macklin
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:14 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony

Dear Board of Education,

Thank you for fighting for teachers and students. There is no better way to instruct our children than personal instruction from a motivated professional. Every day I differentiate my lesson to fit EACH student; every teacher does this when we explain our lessons to each student to fill the gap between instruction and understanding. If you allow the DOE to cut our pay, my wife and I will find it unsustainable and move back to Texas. My wife has her master's degree and I have my earned master's degree and my Ph.D. and combined over 50 years of education experience. Additionally, we bring creative projects into our classroom, add Ha to our curriculum, include current events in our lessons, introduce students to all the soft skills necessary to navigate through our complex world, and often times buy school supplies and food for our students.

If pay is cut, we will be like migrant laborers and go where the money meets daily living needs and allows for some savings for old age. I'm 54 and too old to put my future in the hands of a Department of Education that would cut my pay, replace me with a computer, or try to hire a tutor (with no benefits) to undercut me. The only other step they could do that would be worse would be to outsource our jobs to China or India.

Please advocate for professional teachers.

Mahalo,

George Macklin, Ph.D.
Kealakehe High School
English Department

Testimony BOE

From: Susan Doherty Bishop <susandohertybishop@hotmail.com> on behalf of Susan Doherty Bishop
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:14 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Tutors vs. Teachers

Aloha

I am a certified and licensed Special Education teacher with 25+ years of teaching experience who was recruited by the Hawaii DOE in New York. I accepted a teaching position on Oahu beginning the 2019-2020 school year. I sold my home and moved to Hawaii lock, stock and barrel. Now, in the 2020-2021 school year I have been told I am being let go at the end of this school year for budgetary reasons. Yet, unlicensed tutors will be hired.

I moved here in good faith, 6,000 miles, to be replaced by a tutor. I will be on unemployment, and as I have no family here, facing potential homelessness. I sold my home and moved here after being recruited to teach in Hawaii for this? Laying off teachers is not only financially devastating and grossly unfair to me, but not in the best interest of my Special Education students. All students, including SpEd students, need and deserve well qualified teachers to help them learn. The decision to lay off qualified and experienced teachers and hire tutors is not putting students and their education needs first.

Mahalo

SusanBishop

Peace

Testimony BOE

From: Kaipo Crouch <kcrouch@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kaipo Crouch
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:13 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Kaipo Crouch and I am the sixth grade teacher at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Kumu Kaipo Crouch
Papa 6

Testimony BOE

From: Chris Reihanifam <creihani@gmail.com> on behalf of Chris Reihanifam
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:12 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a family member of a special education teacher in the state of Hawaii and I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuous of extra compensation for classroom teacher in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. I am writing this letter to inform you that I oppose the budget cuts for special education teachers differential pay. Discontinuing shortage differentials will affect her ability to afford to live and teach in Hawaii. These special education teachers should not struggle to survive after all they have done for their students, especially this year. She has put herself at risk of coming into contact with someone with Covid-19 so that she could service students with special needs since August of 2020. You must realize that this differential pay is vital if you want to maintain the special education teachers that you have, including her. These students deserve to have qualified classroom teachers supporting them. A lack of qualified teachers will only hurt your schools and the students. Students will not receive the proper instruction and interventions they need without the support of these qualified teachers. The knowledge these teachers have provides students safe, encouraging, engaging and educational learning environments/experiences. Please consider the effects of discounting the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Sincerely,

Christopher Reihanifam

Testimony BOE

From: Kristina De Witt <kristinakauai@gmail.com> on behalf of Kristina De Witt
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:12 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha BOE and others,

I am submitting a testimony for the BOE Special Meeting **Action Item A:** Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am a teacher at Pearl Harbor Elementary,

Please reconsider and look at the data! The percentage of special educators staying in the profession after the differentials were implemented has increased significantly, and the percentage of special educators leaving the position has decreased significantly!

I myself before the differentials were announced considered moving to a general education position as the pay (was) the same and the workload was dramatically less than a special education position. This differential announcement encouraged me to stay in the position as a SPED teacher. If the differentials are revoked, I will be forced to make this decision again, as I refuse to be highly qualified but paid the same as general education teachers.

Special education teachers not only have the typical tasks as a general education teacher does, but we are required to provide individualized instruction which means we have to plan and modify instruction for each and every one of our students. We are also required to hold IEP meetings annually and three IEP meetings for those students that are due for a reevaluation of special education services. Preparing for these meetings takes hours, and writing the IEP takes many hours. Not to mention the post-meeting work that takes much time to activate the IEP as well. SPED teachers also have to write general education report cards as well as another set of reports for the IEP. It is easy to see that in most situations we have twice as much work as general education teachers.

Please please reconsider this decision. It has made a positive impact on the students to have qualified special education teachers in the classrooms versus unqualified/unlicensed special education teachers providing services.

Thank you,
Kristina

Testimony BOE

From: Kanoe Vares <javares@ksbe.edu> on behalf of Kanoe Vares
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:11 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Kanoe Vares, writing in regards to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A. I am proud parent of a student at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Ānuenue and I write to ask for continued support of the shortage differentials that our immersion schools sorely need. Please do not walk back on this BOE policy which is affordable. I have noticed how the 2020 differentials have increased morale around school teachers. The funds has also helped increase the amount of teachers in an already unbalanced student to teacher ratio particularly at our burgeoning elementary school. Please compensate our 'ōlelo Hawai'i teachers fairly for their extra skill set. The survival of our language depends upon the survival of our teachers in this overpriced state.

Me ka ha'aha'a,
Kanoe Vares

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Testimony BOE

From: Emiko Joy <emiko.joy@paia.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Emiko Joy
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:08 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Kula Kaiapuni Teacher Shortage Differentials

Aloha kākou e nā lālā o ka BOE,

I am a teacher in the Kula Kaiapuni program for the past 4 years. I have already submitted testimony as a teacher.

I am writing you this testimonial separately regarding the continuance of the shortage differentials for teachers in the Kula Kaiapuni program as part of the agreement as stated in BOE policy 105-8, as a parent.

My family has been embraced by the program since our time in Pūnana Leo o Maui, our community's Hawaiian Immersion Early Childhood Education program (accredited). It has been a wonderful experience and life-changing. I am now seeing my grandchildren learning their 'ōlelo makuahine.

As a long-time parent in the program, I have seen constant teacher shortages impact the learning of our students, including my own children who have had *years* of long-term substitutes (collectively) because of this shortage. It has been hard to watch, and so very tempting to leave the program due to less than quality instruction, no matter how well-intentioned the unqualified teachers are or how hard they tried to provide the best instruction they could. We managed to keep our children all in the program by filling the gaps as parents and making sure we had a parent proficient in 'ōlelo Hawai'i in the home.

I am so thankful for every kumu we have with us. I have recently been hearing comments that some of our kumu, who are already struggling with the technology and system of Distance Learning, are thinking of other means of employment or moving to the mainland. I hope we do not lose any more to DL challenges much less the removal of the differential they have been becoming accustomed to. I know that we all have to tighten the purse strings and we have, but if there is a way to keep the differentials for our kumu, please find it.

Me ka 'Oia'i'o Aloha,

Q. Emiko Joy

Testimony BOE

From: Andrea Peregretti <andrearei12@yahoo.com> on behalf of Andrea Peregretti
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:08 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a family member of a special education teacher in the state of Hawaii and I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuous of extra compensation for classroom teacher in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. I am writing this letter to inform you that I oppose the budget cuts for special education teachers differential pay. Discontinuing shortage differentials will affect her ability to afford to live and teach in Hawaii. These special education teachers should not struggle to survive after all they have done for their students, especially this year. She has put herself at risk of coming into contact with someone with Covid-19 so that she could service students with special needs since August of 2020. You must realize that this differential pay is vital if you want to maintain the special education teachers that you have, including her. These students deserve to have qualified classroom teachers supporting them. A lack of qualified teachers will only hurt your schools and the students. Students will not receive the proper instruction and interventions they need without the support of these qualified teachers. The knowledge these teachers have provides students safe, encouraging, engaging and educational learning environments/experiences. Please consider the effects of discounting the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Sincerely,

Andrea Peregretti
37 Night Bloom
Irvine, CA 92602
949.929.2972

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: Satele 'Ohana <palisades.sateles@gmail.com> on behalf of Satele 'Ohana
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:06 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony of Behalf the Satele Family

Aloha BOE,

I humbly submit testimony on behalf of myself and family to address the proposed measure in Thursday's agenda- "II. A. Board of Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and **Hawaiian language immersion programs.**"

We **STRONGLY URGE** the Board to reject this proposal which discontinues rightful differential compensation, as addressed in the implementation of BOE policy 105-8, to Kumu (teachers) instructing in the Hawaiian language immersion programs.

My family are grateful beneficiaries of the Kaiapuni (Hawaiian Immersion) school system. Both my children (kindergarten and first grade) have been incredibly blessed by the limitless hardwork and effort exerted by these Kumu. Their dual qualifications as stated in BOE Policy 105-8 are apparent as they navigate both English and Hawaiian languages in their instruction and interactions with families. This is an incredibly difficult task and had it not been for their unique duality of skill sets we would not be able to thrive in the harsh conditions of this COVID-19 season and school year.

Please consider this small yet significant plea of one family and potentially on behalf of many in the Kaiapuni system that demands to see our teachers compensated appropriately.

Thank you for your time,

Raeceen Satele

Testimony BOE

From: Richard Morse <0rmorse0@gmail.com> on behalf of Richard Morse
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:06 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony- BOE Special Meeting 2/17/2021

Testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A
2/17/2021

Dear Chair and members of HI BOE

I have a young friend, Luke, who was born with Down syndrome. He is being affected by this cut in special-ed funding. It will mean he loses his teacher and school.

After a full year of fear and instability for us all, we begin to have a sense that things are retuning to normal. For Luke, that return to normalcy came in the pay hike to special-ed teachers, in January. (If I understand that correctly)

Now, two months later, you are going to yank that away from him?

That strikes me, at best, as bad government. I'm sure you can come up with ways to cure your budget shortfalls that don't hurt those who are most vulnerable and least resilient. I realize that you have tough choices to make.

Thank you for your Consideration.

Richard Morse
P.O. Box 944
Kilauea HI 96754
cell 808 265 6858

Testimony BOE

From: roses@hawaiiintel.net
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:06 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am Sherry Rose, General Education ELA teacher at Farrington High School. I have been a teacher with Hawai'i DOE for 50 years.

I am continually disappointed in the negative actions being taken by our current superintendent. When differentials were announced, I was encouraged by the news as after so long, I believed that the DOE was finally moving in the correct direction to encourage teachers to remain in our profession, move to shortage positions, and help to ensure that a qualified professional was teaching our students in as many classrooms as possible.

I understand the budgetary constraints our state is currently under, but this is not the place to cut. Many teachers are currently able to retire, but we remain because we care about our students and the monetary incentives are not only needed in this uncertain time, they are well deserved! Many teachers have relocated to help staff schools far from their homes--some have even moved to be closer to those geographically isolated locations. And, it goes without saying that our Special Education colleagues are overworked and sadly underpaid for the hours and hours of additional work creating IEPs, meeting with parents and support service providers (lawyers, doctors, behavioral specialists, etc.)--all in addition to creating lessons and individualized instruction for their special needs students.

My, granddaughter, a junior in high school on the Big Island, was unable to choose a class in the Hawaiian Language because there was no qualified teacher at her school. This is an official language of our islands and part of her heritage. Auwe that we are not able to ensure every student the opportunity to learn in our public schools!

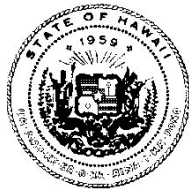
Please support our students and teachers. Direct the superintendent to recind her memo ending teacher shortage differentials.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Rose

DAVID IGE
GOVERNOR

DAVID GIBSON
HO'OKAKO'O CORPORATION
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



YVONNE LAU
CHARTER SCHOOLS
INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PAUL KEPKA
PRINCIPAL

STATE OF HAWAII
Kamaile Academy PCS
85-180 Ala Akau Street
Waianae, Hawaii 96792

February 17, 2021

To: Board of Education, State of Hawaii

From: Paul Kepka, Principal Kamaile Academy PCS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Kepka".

Re: Testimony on Rescinding Hard to Fill Bonus

Kamaile Academy supports hard to fill differentials for teachers, however as a public conversion charter school we strongly advocate for equity of funding to ensure that we can remain competitive with the DOE schools in the community, while not creating a financial burden on the school.

Kamaile Academy PCS is located in a hard to fill area on the Waianae Coast. As a conversion charter school we are the homeschool for the majority of our students.

Our school has consistently matched the DOE's hard to fill differentials in an effort to help with teacher recruitment and retention, while also staying competitive with our neighboring DOE schools in the community. Should Kamaile not offer consistent hard to fill differentials the school risks losing our staff to neighboring schools.

Charter schools have not been provided with additional funding for any hard to fill differentials. Schools must pay differentials to teachers out of our per pupil funding allocation. For Kamaile Academy this is a financial impact of approximately 550,000 per year. Budget short falls are leading our school to make difficult decisions related to reducing our budgets through various cost savings that include cutting staff, cutting salary (via furlough) and, or, cutting hard to fill differentials. .

Charter schools, as public schools, should be provided with an additional budget line of funding so that we can offer hard to fill differentials without a negative impact on the overall school budget.

Kamaile Academy PCS asks that the Board of Education consider charter schools in their decision making process regarding hard to fill differentials for public schools.

Testimony BOE

From: Ric Ornellas <ornellasric@gmail.com> on behalf of Ric Ornellas
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:06 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony_Feb18

I am submitting Testimony for the February 18, 2021 Hearing

[Testimony_for_Feb18_ROrnellas](#)

Testimony BOE

From: liberty furchgott <libertypoetez@yahoo.com> on behalf of liberty furchgott
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:05 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am writing to submit testimony for the [BOE Special Meeting Action Item A](#): Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I've been teaching in state of Hawaii for over 13 years and I am currently a special education teacher at a school designated as a hard-to-staff geographical location; Honoka'a High and Intermediate School. Over the years I have seen teachers, some qualified and some not, come and go like a revolving door and I have witnessed the negative effects of this inconsistency on the students. When teachers leave for better paying positions or jobs closer to home the hard to staff schools and the difficult to fill positions end up with staff who never fully understand the community they serve and who lack the empirical expertise that comes with experience in the field.

What I have seen with the differentials is an effective incentive to keep teachers in those hard to staff schools and filling hard to fill positions. The differentials were a great start to addressing the challenges with teacher retention and shortages. The data regarding decreases in vacancies of hard to fill positions and special education positions speaks for itself; the differentials are working.

The state is on the right track to ensure that these essential positions are filled with qualified dedicated teachers but if the differentials are discontinued then I worry for the students at my small school who will again have to experience ongoing teacher exits as staff are enticed away from serving these needy communities. I urge the board to continue the differentials because without them we will surely see an increase in open positions at hard to staff geographic locations and in special education which will then be staffed by unqualified or underqualified staff which is so unfair to the communities and populations who need the most qualified educators.

Thank you for your consideration
Liberty Furchgott

Testimony BOE

From: SLL Riel <arielhsta@gmail.com> on behalf of SLL Riel
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:05 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha esteemed Board of Education members,

I am Amber Riel, a math teacher from Waianae High School. My testimony is in regards to Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. As I have stated in my previous testimony, our students in hard-to-staff with high populations of students with special needs, like Waianae, need stability most of all. The teacher turnover rate at my school leaves us training at least a dozen new teachers every year. Many of our students come from home environments in flux. Even remotely, the teachers are often the most stable and routine fixture in our students lives. The shortage differentials allow many of our teachers the financial ability to stay at our school. Since many of our teachers, like myself, commute into Waianae to serve our students' educational needs, this differential goes a long way to cover the cost of gas and vehicle maintenance just to get to and from work.

Since teaching and learning has drastically changed as a result of the coronavirus, any spare time I have outside of my work hours have been used for professional development. The differential this year provided me with the money I needed to pay to take the Praxis exam for Special Education at the mild/moderate level so that I could add that teaching field to my license. With the budget cuts this year, our school stands to lose up to 3 special education teachers, so I felt that getting licensed in special education would allow me to help my school in ways I haven't been able to before. In addition, the hard-to-staff, and later the special education, differential would allow me to dedicate my time to more professional development, instead of having to split my time and focus by looking for a second job to help make ends meet.

Overall, these differentials have been working to maintain our teaching force in the hard-to-staff, special education, and Hawaiian immersion areas which the superintendent herself identified as key areas to support. This is not an area we should be making cuts.

Amber Riel
Waianae High School
Algebra 1 & 2 Teacher
(808) 341-6171

February 17, 2021

To: Board of Education

From: Keokapukoa Kaohelauii

RE: Pay differentials for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Aloha hou mai no kakou,

I am Keokapukoa Kaohelauii, and I would like to thank the Chair and members of the BOE, and our State Superintendent for supporting the differential pay in 2019 for our Special Education teachers, teachers in a Hard-to-Staff areas, and the teachers who raised me to be confident and independent, my many kumu in Hawaiian Language Immersion education.

I am here again in 2021 to stand in **strong support** of the Hawaiian Language Immersion differential pays. I'd like to remind everyone that we, students, have wonderful teachers who are educating us about our places and spaces – our duties and responsibilities as individuals and as a collective whole, and teaching us to be responsible to one another and to the world around us.

In closing, I'd also like to remind everyone that we, every single one of us, whether you are reading this testimony, attending this hearing, in school or not, all of us, at one time had a teacher. We (especially adults who make decisions that affect our education), would not be where we are now without our teachers. We must place a higher value on our teachers in order to continue to affect positive changes for our (kids) future. I **highly recommend** that we keep the pay differentials for our Hawaiian language immersion teachers.

Mahalo,

Keokapukoa Kaohelauii
Kaneohe, Hawaii

Testimony BOE

From: Kaipu Laumakani <kbbutalo@gmail.com> on behalf of Kaipu Laumakani
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:03 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony in Regard to BOE paying Differential Payment to Kumu Kula Kaiapuni

Aloha mai kākou,

My name is Kaipulaumakaniolono, a Kanaka Maoli student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

I write today to testify with all my might and aloha that Kaiapuni educators be offered Differential Payment as outlined in the [BOE policy 105-8](#). Especially in a global pandemic, when Kānaka Maoli have been one of the communities hardest hit in Hawai‘i, we cannot afford to further subjugate the aboriginal people of this ‘āina to greater stresses. It is bad enough already that the state does not pay nearly enough of the supposed 20% of its commercial revenue due to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, yet again the state seeks to deprive ‘Ōiwi communities of vital resources like education. The very least the Board of Education and the supposed "State" of Hawai‘i can do is support the brave men and women seeking to foster the next generation.

Please, have a soul. Have some aloha for our kumu kula kaiapuni.

Mahalo nui

Kaipulaumakaniolono



Kula Ho'ona'auao
1776 University Avenue - Everly Hall 221 - Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822

We envision an educational system in Lāhui Hawai'i based on the tenets of aloha 'āina, mālama, 'ike Hawai'i, and pono that liberates and empowers Native Hawaiians to execute our genealogical kuleana to 'āina, lāhui, and keiki.

17 Pepeluali 2021

To: Papa Ho'ona'auao

From: 'Āinahou, Native Hawaiian Faculty Council

Re: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

'Auhea 'oukou e nā hoa kāko'o i ka ho'ona'auao Hawai'i,

I testify formally as a member of 'Āinahou, the Native Hawaiian Faculty Council at the College of Education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa which is a collective of five different departments in the COE (Curriculum Studies, Educational Foundations, Educational Administration, Institute for Teacher Education, Center on Disability Studies.) I also hold the kuleana of being a current teacher educator for Hawaiian Immersion, a parent, and former teacher in kula kaiapuni. An important part of our kuleana at UHM is to increase opportunities that strengthen, sustain and support Native Hawaiian education (language, history, and culture). This move to discontinue the pay differentials for Hawaiian Immersion teachers is in direct conflict with BOE policy 105-8, **"The goal is for program professionals to be qualified in both English as a medium of instruction and Hawaiian as a medium of instruction and appropriately compensated for these additional qualifications."**

As a faculty member that works with 2 of the 3 preparation accredited to prepare immersion teachers, I have seen first hand the dual nature of their qualifications. During the admission process all applicants are expected to demonstrate their expertise in both the content area that they will be teaching in addition to their proficiency in Hawaiian language and educational pedagogy. Until this differential they have never been appropriately compensated for these additional qualifications. It goes without saying that unlike other teacher positions in the HDOE, Kula Kaiapuni program cannot recruit from any other program to fill this area of need and subsequently there is a huge teacher shortage. As you know, teacher shortage has been an

ongoing problem in Hawai'i (and across the nation). "When salaries are adjusted for the cost of living, Hawai'i has the lowest-paid teachers in the nation."

As the global pandemic continues, we have also seen that unlike educators that teach in English medium schools, Hawaiian immersion teachers are solely responsible for the creation and dissemination of their curriculum that has now largely been through online platforms. There is no Acellus, Khan Academy, IXL, etc that has been specifically developed through the Hawaiian language and hence this responsibility falls disproportionately on the shoulders of classroom teachers.

In conclusion, I urge the continued pay differential for Hawaiian Immersion teachers in line with the BOE policy 105-8.

In closing, I am very supportive of ongoing increased teacher pay for Hawaiian Immersion.

Ke aloha nō,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Eōmailani K. Kukahiko". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Dr. Eōmailani Kukahiko,
UH Mānoa, College of Education

Testimony BOE

From: Joanna Wright <joannaw@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Joanna Wright
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:02 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for Meeting Regarding Differentials

Dear Board of Education,

Thank you for hearing input from teachers regarding the budget items under consideration. My name is Joanna Wright and I teach Special Education at Roosevelt High School. I have much appreciated receiving the SPED pay differential for the past year. Not only has it helped me to feel that my job is a good financial choice for my family (when I have considered switching to another position now that I am tenured), but it has also done a lot to boost my morale and commitment to the job through this particularly difficult time.

As a single mom, I am always evaluating which of my job options would best provide for my family. Receiving this differential has finally allowed me to catch up on the bills and start to consider a move to more comfortable housing. It has been a major incentive for me to keep teaching Special Education.

Last Fall was particularly difficult for Special Education teachers, as we were putting enormous amounts of time into planning to accommodate our students' needs in new ways, online and/or in person. At the same time, we were asked to shoulder a number of complicated additional documentation burdens, which included preparing for a lot of extra meetings. We have also been asked to undergo 5 hours of additional training this year, besides our other responsibilities. As I struggled to push through extra work after hours or on weekends to meet Department deadlines, I wondered whether this job was the best choice. I reminded myself that I was receiving a pay differential because the Board of Education understood how difficult my job was, and that the differential was making my family's life better, and that gave me the motivation to keep going.

Our teacher shortage areas are shortages for a reason--because fewer people actually want to teach in those fields or locations. Removing the differentials will cause teachers to leave these areas again, forcing our most vulnerable students to once again work with substitutes and frequent teacher changes, which is so harmful to them. It will also put additional pressure on the teachers and staff who stay, to pick up the burden of assisting substitutes or frequently training new people, which will reduce everyone's ability to meet our students' needs.

I understand the need to cut budgets in this tight financial time, but I think completely removing the differentials is not the answer. A complete removal of differentials, plus the 10% across the board pay cut the state has proposed, would result in a nearly 25% loss in income for myself and others in the same situation and will increase the shortages in these areas. I hope that some type of alternative or compromise can be worked out.

Thank you for your consideration,

Joanna Wright

Testimony BOE

From: Gandharva Mahina Hou Ross <ainaboypoi@yahoo.com> on behalf of Gandharva Mahina Hou Ross
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:01 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Pay Differential for Kaiapuni Kumu

E ke hoa, aloha aina,

‘O wau no ‘o Kumu Gandharva Mahina Hou Ross, he kumu Kaiapuni ma ‘O Hina i Ka Malama Kula Kiekie. Mai lawe i ka uku maiā mākou.

Aloha friend. Love the land. I am Gandharva Mahina Hou Ross and I am the only certified teacher at O Hina I ka Malama at Molokai High School and am responsible for teaching all subject areas to Hawaiian speaking students in our program in grades 9-12. I have been in this position since 1999 and only this last year with the differential am I able to support my ohana and be able to put gas in my car to get to work. Prior to receiving the differential every pay period I would go further into debt just to buy food for my children and put gas in my car to get to work across the island of Molokai. I live in Waialua at the 19 mile mark from town so I drive 60 miles every day round trip to and from work. And on Molokai gas cost \$5 a gallon. With the recent increase in shipping cost to Molokai we have seen a great increase in the cost of all our food and other essentials. I also need to spend lots of time hunting and fishing and farming on top of my teaching job just to provide food for my family. Please don't take away the differential pay for Kaiapuni teachers. It is essential to recruiting new teachers and enabling veteran teachers to continue as teachers.

Me ka ‘oia‘i‘o

Kumu Mahina Hou

Testimony BOE

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:01 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: no personal info

Concern 1: THE DIFFERENTIAL for immersion teachers never applied to charter immersion teachers so make it fair to all by including all immersion teachers.

Concern 2: Because each teacher must create curriculum in Hawaiian, the differential is justified because of the double job.

Concern 3: THE IMMERSION TEACHERS ARE QUALIFIED in both their subject matter and the language. To lay off a teacher and replace with an aide is to change our schools from a place of education to a place of babysitting. Is that really what you want?

Sent from Samsung tablet

Testimony BOE

From: Amie Stroud <amieestroud@gmail.com> on behalf of Amie Stroud
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:01 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Esteemed board,

I present this testimony for 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 spending bill.

First and foremost, let me say that I love my students, my profession, and my island. I have been so thankful for the board's past actions and stance on the matter of keeping students and educators safe and well as moving toward making the teaching profession a livable wage.

With the current state of the economy, the massive cut again falls on education, its special education taking the greatest hit at my school. At my school we have several special education teacher positions being eliminated as well as losing more than half of our educational assistants. So not only will each special educator have a greater caseload and even less support. Please re-evaluate and reconsider the definition of "unmet needs." Our vulnerable students should be taught by highly qualified professionals. They cannot afford to be part of another experiment to save money. Please invest in our children's futures!

Mahalo for your consideration,
Amie Stroud
Special Education Teacher
Kealahou Elementary

Testimony BOE

From: Ms. Angela Hoppe-Cruz <hoppe.cruz@gmail.com> on behalf of Ms. Angela Hoppe-Cruz
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:01 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Protect Pay Differential

Aloha,

See attached testimony, mahalo!

 [BOE HI:Protect Pay Differentials](#)

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Me ke aloha,

Angela T. Hoppe-Cruz, MSW

"My wish for you is that you continue. Continue to be who you are, continue to astonish a mean world with your acts of kindness."

-Maya Angelou

February 17, 2021

To: Board of Education

From: Kahea and Keoki Faria

RE: Support the **continuance** of the **extra compensation** for classroom teachers in the Hawaiian language immersion programs

Aloha mai e ka Papa Hoonaauao,

I am writing to you today in support of continuing the extra compensation for Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers. It is my strong belief that all HIDOE teacher salaries should be increased immediately to acknowledge the importance of their work. There is a major disconnection between what teachers do for our communities, families and children - they are not merely babysitters, they are educators. Our teachers help develop the knowledge and skills that maintain our society as well as a common consciousness that moves us ever closer to a just, equitable society.

Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers are particularly deserving of a salary increase in addition to a pay differential for all that is expected of them. Nearly every teacher is a second language learner of Hawaiian and in addition to being up to date on their content, Hawaiian language immersion teachers also need to continuously work towards improving their basic proficiency in Hawaiian. These teachers also need to constantly create curriculum, or in some cases edit existing curriculum – finding ways to address educational standards while ensuring that the learning is culturally relevant and appropriate. Hawaiian education continues to lack a basic K-12 curriculum that achieves language and cultural competencies while also addressing HIDOE educational outcomes. This is understandable due to the systemic policies and norms that have removed Hawaiian language, culture and history for over 100 years.

If Hawaii is truly to achieve equity and excellence in our schools it must begin with the constitutional commitment to Hawaiian language, culture and history, and the full support of our Hawaiian Language Immersion Program as a means to that end. For Hawaii will never respect diversity if it fails to prioritize its initial commitment to the aboriginal people, language and culture of this land, Hawaii.

Me ke aloha mau o ka aina,

Kahea & Keoki Faria

Testimony BOE

From: saofailowe@yahoo.com
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:01 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha! Thank you for the opportunity to share my manao re the cuts in pay differential for teachers in SpEd and hard-to-staff schools.

This cut will affect me and my kids who attend the hard to staff school. The differential has allowed me to remain in the school and keep my kids there too. Cutting the pay differential will mean my kids will be in an overcrowded classroom. It will mean classrooms with subs who don't know how to handle what a veteran and long time educator knows how to do. It will mean struggles to afford the necessities for survival.

I call on BOE and DOE to appropriately use the Cares to continue this pay differential for our profession, keiki and community.

Mahalo,
Saofai Lowe

Testimony BOE

From: Elena Goldsmith <thegoldsmiths940@gmail.com> on behalf of Elena Goldsmith
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:00 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha!

I am writing to submit testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am asking for the differentials to be left in place to support those teachers in need. I am a teacher at Honokaa High and Intermediate School and I depend on these differentials to be able to support my family of 5 off of my single income. If we were to lose our differentials, I would most likely be forced to change careers to be able to make ends meet for my family.

It is so important for the state to support our teachers with these funds so that teachers do not have to take on second/third jobs.

Mahalo,
Elena Goldsmith

Testimony BOE

From: L Robertson <lrobertson.hsta@gmail.com> on behalf of L Robertson
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:00 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony: Differentials and School Level Funding

Dear Chairperson Payne and Members of the BOARD OF EDUCATION:

My name is Laura Robertson. I am a 12 year veteran teacher at Waimea Elementary School in the Hamakua District on Hawaii Island. I am submitting testimony to urge board members to stop the superintendent's plan to discontinue shortage differentials of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs. We also need to continue to fund our school-level with adequate monies to support our schools that have budgeted teacher and staff reduction.

Please continue to provide the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that this BOE of Hawaii continues to value our hardworking teachers. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki and the future of our state economy. Discontinuing this compensation for this next school year will continue to impact our profession and communities in these areas significantly.

The differential we received has made a tremendous difference in being able to breathe a little easier financially. I know you hear many teachers are living paycheck to paycheck. It is still continuing even with the current differential we are receiving because I am one of them. I am a single mother of two teens. I work another job part time. Housing and the cost of food prices have increased where one of my paychecks goes straight to keep a head over my head with my kids. I feel more stress than ever to support my two children that also go to public schools that have teachers currently receiving this differential. Our rural communities will be impacted and at my school we are already losing 5 teaching positions, a VP, and 2 Special education teachers.

I know of teachers who have left the Hamakua area to go back to the mainland because teachers cannot afford to live here anymore. Keeping the differentials for our hard to staff geographical locations, special education, and Hawaiian Language Immersion Programs will keep highly qualified teachers in areas where there are still current teacher vacancies to fill with HQ teachers. Please keep the differentials and please fund our schools who are feeling the impact in reducing teaching positions which will impact student learning due to the increase in class sizes. Please help to support our students, parents, and our communities with these financial decisions.

Mahalo for your time and understanding,

Laura Robertson, Hamakua District, Hawaii Island
Waimea Elementary School, 5th Grade Teacher

Aloha mai dearest board members,

This correspondence is an urgent request that you take NO action regarding the Teacher's support for Hard-To-Staff areas; Geographic, Poverty, SPED, etc.

Teachers need systemic support in order to do a great job. Our keiki deserve a great job! As you reflect on your decision, please ask yourself - In what other career are professionals asked to give back to the funding agency the supports required and professionally deserved. We are educated, licensed, creative, hardworking, data driven professionals. Any decision to take away supports which have been hard-fought and long-in-coming would reflect a devaluation of teaching. With the known metric of being in the worst position across the country, the State of Hawaii Public Schools are struggling to make strides for an institution that deserves our keiki.

Please, please, please, leave in place the teacher differentials - which are deeply important and structurally necessary.

deanna j.k. kackley

Deanna J.K Kackley

Honokaa High and Intermediate

162 Melani St.

Hilo, HI 96720

dkackley@hawaii.edu

Testimony BOE

From: Jamie K <jamie96740@gmail.com> on behalf of Jamie K
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:00 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony for the **BOE Special Meeting Action Item A**: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am currently receiving a differential, and this has made the difference between me having to find a second job, and getting to focus on building strong relationships with students and their family, designing meaningful lessons, and continue to find opportunities for professional development to meet the changing needs of our keiki. Eliminating these differentials will negatively impact you and your students because it will take time away from my students. Losing close to \$15,000 a year will mean having to find a second job, and I will no longer have the time or energy to continue prioritizing the needs of my students at all times. In fact, it will likely result in many of my colleagues leaving hard to fill positions, in which case my own child will suffer from rippling effects due to poor staffing and overcrowded classrooms.

We all understand these are difficult times. But please do not sacrifice education if you truly intend to rebuild a stronger community that will meet the demands of a post-COVID world. Our keiki will suffer for many generations if we cannot create a better future for them now. Discontinuing the extra compensation will be detrimental to all.

Sincerely,

Fumi Koizumi-Droge
Special Education Teacher
Kealakehe High
(808)987-9781

Testimony BOE

From: Sharon Saronitman <ssaronitman@gmail.com> on behalf of Sharon Saronitman
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:59 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am writing in support of action item A for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. I am an inclusion special education teacher on Kaua'i and the department head for special education at my school. I have had first hand experience with the differential making a difference at our school. We had a veteran dual certified tenured teacher enter an unfilled special education position this past school year. Without the differential, this position most likely would have had to be filled by an uncertified unqualified teacher. And now the Superintendent wants to go back to that? I cannot for one minute understand how this is even an option. With all of the struggles our students have had to endure this year, especially those with special needs, we are going to take away the one thing that we can prove worked. It seems the lawsuits that will most likely occur will be far beyond the price that the differentials would be enough to stop this. Please continue the differentials. Because it is the right thing to do.

Mahalo for your time,
Sharon Saronitman

Testimony BOE

From: Kara Sweeney <ksween0810@gmail.com> on behalf of Kara Sweeney
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:59 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Kara Sweeney and I am a Special Education teacher at Kealahou High School in Kona, Hawaii. I made the difficult choice to teach in Hawaii where it is already one of the worst paying places for public school teachers comparatively to the cost of living, yet each day I sacrifice my pay and try to make things work to support our keiki. Additionally, as a special education inclusion teacher in a pandemic who is also in graduate school, I work each day into late hours of the night. I manage a caseload with IEPs, meet with high need students on a one on one basis, and do everything I can to be there for my kids while providing them a quality high school level curriculum. On top of this, I have to create and modify content to make sure this is occurring.

I already wear two hats and am working two jobs for the price of one (a special education case coordinator and a biology teacher/planner), and working in a hard to staff area has struggles of its own. Students have larger issues and higher needs.

Cutting the differential and using federal stimulus money to hire tutors is honestly insulting and not treating us like the professionals we are. Teachers are Essential Workers, and you can't expect them to work 24/7 and be super heroes while getting paid unlivable wages.

Mahalo,
Kara Sweeney

February 18, 2020

Board of Education, Special Meeting

II. A.

Aloha e ka Hale Ho'ona'auao (BOE),

This is testimony strongly **opposing** the discontinuance of shortage differential pay for licensed and qualified Hawaiian Language Immersion teachers. As a Hawaiian Immersion charter school teacher, I along with those who have taught immersion for close to 30 years, do not get the pay. However, I strongly advocate for our fellow teachers who have been granted this differential to continue to receive it.

All teachers live a life of dedication to the future and the greater good. Being fluent in Hawaiian is a whole separate lifetime commitment full of sacrifices for the benefit and strength of Hawaii, its youth, its families, and its people. When a Hawaiian Language Immersion teacher is being hired, not just any teacher can fill that position, before a substitute or a hired teacher can step into that classroom, there is a language requirement. It's double the needed qualifications so it drains out half of the pool. Please have the superintendent rescind her discontinuation of this shortage differential pay and grant it to the Hawaiian language immersion teachers so they can keep these programs strong and continue to home the growing enrollment across the state.

Mahalo nui loa,
Na Kahi Kumuolelo

Testimony BOE

From: Gerald Reopelle <gjreopelle@hotmail.com> on behalf of Gerald Reopelle
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:58 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a family member of a special education teacher in the state of Hawaii and I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuous of extra compensation for classroom teacher in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. I am writing this letter to inform you that I oppose the budget cuts for special education teachers differential pay. Discontinuing shortage differentials will affect her ability to afford to live and teach in Hawaii. These special education teachers should not struggle to survive after all they have done for their students, especially this year. She has put herself at risk of coming into contact with someone with Covid-19 so that she could service students with special needs since August of 2020. You must realize that this differential pay is vital if you want to maintain the special education teachers that you have, including her. These students deserve to have qualified classroom teachers supporting them. A lack of qualified teachers will only hurt your schools and the students. Students will not receive the proper instruction and interventions they need without the support of these qualified teachers. The knowledge these teachers have provides students safe, encouraging, engaging and educational learning environments/experiences. Please consider the effects of discounting the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Sincerely,
Attorney Gerald Reopelle

Sent from [Outlook](#)

Testimony BOE

From: Ana Paula Menezes <anapaulambacpcu@gmail.com> on behalf of Ana Paula Menezes
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:57 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Aloha,

I am a SPED educator at a hard to staff school at Kealakehe High School in Kailua-Kona, Big Island.

Without the \$15,000 differential, I will not be able to make rent. I am a single parent with 4 children.

I am not even paid for my Master's degree. Our salaries are already much lower than educators' salaries on the mainland and we have a high cost of living. If differentials are taken away, there will be very few SPED teachers left and several general education teachers will leave the profession all together. Please think how hard it was for parents this past year to teach their kids at home. It will be much harder next year with fewer teachers and larger number of students/teacher.

Rents are through the roof here on the Big Island because people from the mainland are flocking over here to telework from here and taking all available places driving prices up.

Instead of cutting teachers salaries and school budgets the government has to raise property taxes on all non Hawaiian residents! This way, the government will be able to address its deficit!

Thank you for your consideration.
Ana Paula Menezes, MBA, CPCU

Testimony BOE

From: E Kagawa <ekagawahsta@gmail.com> on behalf of E Kagawa
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:57 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Members of the Board of Education-

I am a Special Education Teacher in a Hard-to-Staff School. These differentials are a direct benefit to the students. For Hard-to-Staff areas, it provides stability for students as teachers are choosing to stay at these schools. Without certified teachers, these schools are hiring long-term subs and emergency hires. This is not the best environment for our students.

Also as a dual-certified teacher, I was actually placed in this line and moved from my General Education line that I LOVED! This is because there is a shortage of teachers for Special Education Teachers. I was encouraged that with these incentives, there would be enough teachers to address the needs of our disadvantaged students. These students deserve and have a right to certified/qualified teachers.

To keep this short - the question is Can we afford to do all these budget cuts? NO!

We can't afford this. The costs in the long run will be harmful to our students and our future! Saving a few dollars now will exponentially cost more in the long run! Our students deserve to the priority! President Biden is prioritizing the schools and saying all budgets should minimally remain intact. We need to prioritize education!

Please don't sacrifice our students, our keiki!

Thank You.

Edwin kagawa
Special Education Teacher
Kea'au Middle School

Testimony BOE

From: greg Longnecker <greg.longnecker@gmail.com> on behalf of greg Longnecker
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:56 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for Action item A

To whom it may concern:

I am the father of a 15 year old son with down syndrome and autism.

He is currently enrolled in Kapaa middle school. His teacher is Ms. Tamarine Carvalho, she is the best SPED teacher we have ever had. I am in full support of Action Item A. These teachers take so much time and effort in their jobs as SPED teachers because they love these children. However, they have to make a living doing it. For the state to take any money from these very specialized teachers is shameful! This is not in the best interest of any of the special needs students or parents.

If these pay cuts go thru, we will most likely lose these highly educated and wonderful teachers. Due to the loss of income and high cost of living in Hawaii. The children desperately need these teachers. How can anyone do this and have a clear conscience.

Greg Longnecker

Testimony BOE

From: Tamisha Lee <lee.tamishaj@gmail.com> on behalf of Tamisha Lee
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:55 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

I am writing to share testimony about two items. The first, the loss of the hard to staff differential pay and second related to that Kishimoto's proposal to hire private tutors.

Hawaii is a hard state to teach in. We face a myriad of problems ranging from poverty, language issues, domestic violence, attendance, lack of access to technology. And yet, those of us who teach here, do so despite those issues. And we work hard. Hours and hours of unpaid time planning, grading, and helping kids. I live and work in Kona and we are chronically short of qualified teachers. When I was applying to the DOE, I had schools falling all over themselves to interview and hire me, not because I'm so wonderful, but because there is just a lack of qualified teachers here. Our students deserve to have dedicated teachers willing and able to teach them the skills they need to be successful here and in the wider world. That differential pay makes a world of difference for so many of us. It has allowed friends to replace their unsafe vehicles for safer new cars to get to work. It allowed another friend to continue to teach here in Hawaii. For my SpEd friends, it has made it possible to just survive! Taking that away will mean a loss of \$15,000 for those SpEd teachers, who are critical for our keiki with disabilities. And our SpEd teachers are expected to not only case manage but plan, teach, implement, modify, adapt, and grade, just like the gen ed teacher. They deserve that pay. And it makes a difference in how many qualified SpEd teachers we have available to us.

And for the DOE to talk out of both sides of their mouth is infuriating. They are threatening us with a nearly 10% pay cut, drop in the differentials, and at the same time want to spend MILLIONS of dollars on private tutors who are NOT qualified, do not require any certification and don't know our kids. It is the biggest money grab I have ever seen. Who is going to vet these tutoring companies? How will their efficacy be measured? Hire tutors and cut teacher pay at the same time? I've never heard something so nonsensical. That federal money should be spent shoring up the people who have CHOSEN to be teachers, knowing they will never be rich, but knowing they are making a difference.

This has been a hard year on everyone but on teachers most especially. We've been asked to turn our entire profession on its head and totally revamp what we do in the face of this pandemic. And what did we do? We stepped up and did just that. We learned new technology, revised lesson plans, reached out to our families and students. We made connections, even through a computer screen. We've listened to our students' fire alarms go off every five minutes. Coo'd over their pets. Sympathized when they just couldn't take it any more. We've boosted their morale as best as we can. And in return for completely retooling our profession overnight, the DOE wants to cut our pay and take away our differentials, and give federal funds to unknown private businesses, with little or no oversight or accountability. That's the most egregious misuse of funds destined for STUDENTS I can think of.

PLEASE, reconsider and help us change the DOE's mind on how we use those federal funds and how we are paid.

Thank you,

Tamisha J. Lee
Kealakehe High School
Social Studies

Feb. 16, 2021

Aloha,

I am writing in regards to **BOE Special Meeting Action Item A, Funding of Teacher Differentials**. I am asking that you continue to fund these differentials for our hard to staff schools. The differentials have cut the teacher shortage by 25%! That is extremely significant. I have been a dedicated teacher for twenty six years in a shortage area at my extremely rural, Title One school. When we finally received the differential for the first time this year, it made a huge difference in my life. I am a single parent. I have four children. I work 3-4 jobs year round to make ends meet. Unfortunately, many of our side jobs have cut back hours or are on hold for Covid. This differential came just as my car had broken down after serving me for nearly twenty years. Without the differential, I simply can't afford the payments. We are now teaching full time to students in person full time as well as teaching online full time. We are putting in many more hours with no extra compensation. It is like we are all first year teachers again. To take this differential away would add insult to injury. We just won't have time for that fifth or sixth job! Many teachers have family members out of work. The bottom line is the differentials work to reduce shortage areas. PLEASE continue to fund them.

When you pay teachers a living wage, everyone wins. As a parent, the differentials are essential to securing qualified teachers. For example, my children at the elementary have had subs for the entire year because they couldn't fill teaching positions. My son at our middle school has had subs for half of his core subjects. He isn't have a real language arts teacher nor a science teacher for 7th and 8th grade. We have such a high teacher turnover rate, and our keiki suffer. It is an unfair disadvantage to our rural, title one school. Teacher differentials help get qualified teachers in the classrooms. That is what our keiki deserve.

I started teaching making 23K right out of UH. I maxed out on the pay scale years ago. I stay because I love the students and cherish my job. However, without the differential, the new stresses, hazards and extra work associated with Covid 19 make it difficult to remain in the profession and will again exacerbate the teacher shortage problem.

We should be looking to increase teacher pay and expand loan forgiveness programs while we put our lives on the line. Please kokua and continue to fund the hard to staff differential. The keiki are counting on you to keep qualified teachers in their classrooms.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration,

Alison F. English

45-1038 Kalehua Rd.

Honokaa, Hi. 96727

BOE Special Meeting Action Item A;

My name is Charmaine Nuesca-Ganer and I teach at Lahaina Intermediate School. I am giving my testimony today on behalf of teachers throughout Hawaii who are the least paid in the nation when adjusted to cost of living. As a special Education in a difficult area to staff it is heartbreaking to hear of losing the differential pay. Working at a difficult to staff school, we have several positions held by long term substitutes which are unable to write IEP's which then is divided up among the Special Education teachers. This increases the amount of work each Special Education teacher needs to do. I'm not complaining about the extra work, but in the six years of being in this position I've seen an increase in duties with no compensation.

Our special education students are at a profound disadvantage when they do not have certified special education teachers in the classroom. We have to take steps to ensure our most vulnerable students receive the education they deserve. When a special education teacher cannot be found, the students are served by a long term substitute who does not have experience dealing with the intricate nature of special education. Differential pay will help continue to keep the teachers that are in the position now and future special education teachers who are qualified.

As a personal testimony, I have worked in special education for over 21 years and loved every minute of it. I have endured struggles of becoming a teacher which took me 10 years to complete as I worked fulltime as an Educational Assistant and went to school in the evenings then eventually online. After receiving my teaching degree, I worked as an emergency hire special education teacher. My first year, I was given the FSC room with all types of behavioral

issues and challenges. Because of my experiences I felt confident and endured the setbacks of dealing with a due process situation from another school, a student with court issues, and a parent who did not believe in the DOE system. By my second year the parent learned to trust me, the student with court issues was provided with a safe environment, and the due process took another year from me, but we succeed with a victory on behalf of the Department of Education.

I am very passionate about my job, about my students, and also my parents. To take away the differential pay at this point just doesn't seem fair. I have invested so many hours into my job it would be nice to know that all this hard work has some type of benefit for me. I am not able to take the amount of PD's I would like to increase my pay, I would rather invest the time and effort into running my classroom with efficacy and preparedness.

Today, I have a classroom filled with 12 students, 6 EA's, 2 RBT's, and 2 skills trainers. I manage the day in and day activities of everyone from speech services, OT services, PT services, and ensuring each student is provided with their individualized plan. All I ask from you is to be fair and continue to provide me and others with a fair salary. Everything I've done is for the betterment of my students and family, all I ask is to treat me with respect and continue to provide me and my family with the differential pay.

Sincerely,

Charmaine Nuesca-Ganer

Lahaina Intermediate School

Testimony BOE

From: Evelyn Nichols <evelynnichols@yahoo.com> on behalf of Evelyn Nichols
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:54 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Action Item A Special meeting -Discontinuous of Extra Compensation

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a family member of a special education teacher in the state of Hawaii and I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuous of extra compensation for classroom teacher in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. I am writing this letter to inform you that I oppose the budget cuts for special education teachers differential pay. Discontinuing shortage differentials will affect her ability to afford to live and teach in Hawaii. These special education teachers should not struggle to survive after all they have done for their students, especially this year. She has put herself at risk of coming into contact with someone with Covid-19 so that she could service students with special needs since August of 2020. You must realize that this differential pay is vital if you want to maintain the special education teachers that you have, including her. These students deserve to have qualified classroom teachers supporting them. A lack of qualified teachers will only hurt your schools and the students. Students will not receive the proper instruction and interventions they need without the support of these qualified teachers. The knowledge these teachers have provides students safe, encouraging, engaging and educational learning environments/experiences. Please consider the effects of discounting the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Sincerely,
Evelyn Nichols- Reihanifam
949-231-7459

Testimony BOE

From: Debbie Matthews <debbiejomatthews@yahoo.com> on behalf of Debbie Matthews
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:54 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: BOE special meeting action item A

My understanding is that our Superintendent decided, without BOE approval, to unilaterally eliminate special education , hard to staff, and Hawaiian language fundings. I am the Student Services Coordinator at Pahoa Elementary School. For the first time in four years, we have been able to have highly qualified special education teachers to fill all of our positions. ALL of these teachers are compassionate, caring, intelligent individuals who work with general education teachers to ensure that our most vulnerable keiki receive the supports that they desperately need.

We live in one of the poorest districts in the State, with free and reduced percentages historically between 85-90%, a poverty indicator. We also have a diverse culture; many of our keiki are Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian. We believe in inclusive practices, honoring everyone, every culture, celebrating our heritages.

Realizing that we have three strikes against teachers in our school is not new. That is why the funding was granted. What is new is that the person who should have our backs has targeted us to bear the burden one more time. We are drowning and have been asked to hold the anchor so that others can swim.

Enough!

Help us keep the good teachers we have. Enable them to support their families and continue to support our PES keiki.
PLEASE HELP!

Testimony BOE

From: Renee Obrien <msreneeobrien@gmail.com> on behalf of Renee Obrien
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:52 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha Board Members,

I'm testifying in support of Action Item A. for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education.

I'm a special education teacher on Maui at Lihikai Elementary. I went into special education because I wanted to teach extraordinary students strategies so that they can understand how use their strengths (I call them super powers) to succeed and feel confident. I'm very blessed to be lucky enough to teach this amazing group of students.

With that said, I also believe that I deserve to earn a living wage. When we received our differential pay I was finally able to only work one extra job on the weekend instead of 2 extra jobs.

I'm a single mother of two daughters one of which needs special support in reading and writing. This differential pay made it possible to give up my extra weekday job so that I could spend more time with my daughters. It also made me a better teacher because I was able to take my extra time to take more classes to learn new and even better ways to support my students.

Also, the differential made a huge difference in staffing our school with qualified special education teachers.

Please don't discontinue this differential pay. This is just a small way that we can continue to attract more qualified special education teachers to support our most vulnerable students who need support so that they can learn how to unleash their SUPER POWERS!

Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo nui loa,

Renee O'Brien
Proud Special Education Teacher
Lihikai Elementary
Maui

Testimony BOE

From: kAuLuWeHik <kauluwehi.kaiawe@gmail.com> on behalf of kAuLuWeHik
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:54 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for Agenda A

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Kauluwehi Kaiawe and I am a parent of a child with Special Education needs for my son at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting [on Feb. 17th. at 11am.](#)

As a parent with a child who is currently in the special needs program, I strongly feel that the extra compensation and support is needed. There is already a lack of help in the special needs program. My child's needs for support in this department is strongly needed as he continues to develop his academic skills. Since we started getting help for my child through his special education teachers, I have found great improvement in his learning abilities and his mental well-being which I feel is strongly important for a young child's growing development. He's grown so much as a child through his special education teachers, His academic growth would not have improved without the help and support of them. I strongly feel that he will be left behind in academics and pushed to the side should there be a defunding of any kind. With this, i hope to remind you of a well known term/saying "No child left behind". I'm so grateful for our special needs program as his teachers continue to provide my child with as much support as they are able to, through DOE funding.

I am also writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupun schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Testimony BOE

From: Lindsey Robertson <lindsey.robertson@k12.hi.us> on behalf of Lindsey Robertson
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:53 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Lindsey Robertson, Special Education Teacher
Hawaii Department of Education

BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Wednesday, February 17, 2019

Aloha. My name is Lindsey Robertson and I am a Special Education Teacher for the Community Based Instruction Program at Roosevelt High School. I am also a member of the SPEDucator Project, a collective of 20 classroom special education teachers across the state of Hawaii. Let it be known that I am writing as an individual. I represent myself and not the feelings of anyone else at Roosevelt High School, or those in the SPEDucator Project.

I am respectfully writing and submitting testimony on BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I graduated with a Bachelor's of Science in Applied Learning and Development from The University of Texas at Austin in May of 2017. In addition to my Bachelor's degree, I earned the proper credentials needed to teach special education grades K-12 through a 4-year state-approved teacher education program (SATEP). Shortly after graduating, I moved to Hawaii to pursue the start of my teaching career as a special education teacher because I am committed to serving students with disabilities by working tirelessly to uncover the unique gifts and talents each student has to offer. Little did I know, working tirelessly would mean compromising a living wage for my profession in Hawaii. After living in Hawaii for 2.5 years, I had discovered that my income was not a fair living wage considering the high cost of living in Hawaii. I was thrilled for the differentials to be approved, effective January 7, 2020.

For the past three years, I have worked in two different types of special education classrooms, serving as a case manager for each student's Individual Educational Plan, and facilitating the services needed to support each student with the greatest resources and opportunities with special needs. Although I love my job as a special education teacher, the reality of continuing to teach as a special educator within the Hawaii Department of Education is both unrealistic and harsh. According to NPR, my current salary is the lowest salary in the country when adjusted for the high costs of living in Hawaii. As a result, I have considered not only leaving the special education profession to pursue another career in Hawaii, but the state altogether, which will only continue to add to the current teacher shortage.

Ultimately, students with disabilities, regardless of the extent of their disability, deserve to be taught by highly-qualified special education teachers who are paid a fair, living wage. Students need to be taught by teachers who are paid a living wage and who desire to stay, not by new hires who are constantly leaving through a revolving door. In expanding the strategic plan to recruit and retain qualified special education teachers, we are providing students with disabilities the services they need to lead successful lives and be contributing members to the community. In the 2018-19 school year, 198 non licensed teachers were instructing students while another 154 special education teaching positions were left vacant. There is a need to fix a system in Hawaii where our students with special needs are not being provided the opportunity to have an education that is

being taught by highly qualified teachers. Data has been presented on the reduction of special education teacher position vacancies. From 10/1/2018, vacancies were reduced from 125 to 69 vacant positions, a 45% decrease. We aren't only facing a teacher shortage crisis in the nation, as well as in Hawaii, but we are facing moral inequity where targeted populations and demographics continually face shortages which result in a disastrous education being offered to these targeted populations.

I STRONGLY oppose BOE Special Meeting Action Item A. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

--

Lindsey Robertson
Special Education Teacher
President Theodore Roosevelt High School
Follow me on [Twitter!](#)

SPEDucator Project Member
Learn more about [The SPEDucator Project](#)
Every Student Deserves
SOMEONE SPECIAL *like you*

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Testimony BOE

From: Derrick Rees <derrick73159@aol.com> on behalf of Derrick Rees
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:53 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I spent over five months student teaching in the Seattle public schools in order to graduate with a Master's of Education in a state approved teacher education program I have a teaching licence in Hawaii K - 12 in special education. I personally feel licensed teachers already teaching can help our students. Possibly considering transferring some of the funds for tutors and summer school can be used for licensed teachers already teaching in Hawaii school classrooms? If the differentials are taken away I personally would be taking a large pay cut making it difficult for me to continue teaching in Hawaii. Thank you for your consideration. Derrick Rees

TO: The Board of Education

From: Malia Beaver, Teacher

Date: February 17, 2021

Aloha,

My name is Malia Beaver and I am a teacher at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School. This is my written testimony in opposition to the DOE Superintendent's proposals regarding: (1) the discontinuance of shortage differentials; and (2) restore the school-level budgets, positions, and salaries.

- (1) I am oppose and object to the discontinuance of shortage differentials for the following reasons:

I teach in a community in which our school's student population enters our school with remarkable learning deficiencies that range from preschool to under grade level at an average of 2-3 years below. My school is located in one of the hard-to-staff geographical locations with a 27% Special Education student population. Additionally, our Nanakuli/Waianae has the largest Hawaiian population that is one of the poorest socio-economic communities on O'ahu. Being that Hawaiian is our State's official language, Hawaiian language programs should be protected and supported.

The challenge to close the gap of learning proficiency falls on us at the secondary level to get the students as close to the College Career Readiness (CCR) as possible. This means our instructions and learning goals are quite rigorous and ambitious. This is a challenge to teachers as teachers must deal with student behaviors while holding students accountable to their own academic progress. It's not surprising our school and schools like us have a constant teacher turnover. So the hard-to-staff differentials have helped schools like mine to keep faculty longer because of the differentials. This helps our students receive consistent instructions and learning expectations that normally are interrupted by a teacher's departure, especially in the four core subjects and Hawaiian and World languages (credit requirements for most college admissions).

Without the differentials, students may lose a qualified core teacher during a school year with a substitute teacher replacement. If our school can't find a replacement, the same students will experience the next level with a substitute teacher not specializing in that subject to the deterioration of learning and achievement in which the students, to no fault of their own, will not be at the CCR exit level they would have been, if the highly qualified teachers had not left. Albeit, we still have turnovers, but not as great as when there weren't the differential incentives in place.

In the DOE Superintendent's memo, she incorrectly states that the shortage differential was a pilot program. That is not true, that program has continued per her memo of

December 5, 2019. In addition to continuing the shortage differential program, this current DOE Superintendent's memo also noted her intentions to address the equity and compression in teacher salaries via a pilot program she proposed effective January 7, 2020.. The differentials are in the first phase of a multi-phased plan. The PILOT plan was the Addressing Equity and Compression in Teacher Salaries.

The DOE Superintendent is adversely targeting the classroom teachers and students' learning environment to the detriment of the students and the schools' ability to retain teachers in a hard-to-staff school. Stopping that shortage differential will impact more than 4,000 teachers who will experience a drop in pay and jeopardize the essential classes needed for each student's CCR exit plans.

Please keep the special education, hard-to-staff, and Hawaiian language program differentials in place and rescind the DOE Superintendent's February 9, 2021 memo that tries to end them.

- (2) Governor Ige has recently reduced the 10% DOE budget cut to 2.5%. Prior to that announcement, our schools were required to make budget cuts by cutting school positions. This affected classroom teacher positions when schools, such as mine, were already at a skeleton faculty and support state. The DOE Superintendent sent BOE her proposal on how DOE will use the \$183.6 million federal stimulus funds. DOE wants to spend one third of that (\$48.5 million) to pay third-party tutors while laying off high qualified teachers. This means 1,000 school employees, including 700 teachers losing the jobs and various sorely needed enrichment programs will be slashed. THIS MAKES NO SENSE.

I am adding my voice to ask the BOE amend DOE's budget to follow the intent of two bills being heard at the Legislature which would require the DOE to follow federal laws and use the stimulus funding to prevent school layoffs and pay cuts.

Thank you to all BOE members for taking the time to read/listen to my written testimony.

Mahalo,
Malia Beaver
Teacher at Nanakuli High and Intermediate School

Testimony BOE

From: Kekoa & Kela Bay <kbaysquared@gmail.com> on behalf of Kekoa & Kela Bay
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:52 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony - General Meeting - Action Item B

Aloha Board of Education,

I appreciate this opportunity to testify against the Department of Education's plan for use of COVID-19 relief funds. After reading through the proposal it is clear that the Department of Education is missing some major conditions within their student support section where they are proposing an intensive support program utilizing tutors. There is not anything within this program that would suggest a level of qualification for "tutors" and we have a substantial resource of highly qualified teachers who are available to provide the support.

The DOE is currently seeking to reduce budget going into positions for teachers, yet they want to hire non-descript tutors without a specific level of qualifications. This is not at all reasonable or right.

The other major shortfall of their plan is that the work they presented is missing a quarter of our student population. Not including High School needs in their projections and planning is an extreme shortfall. As a High School special educator I am seeing the impact that COVID is having on both students in the General Education population and students with needs for extra support such as special education, English language learners, and other support programs available at the schools.

The reality is that we are currently compounding the problems by not opening our schools fully. Data from school districts nationwide demonstrate that schools are safe to open with appropriate social distancing, masking and cleaning procedures in place and our failure to open all of our schools appropriately is only putting our students more at risk and further behind.

I encourage the Board to reject the Department of Education's current plan and request they revise it to ensure we maintain our current teachers and provide qualifications for any further support that would be brought in addition to the teaching positions we have.

Although this isn't part of this action item, I also encourage the Board to request an immediate plan for getting as many students back into classrooms as possible. The longer we maintain distance learning as a model, the further behind many of our students are getting. With this trend we are increasing the number of students who are at-risk in many ways; academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. The CDC has stated "Opening schools for in-person learning as safely and quickly as possible, and keeping them open, is important given the many known and established benefits of in-person learning." I would add that keeping them closed or primarily distance learning has a detrimental impact as is evidenced in the DOE's data they provided in their request for approval.

This should be our biggest priority, yet the DOE and the Board have left it to individual schools and complexes to determine the level they will return to learn.

Thank you for taking the time to review my testimony. We need to be clear in properly supporting our students with the money that has been provided to the DOE.

Mahalo,
Kekoa Michael Bay

Testimony BOE

From: ralstan vares <kaulana775@yahoo.com> on behalf of ralstan vares
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:49 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Kaulana Vares, writing in regards to Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A. I am proud parent of a student at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Ānuenue and I write to ask for continued support of the shortage differentials that our immersion schools sorely need. Please do not walk back on this BOE policy which is affordable. I have noticed how the 2020 differentials have increased morale around school teachers. The funds has also helped increase the amount of teachers in an already unbalanced student to teacher ratio particularly at our burgeoning elementary school. Please compensate our 'ōlelo Hawai'i teachers fairly for their extra skill set. The survival of our language depends upon the survival of our teachers in this overpriced state.

Me ka ha'aha'a,
Kaulana Vares

Testimony BOE

From: Chyna Colorado <chyna@wisn.org> on behalf of Chyna Colorado
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:50 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Kaiapuni Educational Program

Aloha,

My name is Chyna Colorado and my daughter has been a part of the Kaiapuni Educational Program since she was 4 years old (back when there was still pre-K).

For my testimony I would like to share how important this program and the kumu have been in meeting my child's educational needs and encouraging her participation in the greater community.

During my child's early educational years, she found extreme difficulty focusing and retaining information and meeting required milestones. Because of the patience, attentiveness and drive of all of her kumu she began to excel in her school work, eventually earning 4.0 throughout intermediate. At this same time, the program offered many opportunities to learn outside of the classroom through field trips, cultural exchanges and events. These experiences instilled a greater sense of community and kuleana, my child has a keen interest in our communities health and searches out ways she can play a role in helping. I am certain that my child would not have achieved the educational success she has, were it not for the Kaiapuni Educational Program.

The Kaiapuni Educational Program supports the development of our children and their place within the local and global community. This could not be achieved without our kumu and all the hard work they put in, inside and outside the classroom to bring out the best in our keiki and support them in achieving their full potential. For this, our kumu are deserving of all the support we can give them to continue their work.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter,

--



Chyna L. Colorado

Program Manager

Worldwide Indigenous Science Network

w: wisn.org

e: chyna@wisn.org



Testimony BOE

From: Cheryl Goo <cgoo@kanoelanies.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Cheryl Goo
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:50 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I would like to testify in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. My name is Cheryl Goo. I am a special education teacher at Kanoelani Elementary School. I am also a parent of a child who receives special education services at a public school in Hawaii. Taking away the differential will be absolutely devastating. We should be looking at ways to support and help our keiki and their hard-to-staff teachers in a time when it is needed most. I worry about the impact of taking away differentials as both a parent and as a teacher that is just trying to make ends meet. I have been teaching students in person and online since August and I love my job but it is incredibly challenging. I want to stay in teaching but I worry how I will do that with a spouse who is also struggling to financially stay afloat due to COVID. Please consider keeping the differentials.

Thank you. Sincerely, Cheryl Goo

Testimony BOE

From: Lauren Collier <lauren.collier19@gmail.com> on behalf of Lauren Collier
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:50 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for sped differential

Aloha,

My name is Lauren Collier and I am a proud special education teacher at Kaneohe Elementary school.

I am testifying in support of Action Item A, for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I have been a special education teacher for 9 years 4 of those in Hawaii. I have been teaching in person since June and prior to that taught from 7:30-3:30 with back to back online sessions to accommodate my students needs.

This year I have 15 students on my case load and in my classroom in grades k, 1, 3, 4, 6. I differentiate work while reaching to grade level standards. I have 3-5 meetings a week after school contract hours. The differential compensates me for those hours.

I am an excellent special education teacher but because of that I am penalized with more work. I accept that because I am compensated with the differential. I know with the loss of these differentials I will consider leaving the DOE because I am already not being paid for my work, effort, dedication, and time.

Please do not cut the differential you are directly hurting students.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Lauren Collier

Testimony BOE

From: erin noordhoff <huinaluseat4@yahoo.com> on behalf of erin noordhoff
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:48 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Please kokua--fight for differential pay

Aloha,

My name is Erin M. Williams, and I am an English Language Arts/EL Support teacher at Kealakehe High School.

If the differential pay is cut for our school, I will need to apply for early retirement and seek employment elsewhere. I will not be able to subsist on my salary without the differential pay.

I kindly ask that you fight for those of us who have chosen to work at schools that are difficult to staff. I drive 60 miles a day to work at Kealakehe High School because I believe I am making a difference in the lives of my students there.

I thank you for your most serious consideration in this matter.

Mahalo nui loa,

Erin M. Williams
Kealakehe High School
Personal Cell Phone #: 808.372.6539

Testimony BOE

From: Jessica Reihanifam <jreihanifam@gmail.com> on behalf of Jessica Reihanifam
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:49 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To Whom it May Concern,

I hope this email finds you well.

I am a family member of a special education teacher in the state of Hawaii and I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuous of extra compensation for classroom teacher in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. I am writing this letter to inform you that I oppose the budget cuts for special education teachers differential pay.

Discontinuing shortage differentials will affect her ability to afford to live and teach in Hawaii. These special education teachers should not struggle to survive after all they have done for their students, especially this year. She has put herself at risk of coming into contact with someone with Covid-19 so that she could service students with special needs since August of 2020. You must realize that this differential pay is vital if you want to maintain the special education teachers that you have, including her. These students deserve to have qualified classroom teachers supporting them. A lack of qualified teachers will only hurt your schools and the students. Students will not receive the proper instruction and interventions they need without the support of these qualified teachers. The knowledge these teachers have provides students safe, encouraging, engaging and educational learning environments/experiences. Please consider the effects of discounting the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Sincerely,
Jessica Reihanifam

Testimony BOE

From: Beverly Maragos <BevM@aliibuilders.com> on behalf of Beverly Maragos
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:49 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Beverly Maragos and I am a Grandparent and Guardian of a student at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in **opposition** to this agenda Item.

There are four main points for this opposition.

1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required.
2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy.
3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.
4. This compensation helps the State's teachers to maintain the economic status that provides an incentive to do what is right for the keiki of the State of Hawaii.

This pandemic has been the hardest for teachers, to keep our Keiki in school and to help them thrive in education. At what cost is the State of Hawaii is willing to take to make it harder on these teachers. I have seen 1st hand as to how hard these teachers work for our keiki.

My keiki has benefited from learning the Hawaiian Language. She is now fluently bilingual that helps her to know the importance of her culture and heritage, as well as develop a stronger personal identity, Studies have shown bilingual children can outperform monolingual children in a number of subject areas. The effects of bilingualism can help improve a child's educational development, cognitive functions, social skills, literacy, and emotional skills that have positive effects for many years to come.

I am begging the DOE, Board of Directors and Superintendent Christina Kishimoto **to not do this to our teachers** who already are economically suffering, but work so hard to keep our young children learning and engaged. For those that are making this decision, think of other way to cut cost, don't do this to our Keiki and Teachers.

Sincerely,
Beverly Maragos



P.O. 1778

Kaīlua-Kona, HI 96745

Tel: (808) 325-5564

Cell: (808) 937-3602

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Testimony BOE

From: Chris Neppel <cwneppel@gmail.com> on behalf of Chris Neppel
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:49 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

At the top of the email, explain that you are submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting **Action Item A:** Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Share your personal stories about how you, your school, and your students will be affected by potential budget and position cuts, along with the HDOE's proposal to use a large share of the latest federal stimulus funds on tutors instead of restoring funding for schools so they can retain teachers.

Feel free to use the following prompts as you draft your testimony:

- Why is it important to use these funds to retain our qualified teachers?
- How will these budget cuts and loss of positions affect you personally, or someone you know (without mentioning their name)?
- Do you know fellow teachers whose positions are being cut? How will these losses affect your students?
- Will your class sizes be larger? How large are they now? Will you be forced to teach multiple grades?
- Will you lose SPED teacher and educational assistant positions that are badly needed? How will this affect your school's ability to meet IEP goals for your students?
- What subjects will your school have to cut (e.g., art, physical education, STEM, AVID, AP courses)? How will the loss of these subjects affect your students?
- Is another member in your family already out of work or dealing with reduced work hours because of the pandemic? Is your family surviving on your one income? Will this cause your family to have no income or leave the islands?

My name is Chris Neppel. I am a 4th grade teacher at Jefferson Elementary, and I've been teaching with the DOE in the state of Hawaii for 19 years. I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting **Action Item A:** Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. I am asking that you **DON'T CUT DIFFERENTIALS** – I am asking the BOE to direct the superintendent to rescind her memo ending teacher shortage differentials. I am asking that we continue making progress at our schools by restoring funding for schools so they can retain the teachers who are currently working at our schools to maintain the positive working relationships that we have. Progress is what we need, and progress is keeping the funding intact at your schools. Any cuts or hiring of tutors with these funds is the regression not progress. This would be regression because we would not be supporting the students at the schools by taking away their resources that include established meaningful and familiar working relationships with their teachers that they know and love. The retainment of teachers at the schools by restoring these funds at the school level is the right step in the right direction for all parties involved in the education of our students. Any cuts will increase the workload on teachers with increased class sizes, making teaching more challenging for teachers, and learning more challenging for students. Everyone knows we need a workable/teachable student to teacher ratio to most effectively meet the needs of our students.

Mahalo,

Chris Neppi
Jefferson Elementary

Testimony BOE

From: Peter Rossman <rossman_khs@yahoo.com> on behalf of Peter Rossman
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:49 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Please save the hard to staff differential

Aloha Board of Education,

I have taught at Kealakehe High for 21 years, and until recently, it has been very hard to continue to teach here. The new differential has made it much easier to remain and serve in a remote place like Kona. Please continue this program so that I may more easily remain a teacher.

Mahalo nui loa,
Peter Rossman
Kealakehe High

Testimony BOE

From: Helemano Ishibashi <hishibashi@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Helemano Ishibashi
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:48 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Helemano Ishibashi and I am a teacher at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo nui,

Na Helemano Ishibashi

--

Kumu Helemano Ishibashi
Ke Kula 'O 'Ehunuikaimalino
Papa 5

Pepeluali 18, 2020

Board of Education, Special Meeting

II. A. Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs.

Aloha mai e ka Board of Education,

As a tenured teacher and as a makua of four students in the Kaiapuni program, I **oppose** the discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in Hawaiian language immersion programs and special education programs and urge the BOE to **reject** the proposal.

Last year, my fellow kumu, my students and their parents traveled downtown to testify in-person before the BOE to support the pay differentials. We all maintain that these differentials are needed and should continue to be implemented. The work has not lessened for us kaiapuni teachers during these COVID distance learning times, but rather has doubled. All curriculum is left up to the individual kumu to digitize for their haumāna. Many kumu like I, have had to invest their personal family time and money to support their efforts.

Please support our kumu and most importantly our Kaiapuni program with an equitable future.

Mahalo,

J. L. Waianuheia Walk
Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Pū'ōhala
Papa 'Elima Kumu

Testimony BOE

From: M Longnecker <mliliko@gmail.com> on behalf of M Longnecker
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:47 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

My name is Mamie Longnecker and I have a child who has DS -ASD in Special Education at Kapa'a High school on the island of Kauai. My son is in a functional life skills classroom.

I am testifying in support of Action Item A.

I am from Japan so please forgive my English--my second language.

This is my testimony for my son who has a teacher who totally understands his needs and is able to deal with him without a registered behavior technician. In Kauai we do not have enough ABA services and I am concerned about his learning environment. If he is given a unfavorable task or is off routine, he shuts down or gives a hard time to his one on one. Who ever is dealing with him has to know how to deal with him so he is not just sitting in the class, doing nothing; and who can help him to finish his task on time. It is very stressful for me even I am the one raising my son. You don't know what will trigger him to get him upset or shut down.

Having a skilled qualified special education teachers are the key for Special Education System, so Special need children are able to learn effective ways; and parents are less concerned and are able to trust that the DOE will follow IDEA.

To cut pay for skilled, licensed special education teachers who really work hard and know what they need to do will cause them to leave their positions.

Yes, there will be some way to hire unskilled teachers for Special needs children for less pay under a Special Education Teachers' license. However it is like General Doctors doing brain surgery on your brain who works under Brain Surgen doctors' license. Do you feel comfortable and trust them to work on your brain?

There is need for Qualified Special Education Teachers and the positions needs to have special skill. Why do you want to give them a pay cut?? I believe that will bring big chaos. Special Education Teachers are working hard with children face to face; not remotely.

I totally understand you guys need some budget cuts. Do you have anybody in DOE who is actually not working but still receiving pay? Is there any administrative positions that are closed since last year March but still get paid?

Thank you so much to hear my testimony and I hope you will make the right decisions.

--

Aloha,

Mamie

Testimony BOE

From: Kaluhikaua Ka'apana <kaapanakaluhikaua@gmail.com> on behalf of Kaluhikaua Ka'apana
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:46 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

My name is Kaluhi Ka'apana and I am a kumu papa mālaa'o (kindergarten teacher) at Kula Kaiapuni 'o Waiau. I am submitting testimony for the **BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.** The already approved BOE Policy 105-8 states that Hawaiian immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set that is required to teach in a Hawaiian immersion school. These differentials also have helped to decrease the amount of vacancies in kaiapuni schools, which allow our schools to survive.

This year is my first year of teaching and I, along with my colleagues, have had to endure so much, as every teacher has this school year. On top of the usual stress of translating curriculum and creating resources for my students--because Hawaiian immersion is limited in those things--I have also had to learn how to teach 5 year-olds over a computer, many of whom do not come from a Hawaiian speaking homes. This meant also creating resources for parents, so that they can help their keiki at home or taking the time to meet with students and families to support them academically and emotionally. As kumu kaiapuni, we work tirelessly and usually outside of work hours to give the keiki the best education we can, especially in these uncertain times. Many times, my work day did not end until late at night or I was working through the weekend.

If this differential is eliminated, that will be a huge financial burden on me and my 'ohana. If these cuts are in addition to any possible furloughs, I'm not sure that my 'ohana will survive these cuts. If these cuts are to avoid possible furloughs, it will force a group of minority teachers to shoulder the financial burden. Our hard work for our keiki deserves more than to be the "go-to" elimination when the budget needs to be balanced. These cuts will truly hurt, not only the teachers, but the schools and our keiki that will begin to lose teachers who cannot take on the financial burden. Please consider this testimony as you move forward with your decision.

Na'u,

Kaluhi Ka'apana

Testimony BOE

From: Amelia Keefe <ameliak@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Amelia Keefe
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:46 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Hello,

My name is Amelia Keefe. I am writing in regards to BOE special meeting action item A. We need to make sure to keep qualified and the funds will help us to retain those teachers. We need to keep class sizes down to support all students. Please keep the funds for supporting our students with highly qualified teachers.

Amelia Keefe

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: Emmanette Haiola <japel.emm@gmail.com> on behalf of Emmanette Haiola
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:46 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for BOE Special Meeting

I would like the BOE superintendent to rescind your memo on ending teacher shortage differentials. I suggest that we discontinue the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard to staff geographical location, and Hawaiian language programs. By doing so we can keep our educators while we are dealing with this pandemic. There are many uncertainties with educators' individual needs causing distress and hardships.

I am a high school counselor at Kahuku High and Intermediate school. My husband has been furloughed, employed and then laid off. It has been difficult being a Senior counselor this year and trying to fulfill my position along with college and career counselor to support students with college admissions, scholarships, and letters of recommendations. I have six experiences as a counselor and 7 years of teaching math, science, and AVID. So I volunteered to mentor three new counselors this year so best support our students, teachers and families. I am grateful for my job. I know the power of knowledge and learning. Students are figuring things out and doing well. While others need more time to navigate and learn their style to adjust to distance learning. Lets continue to support educators!

We are all experiencing financial hardships, mental health, along with stability during these times. Please hear the plead of a counselor, educator, mother, aunty and sister.

Emmanette Haiola
Kahuku High and Intermediate School
12th Grade Counselor
305-7353

Testimony BOE

From: kevin tynan <kevintynan71@gmail.com> on behalf of kevin tynan
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:45 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony

*I am submitting testimony for **BOE Special Meeting Action Item A**: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.*

I have been an educator on the Waianae Coast for many years now and I make the long journey here every morning because I believe that we are only as strong as our weakest link. These underserved schools are in desperate need of good educators and the "hard-to- staff" bonus makes it possible to keep them. Stop making it more difficult for these students!!! You WILL LOSE TEACHERS!

Testimony BOE

From: Dr. Marcia Howard <mdhoward.phd@gmail.com> on behalf of Dr. Marcia Howard
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:43 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony (updated)

Aloha,

I am testifying on Action Item A: **Board Action on temporary discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs**

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 17, 2021

My name is Dr. Marcia Howard. I am a Special Education Teacher at Waianae High School in Leeward District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in support of Special Education Teacher differentials.

It is imperative that this committee provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and continue providing funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard-to-staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. Our teachers are worth it as they are important for the future of our keiki.

I have been teaching special education for the past 26 years (21 here in Hawaii) and it has been a rewarding yet difficult experience at the same time. I enjoy working with students with special needs however there are parts of my experience in teaching that have been frustrating and mainly it's the pay. I received my Doctorate Degree in Exceptionalities from The University of Hawaii at Manoa in 2014 and was hoping that with this degree I could attain enough salary to sustain my living here in Hawaii, however I have not.

In Brooklyn, New York where I am originally from, teachers with 26 years of experience are making upwards of \$120,000. I can only imagine that with a PhD they are making more. It is sad that with a PhD and 26 years experience in special education here in Hawaii my salary is only \$68,000. I would implore this committee to keep the salary compensation for special education teachers especially when you consider the amount of paperwork that we deal with on a daily basis, the amount of time we spend in meeting that goes beyond the contractual hours on writing IEPs, grading progress reports, contacting agencies and service providers, gathering data, and conducting meetings that can have up to 8-10 people! I can't even stress upon the effort put forth to teach the students with special needs in hopes that they can grasp the concept enough to possibly move them into inclusion classes with their nondisabled peers. This compensation is needed and eagerly welcomed!

Lastly, I know that all teachers spend an insurmountable time in writing and creating lesson plans, tests, and projects, but if Hawaii is to tackle the issue of shortages in special education, by attaining and maintaining licensed, certified, and highly qualified Special Education Teachers, then continuing to provide funding for the amount of time and effort in the form of salary compensation is a excellent start!

Marcia D. Howard, PhD
11th & 12th grade
Special Education English Teacher
Waianae High School

--

Marcia D. Howard, PhD

“Thinking is difficult, that’s why most people judge.”
C.G. Jung

Testimony BOE

From: Amie Stroud <amieestroud@gmail.com> on behalf of Amie Stroud
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:41 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Esteemed board,

I present this testimony in support Action Item A for the special meeting regarding Superintendent Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard to staff locations and Hawaiian Language programs.

First and foremost, let me say that I love my students, my profession, and my island. I have been so thankful for the board's past actions and stance on the matter of keeping students and educators safe and well as moving toward making the teaching profession a livable wage.

I am a special education teacher on the Big Island in a hard to staff school. I currently live in a one bedroom apartment with another teacher. Before differentials I was working two part time jobs in addition to all the extra hours that special education requires. This should not be the norm for professionals. My roommate has three masters and was still working a part time job before the differentials. With differentials we are finally "making it" financially and have options in the unstable housing market. Removing the differential would be a massive hit for me and my roommate. With the differential I was able to consider living in Kona long term. The possibility of my whole career here and raising a family here felt possible. Differentials made being a special educator in Hawaii enticing and many highly qualified individuals moved into those positions.

Many professionals have made financial investments in their education/qualifications to become certified in these areas. And no with more debt or obligation on the line, the superintendent is planning to remove a program that has shown to work.

Even with a masters degree, without the differential I have to reconsider my decision to teach in Hawaii. It is not financially feasible for a single person with a single income to teach and live in Hawaii-especially new educators who have not moved up in class or STEP. If you think we are in a teacher crisis now, wait until those who can afford to live here start retiring in the next few years. Will Hawaii hold a reputation for not following through on promises and not taking care of their teachers?

Mahalo for your consideration,
Amie Stroud
Special Education Teacher
Kealakehe Elementary School

Testimony BOE

From: Christina Cunningham <c.cunningham@seariders.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Christina Cunningham
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:41 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: TESTIMONY

Aloha.

I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting regarding Superintendent Christine Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Christina Cunningham and I am a Special Education teacher at Waianae High School. This is my 5th year teaching but I have been working in different positions from December 2002 and eventually decided to become a teacher back in 2015. I enjoy working as a teacher and being able to build relationships with students to help me learn how to teach them because not all of our students are on the same levels. From teaching in the classrooms and writing Individualized Education Programs comes with taking your assignments home to correct when that is after school hours. I am drained most days and I feel like taking away from teachers will only take away from our Keiki's who are our future because I will not be able to live off of a lower income.

I have been shocked, concerned and depressed in regards to the caliber of education provided to our students with special needs. The turn over of teachers on a yearly basis undermines the quality of education that is provided to the students who are most in need, not only due to their disabilities, but due to the environment in which they live. These students deserve the best teachers who commit to stay and establish relationships with them. What they get are the least experienced teachers who come for a two year holiday.

The SMARTEST decision that I have witnessed was the Board of Education's decision to increase the differentials provided to special education teachers, Hawaiian language teachers and those teachers who serve students in hard to place areas. I have witnessed the positive result of that decision. Qualified teachers have remained in their positions, good teachers that were here previously have returned, and teachers that were considering leaving have remained. Money matters!! The mainland provides teachers to the islands and they need to be paid a respectable amount in order for them to stay! Teachers from our community are more likely to remain in their challenging teaching positions if they are compensated for their tireless efforts. Please, please, please show respect to the students we serve and to the teachers who serve them.

I am asking that Superintendent Christine Kishimoto rescind her memo stopping the shortage differentials. That would be extremely detrimental to the students who need quality support and teaching. The board did not expect or intend for the differentials to end in 2021 and did not instruct Christine Kishimoto to unilaterally discontinue the differential pay.

I am counting on you to see the wisdom in continuing the payment of differentials. It is a move in a long overdue positive direction. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Christina Cunningham
AA, BPA, PBCE
Special Education Teacher
Waianae High School

--

Christina M. Cunningham, AA, BPA, PBCE
Ninth Grade Success Academy
Community-Based Instruction
Proud Alumni Searider ('01)
Wai'anae High School
Ph: (808) 697-9400
Fax: (808) 697-7018

Testimony BOE

From: Billy Pilgrim <bilypilgrim72@gmail.com> on behalf of Billy Pilgrim
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:39 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for BOE Special Action Item

My name is Brian Stockes and I am currently a SPED teacher at Waialua High & Intermediate School. This pay differential keeps me in my position. It compensates me for all the extra hours of paperwork and meetings I have to plan and hold for all my students. If we don't keep the differentials, many will just return to general education or leave the state all together. The statistics speak for themselves as to the effectiveness of the differentials over the past year. These are our most vulnerable students. Let's not make these cuts on their backs.

Testimony BOE

From: Moana Fleming Nazara <mnazara@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Moana Fleming Nazara
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:38 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Moana Fleming Nazara and I am the School Administrative Services Assistant (SASA) at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to **provide testimony for Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs** in the **BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.**

I am writing in **opposition** to this agenda item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo in advance for your consideration,

Moana Nazara

Ke Kula 'O 'Ehunuikaimalino

SASA

Phone: 808/313-3143

Fax: 808/323-4538

`A`ohe hana nui ke alu `ia

(No task is too big when done together by all)

Testimony BOE

From: Jennifer N <jenno4@yahoo.com> on behalf of Jennifer N
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:38 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To whom it may concern,

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I understand that the data gathered suggests that the extra compensation program was effective to reduce persistent shortages of special education (SPED) teachers. Keeping this pay differential in place for those hard-to-fill positions will assist the DOE in ensuring the provision of minimally competent professionals in SPED teaching positions. This could possibly indirectly save money dedicated to due process cases on the back end, considering competent professionals would be in place as the norm. I understand the issues with the budget shortfalls, but I strongly urge the BOE to reject this proposal considering the indirect costs associated with removing this program. Please consider analyzing costs savings by looking at the big picture, which probably needs to be piloted outside of the pandemic, which is a major confound.

Consider that less people are likely going for their SPED teaching credentials at this time because of concerns that there will not be positions due to budget cuts. Continuing this program for a meaningful amount of time not only honors our highly valued SPED teachers, it helps them earn a living wage. This will improve the morale among SPED teachers in Hawaii as well as the valued community members they serve. I was so thrilled to see the effectiveness of this initiative this past year, let's keep it going to show our mālama for our highly valued teachers!

Thank you,
Jennifer Ninci

Testimony BOE

From: Stella O <song1190@gmail.com> on behalf of Stella O
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:37 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Dear BOE,

My testimony is in regards to: BOE Special Meeting Action Item A.

I am a HIDOE related service provider. The elimination of shortage differentials that Superintendent Kishimoto is proposing will hurt my school, our students, and my own school-aged children. If the proposal goes through, we will have an immense shortage of qualified teachers. I know the differential has helped several of my coworkers remain in their position. This will not be good for our students and staff on campus. It will lead to larger classroom sizes, less support for problem behaviors, and increased stress on our students and staff. We will see a domino effect; less staff, higher teacher to student ratio, staff burnout and fatigue, increased social and emotional stress on students and staff, decreased learning and possibly poor academic performance.

Please reconsider the proposal for the sake of my ohana and the families all around Hawaii.

Thank you for your time.
HIDOE employee

Testimony BOE

From: Cindy Cruse <clcruse4@gmail.com> on behalf of Cindy Cruse
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:34 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for CARES ACT funds/COVID

I am a Kindergarten teacher at Kapaa Elementary who is currently experiencing displacement due to the cuts to education. Because of this, I will be forced to leave education and seek employment elsewhere because our family will not be able to live on Kauai without dual incomes. The unpredictable future of our education system and the inability to give the keiki what they deserve is heartbreaking. They deserve better.

Our school currently has 8 kinder teachers who have struggled to reach our keiki through a variety of different teaching methods. We have bought clothes, food, and supplies for them and cried when they cried because of their crazy schedule. The use of the CARES ACT will allow for teachers to keep their jobs and teach our keiki the skills necessary for their education foundation.

Please help us to help the keiki of this great state because in the end, they are our future and the future of this island.

Cindy Cruse
Kapaa Elementary School
Kindergarten teacher

Testimony BOE

From: Kameali'i Nazara <knazara@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kameali'i Nazara
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:34 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Rachel Kameali'i Nazara, I am a teacher at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino located in Kealahou, Hawai'i.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item for the following reasons:

1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. As per the policy Hawaiian Immersion teachers should be compensated for the extra skill set required to teach at these extremely important schools.
2. Any changes to 105-8 would adversely effect the progress the State of Hawaii has made to dramatically reduce the number of vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions.
3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the State must seek new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student learning and achievement; especially at kaiapuni schools.

Our State will always struggle and have needs that a "lack of revenue" will continue to perpetuate, but it is my opinion that as a group of historically and disproportionately affected peoples (Hawaiians and rural community members alike,) we should not be burdened YET AGAIN with having to return to previously unfair and unsatisfactory funding levels to meet the needs of people from more fortunate communities.

Aloha pumehana,
Kumu Kameali'i

Zohreh Furtado

Aloha Education Colleagues; my name is Zohreh Furtado and I teach at Kealakehe Intermediate School. I am a parent, grand parent, and dedicated educator with a firm belief in the connection between education and movement out of socioeconomic disparity. I write this testimony with the intention to renew your perspective on the challenges that our Hawai'i educators face. Tasked with survival in one of the lowest teachers' pay in the nation, when adjusted for the highest cost of living in the nation, there is no wonder that the teacher shortage remains a stable deficit in our beloved Hawai'i.

The combined variants of low pay, high cost of living, and certified teacher shortages, have created one of the highest teacher turnover rates in the nation for Hawai'i. According to Learning Policy Institute, Hawai'i percentage of uncertified teachers stands at 4.9% which is twice the national average. In 2018-2019 school year, the shortfall reached 1029 teaching positions of which 352 were in the area of special education. Non-certified teaching positions affected 60,000 students in Hawaii in 2018-2019, mostly in the disadvantaged social strata. The shortages commenced the partnership between BOE, our Governor, HSTA, and our Superintendent to initiate the pay raise for hard to staff areas. Then our reality was shifted with the surge of COVID-19 infections. The dedicated teachers rushed to adapt to virtual learning and taking care of students like soldiers called to duty, yet education is one of the first on the chopping blocks of the budget cuts.

The current conversations around the astringent and demeaning contract renewal guidelines, the push to reopen schools despite existing health risks, and the differential pay omissions will surely create another shortage crisis and career change for many teachers. Much

of the stability that we have experienced since the differential negotiations have ensued will be erased, and we will be in the same predicament as before.

Although I understand the economic impact of CIVID-19 on Hawaii revenue generation and want to do my part to support my state, I urge you to distribute the current and potential stimulus money to keep the differential pay in place to stabilize teacher recruitment and retention. If teachers need to compromise, furloughs or the 21 hour omissions are a better choice with less financial impact. Please be mindful that teachers are also community members who have lost family members, who have family members who lost jobs, and care for family members who are disabled.

Our current state challenges could also present an opportunity to rethink income generation and a shift from unstable tourism to more permanent self-sufficiency practices of investment in small farms, natural resource protection, renewable energy and establishing Hawaii as the education excellence center of the Pacific for K-16 education. Mahalo for the hard work you have taken on and your continued support of the educators.

Mahalo nui loa no kou hana pa'akiki - Me ke aloha nui Zohreh Furtado

Testimony BOE

From: julia kang <jlkang@live.com> on behalf of julia kang
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:31 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: We oppose the cuts

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Julia and Darious Kang and I am the parent of 2 keiki registered at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

The teachers are the leaders as they are teaching the future leaders (our keiki) of Hawaii. Superintendent Christina Kishimoto doesn't sit in a class room from 8-2:30 with our keiki, it's the teachers. The teachers deserve more than extra compensation, there is no price that can be put on what they do for our future leaders, and by cutting their funds you are taking away from more than just teachers. Please don't take the extra compensation away as our Hawaiian language programs can't take anymore "cut backs" and or left overs as the language is beginning to thrive again as so is our keiki!

Mahalo,

Julia and Darious Kang

73-4206 Kiekie St.

Kailua Kona, HI 96740

808-443-8463

Testimony BOE

From: jennings001 <jennings001@yahoo.com> on behalf of jennings001
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:31 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Action item A

Aloha

My name is Erik Jennings. I am a special education teacher on the west side of Maui. I ask that you please support funding of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

For the first time ever in my 16 years of being a teacher and Hawaii I was able to save a little bit of money for my child's college education because of this extra compensation.

I am sure you are already aware that most teachers live just above the poverty line here in Maui.

I personally do three teachers on the westside who are currently living out of their car because of the cost of living. SBA extra compensation pay goes away many more teachers will be living out of their car simply because they cannot afford to live on the west side of Maui.

Also the last two school years were the first to school years in my 16 years where we had all of our special education positions filled.

By cutting the extra compensation, many teachers may leave the teaching profession which will leave more and more students with unqualified and unlicensed full-time subs for their teachers. So we are talking about giving already struggling student the worst possible teaching scenario.

By supporting and continuing the funding for extra compensation, it'll help make sure that students have teachers who are qualified in the area that they teach. It will also have teachers who may not have the stress of worrying about a place to live because they can actually afford to work and teach in the community.

Again please support extending the extra compensation.

Mahalo for your time
Erik Jennings

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

Testimony BOE

From: Kalehua Krug <pookumu@kawaihonapcs.org> on behalf of Kalehua Krug
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:31 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Special Meeting Testimony: SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED DIFFERENTIAL

Aloha mai kākou,

As a charter school principal, I must disagree with the Superintendent's choice to decrease our state budget from the pocket of the teachers that are most needed. This decision is the absolute opposite of what is pono for us to do in our current context, especially in Hawai'i. The service populations that are targeted in these differentials are our most vulnerable. Secondly, the populations that targeted in this differential are significantly comprised of the indigenous people of Hawai'i. Our cultural heritage here is indispensable and the continuance to provide better education for this population should and must be our mandate.

There are many avenues by which to make budget cuts. There are many avenues to streamline system. This is not the road. Be creative and as innovative in the system distribution of funds as is expected of education within our state system. This is not just about need and workload, this is about integrity to uphold what is right. We will rebuild our economy somewhere else...and once this is removed. It will be increasingly more difficult to reinstate. Be truthful about the ramifications of this decision. Keep the differentials and look elsewhere for savings.

Na'u me ke aloha,

G. Kalehua Krug Ph.D.

Po'okumu, Ka Wai'hona O Ka Na'auao PCS

89-195 Farrington Hwy, Wai'anāe, HI 96792

Helu Ke'ena (808) 620-9030

Helu Kelepa'i (808) 620-9036



This is my written testimony in support of Kula Kaiapuni teachers. My name is Alexis Kahue and I have 2 children attending Kula Kaiapuni in Paia and I honestly love this school and their immersion program and highly support the Kumu and all efforts in educating my keiki. Please continue to provide the pay differential so they can continue supporting our families and children.

Mahalo,
Alexis Kahue

I URGE THE BOARD MEMBERS TO HAVE THE SUPERINTENDENT RETRACT THE MEMO TO DISCONTINUE PAY DIFFERENTIALS.

When we were told to return to the classroom without logical explanations to our questions and valid concerns, we showed up! We fearfully made tough decisions in our personal lives and careers because we weren't given any other choice or provided with accommodations. We (teachers, EA's, and RBT's) have braved through this rollercoaster of a year because we knew how much our keiki needed us during these trying times.

For almost a year now, I have been teaching my students with a wide variety of cognitive, physical, adaptive, and behavioral needs virtually. Currently, I am the ONLY teacher expected to teach hybrid. I've had to train myself how to gently provide distance instruction while parents did their absolute best to learn along the way and support their child's new and challenging way of learning. I have experimented, failed, researched, independently learned, collaborated, struggled, evolved, and it's been a draining journey to say the least. However, I am still here because my students and their families deserve qualified teachers and support staff. We are ESSENTIAL and deserve so much better.

We have continually mustered up the courage to ask our superiors (school and district level) difficult questions with the hope of receiving clarification but are still left to resolve many issues on our own. We have worried through the school days about our inadequate teaching environments that are not equipped to properly handle the severity of this pandemic and we take those burdens home to our families every day. We have been on the front line this entire year and were not even prioritized to receive vaccinations to protect ourselves, our students, and our families.

Last year, during a visit to our school, you were impressed by the teaching style of mine and my former colleagues FSC classroom. Pleased enough to have your communications specialist interview us for "Talk story with Dr. K". Although the segment was never filmed, I will never forget my response when I was asked "What makes your teaching style and classroom structure successful?" My answer will always remain the same and I will continually give all the praise to our TEAM. We have worked hard to create a collaborative teaching culture amongst every team member in our class. We have built our FSC program from the ground up and have made huge strides as a team before and during the pandemic. We could not get through this without the support of each other.

We care. We give. We advocate! Even when these gestures are not reciprocated we continue to show up! Please consider the drastic effects these cuts will have on the livelihood of teachers, support staff, and our keiki's future.

Thank you,
Yvonne San Agustin

Special Education Teacher, FSC

Highlands Intermediate School

Testimony BOE

From: Aaron Day <addleewardhsta@gmail.com> on behalf of Aaron Day
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:29 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for Action Item A

This testimony is being submitted for the BOE Special Meeting **Action Item A:** Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Aaron Day and I have been a mathematics teacher at Waianae High School since the 2005-2006 school year. I could tell you about the impact that these differentials have on my life and my finances, but I am not going to do that. There are thousands of teachers that these differentials impact in similar ways. I am going to instead spend my energy talking to you about the impact that these differentials can have for the tens of thousands of students that attend the schools where teachers receive these differentials.

For the past several years I have taught math to only juniors and seniors. Every year I have students ask me to write them letters of recommendations to colleges. Some of the students ask me to write them these letters when they have only been in my class for around a month. You see, the teachers that they really connected with in their freshmen and sophomore years of high school and know them better than I do are no longer with our school. They were Teach for America teachers who have moved on or they got hired at our school because we always have openings and have now transferred to a school they actually want to be out because there was finally an opening. Our students, the ones who need extra supports to help them overcome the various difficulties associated with where they live, are consistently taught by teachers that are new to the profession, that were not even thinking of being in the profession or are not actually interested in the content that they are teaching because our school always has jobs to fill and we have to fill them with whatever warm bodies we can find. That often means hiring TFA that will stay for two or three years, hiring teachers outside of their field who will then move to a position in their field when there is an opening and hiring teachers who do not choose our school and will leave it when there is an opening somewhere else. Every time we hire one of these teachers, we will have to do it again in a few years. It creates a vicious cycle of constantly having new, inexperienced teachers teaching things that are not what they are passionate about. This hurts our students.

The goal of these differentials is to make it desirable to teach in these areas so that we can hire and keep experienced teachers that are highly qualified. We have seen the most stability we have ever seen in our math department under these differentials. If this continues, the instruction our students receive will improve. If these differentials stop and we go back to our revolving door, our school will continue to focus on getting all of the new people up to speed every year and we will never move forward and our students will continue to be the ones who suffer. Please do not do this to our students.

Thank you.

I am providing testimony for BOE special meeting Action Item A and V/B

I have been a teacher in Hawaii for over 20 years. I have taught at multiple schools on different islands. I am currently a lower el teacher at a public school on Kauai. It is the greatest blessing of my life to serve the keiki and community of this island. My service, the same as every teacher I have worked with, has never been about money. It is no secret that if you are a teacher in Hawai'i, your primary concern is not the money. Year after year, we are repeatedly ranked as one of the worst states for teachers due to the low salary and astronomical price of living. This was before the pandemic hit. Most teachers, myself included, were already struggling to pay their bills. Many of us worked second jobs (most lost due to the pandemic). Since 2012, the number of teachers leaving Hawaii has increased by 70%. Now, most of us are the only people in our home still earning an income. My husband and son both lost their jobs due to the pandemic and have spent almost the entire time struggling through issues with the unemployment system (like many in our community) in order to receive their benefits. They went months without any assistance. On top of the added psychological stress of not being able to cover rent, car insurance, car registration, health care, and other necessary costs, I am working harder than I ever have.

Teaching on an A/B schedule during a health and financial crisis has been beyond daunting. I spend each day working as hard as I can, working more hours than I ever have, and I still feel that I am not able to support the students enough, support my family enough, support myself enough. So, when I see the proposed budgetary cuts, I am gutted. This devastation is not about the number or the money itself, it is about the complete disregard it shows for teachers and students' real lives, their lived reality, a reality that with the added stress of the pandemic is beyond the scope of normal human coping abilities. The fact that the state would propose further budgetary cuts to teachers and schools is a direct statement to us as educators that our lives simply do not matter to the state. Our ability to pay rent does not matter, our ability to afford

food, support our families, pay our medical bills does not matter to the state. By slashing our already objectively meager funding, the state is explicitly saying that the teachers do not deserve access to resources that can sustain even their most basic needs.

By extension, these proposed cuts show us that the state does not care for the keiki of this land, children who are already deeply marginalized and disadvantaged due to the underfunded public school system in this state. Teachers are the lifeline for many of these children who experience intergenerational trauma, poverty, and addiction. It is our labor and energy that makes up for the already lacking support system the state has put in place. By cutting our already meager support, the state is directly harming the children and the future of the islands. It is a cruel and unethical way to account for a failing financial system that already marginalized teachers and students. We all deserve better.

Please support teachers,

Marylee Fredericksen

Testimony BOE

From: Korie Nazara <keahe1987@gmail.com> on behalf of Korie Nazara
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:26 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Korie Nazara, and I am a Parent of 2 keiki at Ke Kula ‘o ‘Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

When you cut back on funding education, our children suffer the most! I hope you reconsider!

Mahalo,

Korie Nazara

Testimony BOE

From: Kaori-Lei Hanohano <kaimihanohano@gmail.com> on behalf of Kaori-Lei Hanohano
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:25 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Kako'o i ka papa hana kaiapuni & Kumu, Letter of Support for Kula Kaiapuni & Kumu

Aloha kua,

He leka kēia e kako'o i ka papa hana kaiapuni a me nā kumu kaiapuni!

This testimony is in support of the Hawaiian Immersion education & teachers within the program!

Our Ali'i invested in the people of Hawaii this education system as you know was created in 1840! Education in Hawaii has always been happening even before 1840!

Now is not the time to cut budgets, positions or programs but invest in our Kumu who have kuleana to help shape our keiki to create a thriving Hawaii! In Kishimoto's Stimulus proposal where is Kaiapuni education & Kumu?

Invest in the Kumu who have worked hard to go through hoops to be Kaiapuni Kumu! That pathway is not easy and has limited acceptance into certified programs for individuals who do not live on Oahu.

Ka papa hana kaiapuni is the future of the department of education! Look back at our previous Department of Education heads they were brilliant kanaka and there models of operation worked!

Invest in our Kumu & keiki they are our future in moving into a self sustainable Hawaii!

Mahalo no ka heluhelu 'ana i ko'u leka!

Mai poina ka 'ōlelo a Kauikeouli " 'O ko'u aupuni, he aupuni palapala ko'u!"

Na'u no,

Kaimipono Hanohano

Testimony BOE

From: Ashley Olson <ms.a.olson@gmail.com> on behalf of Ashley Olson
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:24 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony: 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.

Aloha esteemed members of the Hawai'i State Board of Education-

My name is Ashley Olson and I am a veteran educator who is struggling to find polite words to express myself in the face of draconian cuts to school budgets and teacher salaries. The very idea that positions will be cut and teachers will face salary cuts while millions upon tens of millions of dollars will be diverted to outside tutors and summer school that will benefit only a fraction of our student population is an obscene malfeasance

Please, ask yourselves, how many teachers who are eligible to retire will stick around when their "high three" years of compensation (upon which retirement is based, in case anyone was unaware) are behind them, and their salary is in fact, decreasing? Ask yourselves how many teachers will leave Hawai'i for better paying jobs- and a lower cost of living. Ask yourselves who in their right mind would look at the cost of living in this state and the abysmal teacher pay and decide to dedicate their career to public education in Hawai'i. Ask yourselves how public education in Hawai'i will survive when you cannot find more than a handful of qualified educators willing to work in conditions and for a paycheck that I doubt any of YOU would be willing to accept.

I am about to lose the \$5000 annual differential and it would seem that my position has been cut. I will still have a job, thanks to my seniority, but how much will I hate it? This really isn't how I thought my employer might show appreciation for the years of service and dedication I have given to my students and to my school. This is not the thanks I'd hoped for after giving my employer thousands of hours of uncompensated hours (and by thousands, I mean 4000 at a bare minimum).

You have the power to demand that federal Covid funds are not squandered on 'outside vendors'. You have the power to see that those federal funds are used to get public schools through this crisis intact. You have the power to ensure that the Department of Education does not drive away every teacher who has any other option than the HIDOE. You have the power to ensure that public education in Hawai'i is not crippled.

Use it.

Thank you-

A. Olson

Testimony BOE

From: Liz Noetzel <lizziecakes@icloud.com> on behalf of Liz Noetzel
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:24 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

I am writing regarding two issues that I would like to submit for testimony - BOE Special Meeting Action Item A- Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation, as well as BOE General Business Meeting Action Item V, B: Board Action on the DOE's plan for use of federal funds.

I am a seventh grade English Language Arts teacher at Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School. I have been teaching in the DOE since 1994, so I am included in the group of compressed teachers earning much less than I should be at this stage of my career. Because I love my profession and I have been in Hawaii since 1968, I have chosen to stay with the DOE system. My husband is employed at a private school in our community and consistently informs me of job openings, many of which actually pay more than what I am currently receiving. I've been tempted in the past, but I've chosen to stay with the public school system because I believe in servicing our Island's communities that cannot afford a private education.

HOWEVER- I am currently exploring leaving the DOE and joining the private school community my husband works for, for several reasons. At the very top of my list is the constant disregard our Superintendent has for teachers and her blatant choice to ignore the very real benefits of the differentials, not just the financial ones to teachers, but the trickle down effects for the students, a top priority. There is data which shows that more than 29% of our teachers transferred into special ed positions, and nearly twice as many transferred to hard-to-staff locations such as the one I work in. To eliminate a large chunk of my salary which I deserve after decades of work in this system will not only cause devastating effects on my own family's financial situation, but equally if not more importantly, it will have lasting ramifications on our school: teachers WILL leave, new teachers will NOT come, and **our students** will be the ones who suffer. Even *with* the differentials, we have had three subs in our Art line in the middle school since January. The differential has made it possible for my college-aged child to pick the university she wanted to attend, and even then, I come up short every July and December when her tuition is due and I must take the balance out of my retirement. No teacher in Hawaii is living the high life- we are all getting by paycheck to paycheck, and to reduce that paycheck is unfair and devastating. We all do understand that Hawaii is in a budgetary crisis due to this pandemic, however, there are alternatives other than forcing teachers to carry the burden of society's debts on our backs. I beg of you- please- do not let Ms. Kishimoto discontinue the extra compensation. It will hurt so many teachers like myself, it will hurt the economy because we will have less to spend, and it will hurt the students because some of us WILL leave if we cannot afford to work for the DOE with all of the impending cuts.

Additionally, I am absolutely *flabbergasted* that our superintendent has chosen to use a huge share of the federal stimulus funds for tutors instead of restoring funding for our schools. This is truly unbelievable and unacceptable. There are teachers at my school whose positions were eliminated - our entire line of Electives were cancelled for next year- the students will not have Music, PE, Art, Drama or any Languages because of these cuts, and she has the audacity to allocate money for tutoring? It is unbelievable! She clearly is spewing nothing but rhetoric when she states that she cares about and appreciates the teachers! I cannot wrap my brain around this decision- this has a direct and negative impact on our students who will not be able to take ANY of those classes listed above next year. Can you even imagine yourself as a middle schools student, forced to only take core classes every day? Some students **ONLY** come to school because of the joy they find in their electives classes. Please- someone, do something- this cannot happen- over 700 teachers are slated to lose their jobs and she could clearly care less, about the adults, their families, or the students we are here to serve. I am horrified at

her short-sided, uninformed, uneducated choices. Please save us and the students from her lack of vision and do not allow her to follow through with this ridiculous plan. I predict that if her plan is passed, *very* few students will receive *actual tutoring*, in comparison to how many will receive a well-rounded, quality education that addresses the whole child, if their teachers and programs are retained.

I realize this is long, and I apologize. But this is important, and I appreciate your taking the time to consider the teacher's voices, needs, and opinions, as well as listening to our most important client- our students.

Thank you for your time,
Liz K Noetzel

Testimony BOE

From: Na Leo Kakoo <naleokakoomaui@gmail.com> on behalf of Na Leo Kakoo
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:22 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Sesame Shim, Treasurer, Nā Leo Kākoo o Maui, Inc, non-profit 501c3.
Special Meeting

A. [Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs](#)

I SUPPORT the continuation of extra compensation for classroom teachers in the Hawaiian language programs.

Hawaiian language program teachers put in so much extra time and work to support their students in this program, going above and beyond what is required of them as teachers. It includes translating everything, creating curriculum, and often teacher more than one subject for secondary education. Because of that tiresome work, it is difficult to staff these much needed positions. Because of this differential, more teachers have filled these vacant positions and more kumu feel appreciated for all the work that they do put in. Please continue to support these pay differentials, to help Hawaiian language immersion continue on its path of growth.

Mahalo,
Sesame Shim

--

Na Leo Kako'o o Maui, Inc.
Post Office Box 1913
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793
naleokakoomaui@gmail.com
The nonprofit support group
of Kula Kaiapuni o Maui

Testimony BOE

From: Christopher Castillo <christillo90@gmail.com> on behalf of Christopher Castillo
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:21 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for Action Item A. regarding discontinuance of differentials

Aloha to the members of the Board of Education of Hawaii.

I am writing to testify in support of Action Item A. for the special meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Christopher Castillo and I am a teacher of 7 years at Waianae Elementary School, which is a hard-to-staff location.

When I first started teaching, I knew that the pay was not going to be enough for me to continue to live in Hawaii on my own. So, I was looking for other jobs which took up a lot of my time after school. I must admit that I had spent a lot of my time trying to survive on the island right after graduating rather than planning and preparing for my students. Why? Because if I were not taken care of, I would not be here for the keiki. As I continued to teach in Waianae Elementary, which is a hard-to-staff school, I saw our teachers leave just as soon as they came. In my 7 years at Waianae Elementary, there has not been one year where a teacher has not left and replaced.

It is hard to keep teachers there, especially younger and newer teachers due to the costs. Besides taking care of ourselves, we are spending a lot of our money on our kids. In a community where the kids are coming to school hungry, dirty, and lacking supplies. We continue to put out money from our own pockets to support our kids. The differential pay has helped me pay off a lot of my debt that I have accumulated over the years to help pay for my students needs. Without it, I may have found myself leaving the profession like many of my other former colleagues. Not because I didn't like taking care of my kids or teaching, but because I could no longer afford to take care of myself with the piling amount of debt from the years before that I have spent on my classroom.

Discontinuing the pay differentials for these positions would hurt a lot of teachers which may lead them to leave these already hard to fill positions. This would not only hurt our teachers financially, but also hurt our students by not having qualified teachers in these positions. These positions already have high turnover rates as well as frequently filled by long term substitutes and others with little to no teaching experience. We cannot expect the best out of our students if we are not offering them the best in the classrooms to teach them.

If we really want our keiki to succeed, we need to be able to support and supply them with everything. Which means funding schools and teachers.

Thank you for your time.
Christopher Castillo

Testimony BOE

From: Kapua Nolan <knolan@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kapua Nolan
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:21 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Stephanie Kapua Nolan and I am the Student health aid at Ke Kula ‘o ‘Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Aloha

Kapua Nolan

Testimony BOE

From: H Garcia <honey.k.garcia@gmail.com> on behalf of H Garcia
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:19 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I have been a special education teacher for 15 years. Before the differentials, I was planning on leaving special education for good due to the stress and extra unpaid hours that come with teaching special education. If the differentials do not continue, there is no reason to stay in this profession.

Having to fight for 6-ft. distancing, begging to keep the differentials promised to us this school year, and HIDOE's intent of hiring tutors while laying off teachers, HIDOE has made it very clear that they do not care about safety, teachers, or the student's quality of education.

The only light at the end of this dismal tunnel is the differential pay. I will definitely be looking for another job if differentials do not continue. When I leave, 15 years of special education teaching experience will be leaving with me.

Please have the Superintendent retract the memo announcing that HIDOE will no longer pay teachers the shortage differentials we have been promised.

Thank you,
Honey Garcia

Testimony BOE

From: Mikiala Taylor <mikiala@kaumeke.net> on behalf of Mikiala Taylor
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:19 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: BOE Testimony- Differentials

Aloha,

I, Miki‘ala Taylor, **oppose** the discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in Hawaiian language immersion programs and urge the BOE to reject the proposal. I am a graduate of the Hawaiian Immersion Program, Ke Kula Kaiapuni and share my passion for the culture and language of Hawaii with my students. I am very passionate about my work in and outside of school, however, bills continue to build up which makes it difficult to live comfortably in Hawaii. I love my home, I love what I do, and I love my students. It would break my heart if I would have to choose to leave the classroom because my income is not enough to cover the bills.

na‘u nō me ka ha‘aha‘a,
Miki‘ala Taylor

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Testimony BOE

From: Monique Cariaga <pikakepride@gmail.com> on behalf of Monique Cariaga
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:19 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Monique Cariaga and I am a Parent at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A*:

Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs in the BOE Special Meeting [on Feb. 17th. at 11am.](#)

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo,

Monique Cariaga

Testimony BOE

From: Dan Leis <dtleis@hotmail.com> on behalf of Dan Leis
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:17 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is _____ Dan Leis _____ and I am the _____ parent of a student _____ at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Testimony BOE

From: Tyler Hill <tyler1121@go.byuh.edu> on behalf of Tyler Hill
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:16 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

This email is in regards to the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A.

Aloha,

My name is Tyler Hill, and I am an FSC/CBI SPED Teacher at Waialua High and Intermediate. Upon graduating BYU Hawaii in Spring of 2019, I accepted the SPED position at WHIS where I student taught. I was unsure how I would be able to live out in Hawaii on a teacher's salary, but I knew I could make it work for at least a year before I would have to move to the mainland. I got lucky and my first year as a teacher I received the pay differential for being a SPED teacher. With the added money it became plausible for me to live in Hawaii for an extended period. I have been able to stay at my position the past 2 years because of this pay differential. It is imperative for me to be able to afford the cost of living out here in Hawaii. The pay differential has also allowed me to spend more money on my class, which has given them more opportunities to learn and grow. For instance, every Thursday I provide ingredients for the class so that we can make a meal together and they get to keep the recipe of easy to make meals. They come together and work together as a class to complete the common goal of making delicious food. It gets my students outside of their comfort zone and it helps them interact more with their peers. This year we have done bacon mac and cheese, pancakes and bacon, spaghetti, French toast and sausage, cupcakes, and French dips to name a few. It is the favorite day of the week for my kids and something they always look forward too. Since doing this one student expressed to me that they want to be a chef, while others tell me they can't wait to make the meals for their family at home. Eliminating the differential will take away our ability to cook Thursday among other things. It will also force me to reconsider relocating to the mainland so I can afford to live where I am. I worry for my kids because they're my number one priority. I love having them as my students and I know they love having me as their teacher. If I am forced to leave because of the reduction of pay I know that it will be hard for WHIS to fill the vacancy and that there is a possibility that a teacher that isn't as qualified could take over the class. Under an unqualified teacher my students would be negatively impacted, and they would lose much of what they have gained. I am a qualified teacher who wants to work in the FSC/CBI SPED room. I had many options and places to work, and I chose WHIS. If I had it my way, I would work my whole career at WHIS and retire at WHIS as well. Please keep the differentials in place so that I can be the best teacher I can be for my students. Please don't make me leave the place I have come to call home. Please don't do this to my students. Keep the differentials, they are proven to work to keep the most qualified teachers in the SPED positions.

- Tyler Hill

Testimony BOE

From: Krista Johnson <kjohnson@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Krista Johnson
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:15 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Krista Johnson and I am a substitute teacher and day classroom aide at Ke Kula ‘o ‘Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement. 4. I directly see the importance of these programs in the local communities and those of us that work in them spend many extra hours developing and teaching programs that create well-rounded, well-grounded and bilingual children who become responsible adults who then become supportive and productive participants in not only their local communities but in the community at large.

Mahalo,

Krista Johnson

Ke Kula o Ehunuikaimalino, Substitute Teacher/Day Worker

Hana Like Fish, Owner/Operator

Testimony BOE

From: Shyya Nawailohi Hiapo Ha'o <shyyahao@gmail.com> on behalf of Shyya Nawailohi Hiapo Ha'o
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:15 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Shyya Ha'o and I am the mākuahine at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo nui for your time,
Shyya Ha'o

Testimony BOE

From: Bryson Mitchell <b.mitchell@seariders.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Bryson Mitchell
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:13 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

I am testifying in support of Action item A for the special meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am an educator from Los Angeles, CA. Teach for America Hawaii brought me here in 2013 where I started my journey in education at Waianae High School. As a major advocate for Teach for America and all that it does for our students, I have to say that the pay cuts to teachers along the west side will be detrimental to the program continuing and the livelihood of its teachers.

I can't count the number of times I contemplated moving back to Los Angeles because of the high cost of living and low salary. This wage is hardly a livable one for teachers who have gone above and beyond this year to support students. I hope these decisions are swiftly reconsidered in consideration of the fact that we could see a mass exodus of teachers and our west side keiki will continue to suffer disproportionately. As a mainland transplant, I can confidently say that I so deeply want to continue my teaching journey along the Leeward coast, but these pay cuts may force me to leave and move back to California.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bryson Mitchell
English/AVID Instructional Coach
Waianae High School
(808)697-9400
b.mitchell@seariders.k12.hi.us

***"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."
-Mahatma Gandhi***

Testimony BOE

From: Trey Balding <treybalding@gmail.com> on behalf of Trey Balding
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:13 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony to issue #1

Aloha,

My name is Trey Balding and im currently a teacher at Hawaii School for the deaf and the blind. This is my testimony letter...

Our school is highly struggling with shortage of staff frequent staff turnovers, and hard-to-fill staff geographical.

It is not right to make this kind of decision that affect our payment and our lifestyle when oahu, our home is most expensive to live in the nation. Please reconsider this situation.

Mahalo nui
Trey

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: michelle miyahanana <mmyahan@gmail.com> on behalf of michelle miyahanana
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:13 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony
Attachments: Testimony for Special Ed Differentials_ Feb 2021.pdf; Untitled attachment 01156.html

To the Hawaii Board of Education:

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: board action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations and Hawaiian language programs.

I was lucky enough to discover my passion for teaching at a young age. While in elementary school I knew that I wanted to be a teacher when I grew up. After graduating from high school I enrolled in the College of Education at the University of Hawai'i Mānoa. During my time there I was lucky enough to participate in the dual certificate program. I am one of the few teachers who are dual certified to teach both general and special education.

I must admit that special education was not my first choice. While in school I found it very intimidating. I am now in my seventh year teaching special education at Kapunahala Elementary and can honestly say I cannot see myself teaching in any other position. I have come to love my role as a special education teacher.

Aside from feeling reimbursed for using what little pay I earn to provide for my classroom, I saw how the differentials helped to lower my caseload so I could provide more intimate instruction to those who needed it to thrive. At my highest I had 25 students on my caseload. These students ranged from grades 1-3. At my school we do not have enough classrooms to house each teacher (this is another problem in itself) so most of the special education teachers share half a classroom. This meant that at my highest, I was trying to squeeze 16 students into just half a classroom while teaching curriculum for grades 1-3 at the same time. How did anyone even think this was possible? How was this benefiting our special needs population? Was this supposed to be "good practice" in helping our students reach their highest potential?...This year, thanks to the differentials, we were able to hire more teachers and reduce my caseload to just 8 students. I am now also assigned to just one grade level. This has given me more flexibility and time to better serve my students.

I am scared what the removal of the differentials will do to our special education department once again. Will I now once again be naively expected to serve 25 students in multiple grade levels in the same block of time with just one extra body? How would it be possible to now squeeze those students into my half room all while keeping within social distancing guidelines? How will my students get the attention they need to succeed from grade to grade?

I hope as a state we can come together to realize that it's not just teacher's "complaining" about pay, but keeping our class sizes down so we can provide intimate instruction tailored to student needs.

Mahalo for your time,

Michelle Miyahanana
Grade 4 Special Education Teacher
Kapunahala Elementary School
Kaneohe, HI

Testimony BOE

From: Natalia Sandoval <nataliasandoval.hi@gmail.com> on behalf of Natalia Sandoval
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:13 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha Board of Education,

I am writing testimony to ask that the Board prioritize keeping teachers and other school employees on the payroll instead of using federal stimulus money to hire tutors, especially those who are unlicensed teachers, work out of state, and have more of an interest in making a profit rather than the success of our keiki.

We have thousands of highly qualified teachers here in Hawaii who would be more than willing to tutor and work with students in their schools and communities to address any gaps in learning or loss of learning due to the pandemic. The fact that our own teachers were not offered the chance to work face to face with our own keiki is appalling. Superintendent Kishimoto has no sense of what ohana means. To give millions of dollars to for profit, out-of-state companies, before investing in our own teachers, shows how little she thinks of our education system and educators, here in Hawaii.

I am also writing to request that the Board direct Superintendent Kishimoto to rescind her memo ending teacher shortage differentials. As a special education teacher, I, along with my fellow SPEDucators and our students, will be directly impacted by the loss of the shortage differentials.

There are thousands of special education teachers who have been tirelessly working for years, without proper compensation or pay. We are all burned out by the demands of our profession, but have nowhere else to go. We do not have the luxury of teaching in private schools, as they do not serve the population of students we love working with. We do not have the luxury of switching professions, as we are bogged down by debt we've accumulated over the years building our professional capacity. We are truly public servants to the communities, families, schools, and exceptional students we service.

Should the shortage differentials be taken away, I fear we will lose so many special education teachers again. Less qualified teachers means more work for those of us who are highly qualified. More work for those of us who are highly qualified, means less time spent on providing students with the proper services, instruction, and support they desperately need. Poor servicing, instruction, and support for our special needs students could place us in another FELIX situation, where the Department of Education will be held to stricter mandates by the courts; how sad and embarrassing would that be for the DOE!

Our special needs students are the ones who will truly suffer with the loss of shortage differentials, and I do not want to see what happened with Felix to happen again. We have a moral and ethical obligation to fully fund, support, and service all students, especially those with exceptional needs.

Thank you,
Natalia Sandoval, MA SpEd, NBCT
Waikiki Elementary School
Special Education Teacher
SPEDucator Project Fellow
#SomeOneSpecial808

Testimony BOE

From: Hawaiian Libra <kauwilamahina@gmail.com> on behalf of Hawaiian Libra
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:12 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony: Don't Cut Differentials

Aloha no e Hawaii Board Of Education,

I am a mother of a special needs child since the age of 3, my daughter has received services from the State and was given services through the Department of Education from K to 12th grade. Her care coordinators and her SPED/resource teachers worked very hard for her. They helped create her reading and writing goals and objectives. Because of their hard work and efforts her reading levels expanded and her health goals improved. I ask that you not cut the differentials but advocate for special needs and support our teachers financially. Teachers especially SPED teachers are the most giving and caring educators. They give it their all in creating curriculum, continuing professional development and they invest a lot of time into making their practice effective and efficient as possible. Hiring tutors that aren't as experienced as our teachers is degrading to our educational system and status. Our teachers deserve the best. Our island teachers have a lot to offer please support them by not cutting the differentials.

Mahalo no,
Ms. Kaylene Sheldon
Ka'a'awa, Hawaii

Testimony BOE

From: Mary Silva <maryhavana51@gmail.com> on behalf of Mary Silva
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:10 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: special meeting action item

Please don't cut our pay. I have taught for thirty years with a master's degree that I paid for. It took me two years of sacrifice for my family of four to get this degree. If you cut my pay, it shows me that you don't value the time we put in to get our degrees. I know you have earned degrees, and I am sure your pay is equitable to what you sacrificed yourself. I am not working without being valued professionally or with pay. We have tried to have you understand this. We work extra hours to teach our children. Please respect us both professionally and as a working force.

I EARNED MY PAY>—NO PAY CUTS.

Testimony BOE

From: Kawehi Zoller <kzoller@ehunui.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Kawehi Zoller
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:09 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha pumehana kākou,

My name is Kawehi Zoller and I am the first grade teacher at Ke Kula ‘o ‘Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in OPPOSITION to this item on the agenda.

The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required.

The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy.

The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Kaiapuni schools are significantly in need. Kaiapuni teachers work outside of their hours creating all of their curriculum. Certified teachers in kaiapuni, at least in my program, complete 600+ hours of in-classroom service within 1 year just to get basic certification. And the work does not stop there. This budget cut could end our small kaiapuni school for good and we have been going strong for the last 20 years. I fear that this budget cut will end our school for good after so much progress. The state has a duty to uphold their responsibility to support and sustain the kaiapuni experience. This will severely hurt kaiapuni and harm our Hawaiian language revitalization movement. Please do not move forward with budget cuts to the compensation of Hawaiian language programs.

Aloha nui,
Kawehi Zoller

Testimony BOE

From: Jamie Ahuna <jamietiare@gmail.com> on behalf of Jamie Ahuna
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:07 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Jamie Perry and I am a former teacher at Ke Kula ‘o ‘Ehunuikaimalino. I am currently a stay at home mom and my husband currently teaches fourth grade at Ke Kula ‘O ‘Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting [on Feb. 17th. at 11am](#).

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Thank you for your time,

Me ke aloha,

Jamie Perry

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: Jenna Fear <jennamfear@yahoo.com> on behalf of Jenna Fear
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:06 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha, my name is Jenna Lee and I am a 3rd grade teacher at Kealakehe Elementary School. I am writing this testimony in support of action item A regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am born and raised in Kailua Kona and am the proud alumni of Kealakehe High School on the West side of Hawaii island. Thinking back to my high school years, I can remember a handful of classes where I had long term subs or a revolving door of subs as my teachers. I graduated high school in the top 10% of my class and when I entered college, I found myself needing to take remedial english and math courses due to the lack of quality instruction from those teachers.

Flash forward ten years later with a Masters degree in education, I am proud to say I've become an elementary school teacher and teach at the same elementary school I grew up going to. I became a teacher like many, because I wanted to make a difference in the lives of my students, become the stable being in their lives, and get them prepared for their next phase of life within education and beyond.

When I first got hired at Kealakehe Elementary school 5 years ago, there were dozens of teacher open positions at our school during TATP. Entire grade levels were leaving, people were retiring, and we were forced to fill them with emergency hire teachers.

Since the differentials for hard to staff positions last year, I have seen a definitive change in the amount of teachers leaving our school. Last TATP we had only 2 open positions, compared to the huge amount just 4 years prior. This is undoubtedly because of the increase in pay due to the hard to staff differential.

If the differentials are taken away, I worry many will leave the profession, retire early or move back to the mainland, because they simply cannot afford it. I worry for my own children who will grow up going to school filled with a revolving door of substitutes. I worry for my students who will not be prepared for college due to the teacher shortage.

Please, I beg you, we finally have a system that has shown true of working to help with our teacher shortage in rural areas. All students deserve qualified teachers regardless of their location.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Testimony BOE

From: David Negaard <draagen@gmail.com> on behalf of David Negaard
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:07 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Action Item A. *for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teaching in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.*

Aloha Chair Payne and Board,

I am David Negaard, an English teacher at Henry Perrine Baldwin High School on Maui. I do not receive a shortage differential, but I indirectly benefit from their existence, as do my students. I am *incensed* that Superintendent Kishimoto proposes to eliminate the differentials—which have served as a lifeline to nearly 4,000 teachers (out of 13,500), lifting their compensation a little bit closer to a professional (or at least a local living) wage—without the approval of the Board of Education.

I benefit from shortage differentials because the students in my inclusion classes have greater access to a qualified special education teacher who, because the differential was an incentive for licensed SpEd teachers to move into SpEd positions, is no longer quite so terribly overworked. I benefit from shortage differentials because all my students have increased opportunities to engage with Hawaiian language and culture under the tutelage of qualified kumu. I benefit from shortage differentials because students transferring from a hard-to-staff geographical area to our school are less likely to have spent a significant percentage of their public education in classrooms staffed by substitutes.

More to the point, our students benefit. Students benefit when schools are adequately staffed, and the shortage differentials “moved the needle” in that direction. Sure, there’s a long way to go, but “backward” should not be an option. To regain the ground lost if the Department of Education (DoE) backtracks on this will take years if not decades, and students—a generation or more of students—are the ones who will pay the price.

The Superintendent justified her decision to unilaterally cut shortage differentials by claiming the DoE faces a 10 percent budget cut, but on January 21, Governor Ige restored about 7.5 percent of the Department’s budget. Even if we factor in the \$100 million cut this school year, the hit is 8.6 percent rather than 10, and we have reason to hope that federal relief will soon arrive, allowing the Department to defer egregious to-the-bone cuts in the short term.

The shortage differentials are a good start. They have decreased vacancies in (some) shortage areas by 66 percent in just the last year. Funny how when you pay teachers a more professional wage, they are more likely to stay...who could have imagined?

That lesson should not be glossed over. When the DoE offered differentials to teachers licensed in Special Education who taught in Special Education positions, our SpEd shortage diminished. When the DoE offered differentials to teachers teaching in hard-to-staff geographical areas, the teacher shortage in those hard-to-staff geographical areas diminished. Maybe if we increased pay to *all* teachers, the typical yearly teacher shortage of around 1,000 could be reduced, as well. But that is a topic for another day.

The shortage differentials were established *by the Board of Education* (based on the Superintendent’s request) on December 5, 2019. It was not a pilot—a proposal to address equity and compression in teacher salaries was

the pilot, and it was never implemented—and it is not within the Superintendent’s purview to unilaterally undo what the Board has done. Last summer she tried to suspend shortage differentials for this school year, but the Board rejected her proposal and supported the continuance of the differentials.

We teachers are always struggling. We *wish* our primary struggle was the struggle to do our best for our students, but in Hawai‘i it’s often the struggle to provide for ourselves and our families, working multiple jobs and always one disaster from insolvency. But since differentials were established, nearly 4,000 of us struggled *less* with finances, and therefore had more energy to apply to teaching, our vocation. To rescind the differentials would push nearly 4,000 teachers that much closer to disaster or departure.

I fully support the Board’s demand that Superintendent Kishimoto rescind her memo stopping shortage differentials. Do the right thing; refuse to go backward and strive to move forward.

Mahalo,

--

David Negaard

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

Testimony BOE

From: Tehani Lau <tehanialau@icloud.com> on behalf of Tehani Lau
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:06 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha mai kākou,

My name is Tehani Lau and I'm a Parent at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting [on Feb. 17th. at 11am.](#)

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

I'm having difficulties understanding a budget cut being considered when the funds has already been allotted. Also, it always seems to effect our teachers. They have had to face multiple budget cuts in the past and are the ones that need to suffer. I don't think many realize that teachers make a huge impact on everyone's lives. They are just as important as physicians, nurses, first responders, etc. Teachers don't deserve to be forced to take a budget cut, especially those that are working in special education, hard to staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian Immersion schools. These teachers should if anything be getting raises for wanting to succeed in these areas of learning and for putting in the extra time and hard work for our kids to excel in these areas. Please reconsider this agenda and find another way of making a change.

Mahalo nui,

Testimony BOE

From: Haley A. Ku'uipo Bufil Agbayani <hakbufil@gmail.com> on behalf of Haley A. Ku'uipo Bufil Agbayani
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:01 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony - 2/18/2021

To the Hawai'i Board of Education:

My name is Haley Agbayani and I am in my eighth year of teaching with the Hawai'i State Department of Education (HIDOE). I am currently a third grade teacher, but have also taught in grades K, 2, and 4. My first three years of teaching were done at Mountain View Elementary. I now work at Pāhoa Elementary School (PES) and unless something comes up that forces me to transfer elsewhere, I am in it for the long haul at PES and within the HIDOE. I work amongst some of the most resilient students and colleagues in the Kea'au-Ka'ū-Pāhoa Complex Area, as we have endured and continue to persevere a multitude of life-changing and trauma-inducing events: Hurricane/Tropical Storm Iselle, lava flow 2014, Hurricane Lane, the Leilani lava flow of 2018, and now, COVID-19. I am also a proud product of our public education system and graduate and alumni of Hilo High School, as well as a proud alumni of Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole Elementary and Intermediate School in Pāpa'ikou.

I am writing this testimony with regard to **differentials and restoring budgets**. At a time when teachers and educators are working in overdrive to provide quality education to students both in person and at a distance via virtual learning, in some cases simultaneously, removing differentials is an erroneous move. I work in a hard-to-staff area and the differential has helped me offset my extra out of pocket expenses to support students and their families. Additionally, the extra differentials has also helped me in being able to make extra payments toward the principal balance of my family's mortgage. Without these differentials, I will no longer be able to afford the little extra I do for students to support them or make extra principal payments on my mortgage because the cost of living is exponentially higher here in Hawai'i, let alone rural Pāhoa. What also worries me with regard to differentials and possible pay cuts is that our most senior teachers may decide to retire and leave the profession further widening the teacher shortage our state currently faces, potentially causing increased class sizes in the even that we do not have enough qualified teachers to provide quality instruction.

With regard to restoring budgets, does it really make sense to invest federal stimulus funds in the form of tutors outside of a school-work day? This money should be used to retain our qualified teachers and sustain our new-to-the-profession teachers instead of cutting positions. Additionally, this money should be used to support educational assistant (EA) positions to support the needs of students with IEPs. I teach in an inclusion setting and am very thankful that we started the year with an EA, that extra help should be afforded to all teachers especially during a time when students' needs far surpass what we would "normally" endure in a "normal" school year.

Please consider ensuring that our differentials continue and that federal stimulus monies are used to retain our qualified and new-to-the-profession teachers. Let's support our students and ensure that they receive what they need to be successful by support our teachers and educators!

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Haley Agbayani, M. Ed.
Pāhoa Elementary School, Grade 3 Teacher
7-year Hawai'i Public School Educator

Proud HSTA Member & School and Chapter Level Leader

--

Haley Ann Ku'uipo (Bufile) Agbayani, M.Ed.

808-315-0102, hakbufile@gmail.com, HC 1 Box 4069, Kea'au, HI 96749

- 3rd Grade, P-18, Pāhoa Elementary School, Pāhoa, Hawai'i
- SLL HSTA Grievance Representative, Pāhoa Elementary School, 2019-2021

Testimony BOE

From: Kini Kaawa <kinikaawa@gmail.com> on behalf of Kini Kaawa
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 10:00 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha mai kākou,

‘O Kini Kaawa ko‘u inoa. My name is Kini Kaawa and I am a teacher at Pāhoa High & Intermediate School and a former teacher at Kula Kaia‘ōlelo and Kaiapuni schools.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

The next three points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaia‘ōlelo and kaiapuni schools, hard to fill positions, and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Kini K. Kaawa

BOE Special Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2021-20212 school year

February 17, 2021

Dear Superintendent Kishimoto and the Hawaii Board of Education,

I am writing today to urge you to reject the proposal to discontinue the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations and Hawaiian language immersion programs for the 2021-2022 school year. Thank you for taking the time to hear from teachers across the state regarding this issue.

I am a Hearing Itinerant Resource Teacher for all of Maui District. I am trained in both Special Education and Deaf Education. In my current itinerant position, I meet the diverse needs of students with hearing loss across the continuum. I provide both direct and consultative service to multiple students, across multiple islands (Maui, Molokai, and Lanai), schools, grade levels, and languages. I service students included in general education as their LRE, as well as those in special education classrooms, SPED preschools, and charter schools. I provide resources and trainings to staff, teachers, administrators, and state level personnel as few have the expertise in the area of hearing loss. I also handle all the ordering and distribution of all the hearing assistive technology for these students. My responsibilities often require additional hours, resources, and face to face time with teams across the district.

The state differential that was accepted last year helped me tremendously. I was able to cut back my hours at my second job. I spent less time worrying about my finances. I had more time for myself and family, to take care of my physical and mental health. This allowed me to give my students my best self every day. I also had more time for professional development, lesson planning, and volunteering and networking within my community. I built relationships with the local Rotary Club, Lions Club, and Yacht Club, which are now aware of the needs of my students, and are able to support in many ways.

Now the department of education is proposing to discontinue the extra compensation this upcoming school year. The differential has a big impact on mine and others ability to continue to be effective educators to our students. With the reality of the financial pressures of teaching and living in Hawaii, and the difficulty, both currently and historically, in filling positions that are specialized and require more training and education, I hope the Board of Education will see the value and benefit of retaining their current team of teachers versus the cost, quality, and effectiveness of the children's education.

The reasons that the differential was originally approved are still important today. In fact, with the Covid 19 pandemic, the need to retain highly qualified teachers is even more challenging, yet critical. Please help support the hard working teachers by fighting to continue the teacher shortage differentials.

Sincerely,
Melissa Mills
Hearing Itinerant Resource Teacher
Maui School District

Testimony BOE

From: Julie Sagon <hulajuls@gmail.com> on behalf of Julie Sagon
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:58 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: BOE Special meeting Feb.17@11am

Aloha Kākou,

Our names are Steven and Julie Sagon and we are parents at Ke Kula'O'Ehunuikaimalino. I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

We feel these teachers work very hard in these difficult times. If anything they deserve a raise. Definitely not money taken from them. We want our children to get the best education possible in the public school system. With good quality teachers. Please think about the children.

Thank you for your time,

Steven and Julie Sagon

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony BOE

From: Kat Lagmay <katlagmay@gmail.com> on behalf of Kat Lagmay
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:58 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony: Special Education Funding 2021

Aloha to all members of the Hawaii Board of Education,

My name is Kathrine Lagmay. I am submitting testimony in regards to the absolute need for Special Education in Hawaii to be properly funded and properly staffed at all schools this year and many years to come. Defunding special education puts the most vulnerable children in our state at an even further disadvantage to their peers.

My 6 year old, Ellasia Lagmay, has benefited from nearly 4 years of special education starting in 3 year old preschool for children with special needs. She was born with a very rare genetic condition that unfortunately started her life at a disadvantage. She had speech delays, feeding difficulties, fine and gross motor skills delay, hearing loss which caused some academic delays. All these to no fault of her own. With that being said, the absolute amazing teachers, special educators, speech therapist, occupational therapists and general education teacher of Palolo Elementary have gotten to her to a place in her life where she is THRIVING. She's not 100% caught up to her peer group with some things, but she's close. Without the financial support of the staff who help her, and so many like her, she may not be able to stay caught up to her peers.

My daughter deserves to be educated properly. She deserves that her teachers are properly paid, trained, and supported. Her teachers deserve those things as well. We have been so absolutely thankful and appreciative of the outstanding work of her special educators. Without them, my daughter, and so many kids like her will be thrown to the wolves to fend for themselves in already underfunded schools. Defunding special education teachers also puts a very unfair burden on general education teachers as well.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kathrine Lagmay
Concerned Parent

Testimony BOE

From: Laverne Moore <laverne.moorehi@gmail.com> on behalf of Laverne Moore
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:55 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

My name is Laverne Moore and I am submitting testimony for the **BOE Special Meeting Action Item A**: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I am a special education teacher at McKinley High School, and I speak in opposition of Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

Online teaching has been the most challenging in my 51 years of teaching. Add to it, SPED state and federal mandates, procedures, paper work, training and retraining, reevaluation, eligibility and IEP meetings makes one ask, why am I still teaching?

Why, as a social activist, I love teaching History and working with special education students. The \$10,000 special education differential adds to my high three and is an incentive to continue teaching. Mentoring and supporting incoming special education teachers is a way of giving back to my profession and the HSTA for all of the training and leadership skills I have acquired throughout my career.

My peers need the differential because they are starting out in their careers, have college loans, living paycheck to paycheck, working two or more jobs after school or on the weekends.

Continuing the differentials is a needed benefit for the service they render on behalf of our children in Hawaii's public schools.

I urge the Board of Education to direct the Superintendent to rescind her memo ending teacher shortage differentials.

Testimony BOE

From: Christy Leis <christyleis.slp@gmail.com> on behalf of Christy Leis
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:55 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Cc: Ka'umeala'anui Lind-Strauss
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Christy Leis and I am a parent at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Me ke aloha,

Christy Leis

(808) 769-8407

Testimony BOE

From: Kahili Ezzo <kahili1512@gmail.com> on behalf of Kahili Ezzo
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:52 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha,

My name is Breane Ezzo and I am a parent at Ke Kula 'O 'Ehunuikamalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for Agenda item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The Boe already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in Kaiapunui schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Testimony BOE

From: Patricia Clifford <patty.clifford2@gmail.com> on behalf of Patricia Clifford
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:52 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Aloha,

Please consider this testimony to be included in "Special Meeting, Agenda Item II.A."

I am writing in support of Hawaiian immersion teachers and appropriate compensation based on the already approved BOE Policy 105-8 which states Hawaiian immersion will be compensated for the extra skillset that is required.

Also, the 2020 differential has helped to decrease the number of vacancies in kaiapuni schools which allows schools to survive.

Lastly, the amount of money needed to comply with this BOE Policy is not a lot and affordable.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mahalo

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Kelli Yamauchi and I am the School Counselor at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiaupuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Furthermore, many teachers have made significant lifestyle decisions based upon this pay differential. Some have decided to go back to school to obtain higher degrees for the benefit of our students and community while others have made decisions related to housing. This is pulling the rug out from under us. Discontinuing these pay differentials will harm our students, our teachers, and our community.

Sincerely,

Kelli Yamauchi, MSW

Counselor

Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino

81-1041 Konawaena School Rd.

Kealahou, HI 96750

Direct: 808-313-3123

Fax: 808-323-4538

Testimony BOE

From: Vaina Barton <vaina.barton@gmail.com> on behalf of Vaina Barton
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:48 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha,

My name is Vaina Barton and I am a Parent at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting [on Feb. 17th. at 11am](#).

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo,
Vaina Barton

Testimony BOE

From: Daniel Tavares <danielpktavares@gmail.com> on behalf of Daniel Tavares
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:47 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

Daniel Tavares (Teacher @ Keaau High School)

Special Meeting @ 11:00

Item: II.A. Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Position: Opposed

As a teacher working in the poorest school district within the state I would like to comment on the need for stability. Our students here have very difficult lives, and to them that is their normal. Some don't live with their parents and some even their own families. I know of students who have parents who are in prison, suffered from substance abuse, domestic abuse, poverty, and are not sure where they are going to live tomorrow and who they are going to live with. To some of them this is their normal and the closest semblance of stability that they do experience is here in school. They need to have teachers here that they can count on to stay with and support them through their high school experience towards a better future.

I advocate on their behalf that you continue the pay differentials to retain teachers in these hard to fill and typically impoverished groups/communities.

Thank you for taking the time to review my testimony,
Mr. Tavares

Testimony BOE

From: Helani Kihe <helanikihe@gmail.com> on behalf of Helani Kihe
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:47 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Helani Kihe and I am a Parent at Ke Kula ‘o ‘Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

I would also like to say that our teachers/Kumu always go above and beyond for our Keiki and ohana. During this crazy pandemic they have gone further then they already do to make sure our Keiki get whatever they need to learn and they have helped us makua/parents out tremendously. Our Kumu/teachers need this money to continue to kōkua/help the keiki/children succeed. Mahalo nui for your time

--

me ka ha‘aha‘a
Helani Kihe

Testimony BOE

From: Catherine Devore <devorecrs@gmail.com> on behalf of Catherine Devore
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:46 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: testimony

My name is Catherine Stoneman. I am a 20 year veteran teacher at Waimea Elementary School in the Hamakua District on Hawaii Island. I have thirty-five years experience teaching special education, first in California, and now in Hawaii.

I am submitting testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

I believe taking this action is a mistake and will convince teachers, especially those like me, that the state does not respect us or honor the extreme workload we're currently expected to do.

The extra compensation these differentials have provided me has made a significant difference in my life. For the first time in 20 years since my husband and I arrived I've been able to pay down bills, pay more significant amounts on my student loans, pay for my husband's funeral, and do much needed upkeep on my house and property. I've also been able to pay for the gas necessary for my commute from Puna to Waimea without worry, a necessary expense as I purchased my home in Puna. Homes in Waimea were not a realistic possibility on my salary.

Even with this extra compensation though, I'm still making less than my niece who is a special education teacher in California. She has only been teaching for 15 years and yet her annual salary is higher. In addition, I believe that next year will be far worse for students and teachers than this one. Special education teachers at my school are being told we could have caseloads beginning at 15 students and ending at over 20 by the end of the school year. This is NOT sustainable for students, who need extra help this coming year, or teachers. I've barely been able to keep up on paperwork and planning this year, when I've worked every night until 9 or 10pm. Cutting my pay, AND increasing my workload will only make me seriously consider moving back to the mainland.

Mahalo for your time and understanding,

Catherine R Stoneman, Hamakua District, Hawaii Island

Testimony BOE

From: tre flower <treflower@gmail.com> on behalf of tre flower
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:46 AM
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony, Special Meeting, Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs

Aloha Kākou,

My name is Tiare HewLen and I am a makua/parent at Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino.

I am writing to provide testimony for *Agenda Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs* in the BOE Special Meeting on Feb. 17th. at 11am.

I am writing in opposition to this agenda Item.

There are three main points for this opposition. 1. The BOE already approved Policy 105-8. This policy states that Hawaiian Immersion teachers will be compensated for the extra skill set required. 2. The new differential has helped to dramatically reduce the vacancies in kaiapuni schools and special education positions. More qualified teachers leads to increased student achievement and therefore a stronger economy. 3. The amount of money needed is within the budget allotments with new federal aid and the state should dig deeper into new and innovative ways to cut costs that don't directly impact student achievement.

Mahalo nui,

Tiare HewLen

Testimony BOE

From: Paulina Felcher <paulinafelcher@gmail.com> on behalf of Paulina Felcher
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:46 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony from a Hawaii public school teacher on BOE General Business Meeting Action Item V, B and BOE Special Meeting Action Item A

Aloha,

This is testimony regarding **BOE General Business Meeting Action Item V, B:**

I am a 1st grade teacher at Kapaa elementary school on Kaua'i. I'm extremely disappointed in the BOE for either not doing their due diligence on what the federal stimulus funding can be used for OR just disregarding the law and hoping to use it for anything other than avoiding pay cuts. The notion of using that funding for hiring private tutors while allowing pay cuts and teachers to lose their jobs is absolutely outrageous. The priority for the funding should be to keep and improve the compensation of highly qualified teachers to provide quality instruction to our children. The logic of cutting teacher positions and pay, and then hiring "tutors" to help catch students up is ridiculous. It gives me very little assurance that the BOE has competent/qualified individuals in office and that the BOE has the best interest of Hawaii students at heart. The current teacher pay is not adequate for the cost of living in our state. There are many skilled teachers who leave this profession because they don't deserve to struggle financially to be a teacher when they can pursue other career options that compensate them adequately. They'd even be better off teaching in a state with teacher compensation that matches the cost of living. If you want good teachers in Hawaii, pay us a professional salary that allows us to live comfortably in our state. It will attract quality individuals to this profession. Use the federal stimulus funding to secure and raise the compensation of the teachers of Hawaii who selflessly devote themselves to this profession. Cutting teacher positions in our state should not even be a question. That would cause class sizes to increase so we are unable to safely distance. It makes no sense and it saddens me to even have to submit testimony for the poor decisions the BOE is making. Please do better.

Regarding **BOE Special Meeting Action Item A:** The differentials have made a huge difference across the state. Our union (HSTA) has provided the facts to support that with all the new SPED teacher candidates applying to the teacher prep programs, etc. SPED positions are extremely hard to fill. At my school, there are SPED teaching lines open every year because the new teachers keep leaving. If you want our SPED students to have qualified teachers, you need SPED differentials to attract people to that very challenging position.

Going forward, please work with our union (HSTA) more as you are supposed to. The back and forth with proposals from the BOE, Ige, and the superintendent during covid have been exhausting. You are putting the teachers, students, and families of Hawaii through unnecessary stress when consulting with HSTA first could have avoided most of it.

Testimony BOE

From: Marcie Reihanifam <marciereihanifam@gmail.com> on behalf of Marcie Reihanifam
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:46 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Marcie Reihanifam and I am currently a special education teacher working for the state of Hawaii at Waikiki Elementary School. I am testifying in support of Action Item A for the Special Meeting, regarding Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuous of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs. I had previously taught here for two years but moved away due to the cost of living here in Hawaii. I was able to move back and teach here again because of the differentials in pay for special education teachers. I love living here but love teaching here even more. If I lose this differential pay as a single person I will not be able to afford to live here and pay off my student loans from becoming a teacher in the first place. I am an extremely passionate teacher and I put in so much time and effort to provide everything I can for my students. I work many hours outside of our contracted work hours to develop lessons, lesson prep, analyze data, and complete the endless amounts of paperwork for my students. Being a special education teacher can be an extremely demanding and stressful position. Have you considered that we have been working with students online and in person since August 2020 putting ourselves and our families at risk? We were asked to do this because we are essential yet we are now going to be punished and have our differential pay taken away that is helping us survive in this pandemic? I am shocked that you would consider doing this to your special education teachers who have worked so hard and have put themselves at risk since August of 2020 to support these students. We had to put our fears aside and show up for our students while also spending additional time each day sanitizing and disinfecting our classrooms to keep our students and supporting staff safe. It does not make sense to use federal funds for tutors, when you will lose teachers as a result of the cuts you are making. Please think about how this is going to affect our keiki if they are not provided with qualified teachers. Put yourself in our shoes and think about how much of a slap in the face this feels like after everything we have done this school year. Without this differential pay, I will not be able to afford to live and continue to be a teacher here in Hawaii. I am a prime example of someone who was able to move here to teach in a position that had a shortage because of the differential pay. Please consider how this will affect us, our livelihood and our keiki.

Sincerely,
Marcie Reihanifam, MA SpEd
Special Education Teacher
Waikiki Elementary School
(808) 971-6900

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Marcie Reihanifam, MA SpEd
Special Education Teacher
Waikiki Elementary School
(808) 971-6900

Testimony BOE

From: Jessica Burris <jstark@hawaii.edu> on behalf of Jessica Burris
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:45 AM
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Testimony for BOE Special Action item due TODAY

Aloha,

I am writing to submit testimony for the BOE Special Meeting Action Item A: Board Action on Superintendent Christina Kishimoto's discontinuance of extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs.

As you can see in my signature line below, I am currently an Instructor with the University of Hawaii in the Special Education Department of the College of Education. Specifically, I teach and supervise Special Education teacher candidates that will work in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis. As such, I often mentor students within the DOE's special education settings throughout the state, and I am very familiar with the challenges that teachers and other aides in these settings face on a daily basis.

Working with special needs students is especially challenging in comparison to other school settings, and the exceptional teachers that rise to these challenges deserve to be compensated accordingly. Without this extra compensation, my fear is that fewer and fewer candidates will be willing to accept the extra stress of working with more challenging students, and thus, the students themselves will suffer.

Our DOE system has already demonstrated that they are suffering staffing shortages in the SPED departments throughout all islands, and they are therefore unable to meet the legal requirements of IEP recommendations. If less teacher candidates are motivated to enter the SPED department, these shortages will only continue. More lawsuits will ensue and more children's education will suffer.

Cutting the additional pay for teachers in this department sends the wrong message. We need to make our SPED staff feel valued for the extra work and patience that they display. Superintendent Kishimoto's cutbacks will be a detriment to our DOE, our state's reputation, and our keiki.

Thank you for your time.

Jessica Burris, M.S., BCBA, LBA ([she/her/hers](#))
Instructor
Department of Special Education
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Phone: (808) 927-6494

v-office link: <https://coehawaii.zoom.us/my/j.burris>

Ivy Leilani Caldito
257 Ku'uualoha St.
Kahului, HI 96732

February 17, 2021

Hawaii State Board of Education
Honolulu, HI
testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

SUBJECT: BOE General Business Meeting Action Item V.B.

My name is Ivy Leilani Caldito, I am a retired teacher at Francis Scott Key in Washington, DC. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2488, proposed SD1.

Please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and hard to staff positions to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. The Department of Education will need \$45 million more than this bill provides to do so. Our teachers are worth as they are important to the future of our keiki.

My nephew, Keolaokekai Balubar is a special education teacher at Olomana School on Oahu. He is raising a young family and if funds are not provided to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education, my nephew and some other teachers will be forced to take on two or three jobs to be able to survive. This will likely result to lack of time in lesson planning, IEP development, and teaching his students in the special education classroom.

I am asking you to please provide enough funds to fix the teacher salary compression issue, and provide funding for the pay differentials for teachers in special education to show that we as a state value our hardworking teachers. Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (703) 304-0516 or icaldito379@aol.com.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ivy Leilani Caldito". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the "Very truly yours," text.

Ivy Leilani Caldito

Testimony BOE

From: Stephany Makizuru <s.makizuru@seariders.k12.hi.us> on behalf of Stephany Makizuru
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 9:43 AM
To: testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov
Subject: Stephany Makizuru's Testimony 2.17.21

To Whom it may concern,

Here is my testimony for the Teachers contract. Thank you for all you guys are doing, really am thankful personally for those fighting to make it right.

Stephany's Testimony 2.17.21

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Sincerely,

Stephany Makizuru

Special Education Upper Lead
Waianae High School
Ph:(808)307-8370

"Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful."
Joshua J. Marine