

State Board of Education Thursday, September 2, 2021 – 10:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. HST

TESTIMONY

ACTION ITEM

COMMENTS ONLY:

Presentation on National Association of State Boards of Education (“NASBE”) training to build capacity for effective leadership and governance, establish major goals, and understand how these goals impact the Board’s search for a superintendent

NASBE’s president and CEO, Robert E. Hull, will be conducting training for Board members in accordance with the attached agenda.

The purpose of the training is to

1. Build capacity for effective leadership and governance, from the last training session

Leading for a Lasting Change

- a. (4) Understand **fully** the problem you are trying to solve
- b. (5) Base all decisions and discussions on relevant evidence – data and research
- c. (7) Involve all stakeholders in the process-not just the product
- d. (12) Hold yourself and others accountable for results
- e. (15) Base evaluation of progress and personnel on predetermined metrics

2. Establish major goals,

a. **Inequitable Education:**

Examples:

Homeschool: If options for Distance Learning are not available, schools are telling families to homeschool.

In-person learning: No consideration for students who cannot get vaccinated.

Distance learning: first come, first served. Not needs based.

Wait List: 2,315 Across the state (Infinite campus?) (No information of how many have been denied)

- State Level Distance Learning: with teachers. There have been 660 referrals. There are 450 seats filled. 245 students and families are waiting for the department to hire more teachers.
- STRIVE K-12: self directed on-line learning: no teacher.

b. **Safe and Healthy Schools**

Isolation and Quarantine Protocols: Students at home MAY get school work; work packets are sent home, some evidence of teacher directed on-line learning when the whole class is quarantined. There are not protocols in places. Complexes and schools develop their own method of these absences.

- All missed days are counted as absences.
- If a teacher or student is vaccinated and is a close contact but asymptomatic, they do not need to isolate or quarantine, **EVEN IF**, another sibling is quarantined.

Close Contacts and Contact Tracing: The school principals or designees are identifying close contacts and doing the contact tracing. This includes calls to the families. It also includes follow up calls through the process to provide support.

COVID Case Prevalence: I am not here to present the number of cases in the schools. The Board receives this information daily. Schools will stay open according to the interim superintendent. All schools are safe and following all protocols.

OTHER Inconsistencies:

Inconsistent Mask Wearing is being reported (students and teachers)
Social Distancing is not occurring at lunch, recess, etc.

3. and understand how these Goals Impact The Board's Search For A Superintendent.

Although the interim superintendent has captured the audience through numerous television news casts and interviews, the substance is negligible. Dodging questions by answering questions that have not been asked, repeating an answer over and over to most of the hard questions, refusing to acknowledge that the increase in COVID cases in the schools are largely our vulnerable elementary school children. These children cannot get vaccinated.

OUTLINING A PROCESS THAT WILL ALLOW THE BOARD TO CHOOSE A STATE SUPERINTENDENT BY THE SPRING OF 2022.

- a. Discuss a process that will allow the board to choose a state superintendent in 2022 (in the absence of a strategic plan)
- b. Discuss the major goals you wish to accomplish in the next year
- c. **Ramifications** for the superintendent search

As a private citizen advocating for children, also think about the ramifications of a poor selection for superintendent. Although I certainly had faith and trust in the Board's search and selection for the interim superintendent, he falls very SHORT in **THE FIVE FORCES OF LEADERSHIP by THOMAS SERGIOVANI.**

Reference: Leadership and Excellence In Schooling *Excellent Schools need Freedom Within Boundaries* by Thomas J. Sergiovanni, reprinted from *Educational Leadership*, February, 1984, no. 5, pp. 4-13 by permission from ASCD

At least five leadership forces can be identified:

- Technical—derived from sound management techniques
- Human—derived from harnessing available social and interpersonal resources
- Educational—derived from expert knowledge about matters of education and schooling
- Symbolic—derived from focusing the attention of others on matters of importance to the school
- Cultural—derived from building a unique school culture

These five forces may look simple on face value, but there is so much more to each force. In this paper, which I sent to the Board on Monday, August 30, pg. 16, Figure 1.2 *The Forces of Leadership and Excellence in Schooling* provides a summary of the relationship between the five forces of leadership and excellence in schooling.

TAKE AWAY:

One important concept that I want to mention is about symbolic and cultural forces:

“They are very powerful influences of human thought and behavior. People respond to these forces by bonding together into a highly normative-cohesive group, and this group in turn bonds itself to the school culture in an almost irrational way.

The “cult” metaphor communicates well the nature an effect of extremely strong bonding.”

This was quite evident when the public, parents, families, teachers et.al. actually, bonded together from the beginning of the pandemic in March 2019. A strength has grown since then as evident by written and oral testimonies.

Any superintendent, government leader, policy or individual that espouses, “The opening of in-person learning is worth the risk of COVID cases in schools.”

Again, this is a powerful bond by a cohesive group that will remain strong as long as decisions made regarding our children are dangerous, irresponsible and negligent.

Aloha,

I am writing today in support of adopting the National Core Arts Standards. Exposing our children to the arts is a vital part of helping develop our children's minds.

Working through the arts helps learners to develop creative problem solving skills that a text book cannot teach. Teaching through the arts can also present difficult concepts visually, making them more easy to understand to all types of learners. Development of fine motor skills, language skills, social skills, decision making, risk taking and inventiveness are also achieved through art.

Exposure through art can also teach our learners about color, layout, perspective and balance. These are all techniques that are necessary in presentations of academic work.

Some students who may not be engaged in classwork can be engaged through art. I have personal experience with this myself. I was not an academic learner but a physical one, when I was exposed to art I excelled which increased my self-confidence and sense of belonging. This made a huge impact on my life when I was in school.

Through art education students can also connect with their culture and the wider world. Something so important here in Hawaii.

Art in our schools, especially in these challenging times when students have already suffered so many setbacks over the past year can help bridge that gap.

In conclusion the many benefits of art in school are well documented and there is science to support the fact that they can help our Keiki learn and develop. They make school fun, and the children deserve no less. Please do not cut budgets and sacrifice exposing art to children who are need of something help them belong, to help them learn, and to help them have confidence in themselves.

Mahalo for your time,

Victoria Carlson