



Board agenda 10/21/2021. Items IV B. IV D and V.A

1 message

Cheryl B <burgharc@gmail.com>

Sun, Oct 17, 2021 at 9:42 AM

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

Item IV B. Understanding that the BOE and DOE are looking at the multitrack calendar, I would still strongly suggest that the BOE look at the calendar in general and take a strong stand about creating one that is more inclusive rather than exclusive. We live in Hawai'i and while there are a large number of Christians here, the calendar currently used is one placed on our islands with no thought to the fact that public schools are not supposed to promote religious holidays. There are so many paths that we could take instead.. WHY is the BOE so reluctant to move on this issue? Remove at the least Good Friday.

IV D. When considering the budget for the Hawai'i State Library, would appreciate some form of address to the fact that those of us who live in town still only have access to the library by requesting books and picking them up outside. There are I am sure many reasons for this but one should not be that there are not folks to work or that the state continues to use it for other purposes. IT is our public library.

V.A. Please use the lens of understanding when looking at student performance based on assessments that #1 should not have been given during these times; #2 skill/concept/standards are aligned to a demographic that does not match ours; #3 standardized testing was invented by the Eugenic folks; #4 our schools in different parts of our islands should not be penalized or rewarded based on the above 3 items or any other. We take 2 steps forward and 10 steps back on this issue every year. Teachers are stressed, kids are stressed and putting on extra stress over HI STrive is not necessary now or actually ever. We have so many paths to pursue and continue to ignore them.

As a retired educator, it is so sad to see that we as a community have to continue to stand for our keiki on subjects that have been proven over and over to not be good for them or the community. At what point, does the BOE truly understand its kuleana to the keiki and community and not the politics of the system.

Cheryl Burghardt
Retired educator



Testimony GBM Action Item IV.E. Acceptance of Grant Funds

1 message

Angela M <angelam966@yahoo.com>

Tue, Oct 19, 2021 at 7:31 AM

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

Dear Board of Education members:

I am submitting testimony in opposition of GBM Action Item IV.E. Acceptance of Grant Funds

Year after year the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation donates money to the DOE and the BOE also accepted funds for the last Superintendent search. Chair Payne's memorandum and recommendation does not include the ethics of accepting the donation. Without consideration of the interests of the donors, how will the public trust how much of a stake in the outcome these donors expect?

The Hawaii education system is at an all time low. With years of low performance, how will you ensure the public's interest of raising DOE accountability and dramatically improved performance is attained while balancing the donor/stakeholder agenda? The donor agenda proved to be more important than the mission of the DOE in the last search.

Mahalo Nui,
Angela



Testimony for GBM Presentation on School Performance Results for the 2020-21 School year

1 message

Angela M <angelam966@yahoo.com>

Tue, Oct 19, 2021 at 10:50 AM

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

Aloha Board of Education members:

The performance results for the 2020-21 school year speaks for itself. The education in Hawaii has hit an all time low. What is consistent is what the DOE reports as their strategy to address learning loss, using the tiered system of supports, HMTSS.

The DOE has been unsuccessful in it's implementation of HMTSS.

What are the qualifications of the state office and complex area personnel supporting schools in identifying effective intervention and supports?

Phyllis Unebasami's presentation on HMTSS, slide 6 lists Learning Acceleration as access to grade level content. No, access to grade level content is a basic expectation for all students. Why is the DOE misusing the term learning acceleration? Acceleration implies there are changes in rate of learning in speed and direction (upward trajectory).

Please have Unebasami explain:

How many classroom teachers regularly use formative assessments? Who is monitoring this? Current data does not support this.

How are schools determining intervention blocks and what is being taught in those blocks?

How are schools determining small-group instruction and what is being taught in those groups?

How are tutors informed of what the academic needs of each student are?

What are personalization activities? What outcomes can the DOE produce?

What are specialized services? What current outcomes can the DOE produce?

How are summer programs effective? What are the outcomes from the summer hubs?

In an interview on the morning news, Principal Sean Wong stated teachers are making adjustments to curriculum and incorporating better teaching strategies to address learning loss. Is there an issue with the curriculum schools have been using? Last year the DOE used a non-rigorous and biased Acellus curriculum. Why is curriculum still needing adjustments?

The HMTSS is ineffective and the data speaks loud and clear. How is the DOE addressing this?

Mahalo Nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Angela Mariano



October 21, 2021
General Business Meeting

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board,

We would like to comment on Discussion Item V. A., Presentation on School Performance Results for the 2020-2021 School Year: Strive HI Performance System.

Both the 2020-2021 school performance results and the 1st quarter 2021-2022 universal screener data show how much the pandemic has impacted our students. We must accept the sobering data and move forward strategically on how we can get students back to pre-pandemic levels and above these levels.

The data reveals that while the system as a whole was impacted by the pandemic, certain subgroups struggled more than others in attendance and in proficiency assessments in both English and Hawaiian. We believe in equity in education. This means our system should provide additional supports to our high-needs students to level the playing field so that all students are able to reach the goal of college, career, and citizenship. However, ultimately, we want to lift every student so that they can maximize their potential.

We think it would be useful for the DOE to look at exemplary schools or complexes that have demonstrated success or show the promise of demonstrating success through their strategic thinking in addressing both high-needs and non-high-needs students. Many of these schools have effectively addressed student subgroups that have historically struggled in our system.

For example, at the November 7, 2019, BOE Data Retreat, the DOE identified exemplary Title 1 Schools, those which have a large percentage of economically disadvantaged students, that performed well in English Language Arts (ELA), math and science summative assessments.¹ Not only are these schools located in areas of poverty, but their student demographics are diverse. Yet, they have been able to create positive environments for their schools as well as obtain positive outcomes for all students.

We hope that the DOE will also view the pandemic as an opportunity to change. Knowing that resources are limited, we hope it will use a systematic and strategic approach to address the challenges facing both our high-needs and non-high-needs students efficiently and effectively.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

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https://boe.hawaii.gov/Meetings/Notices/Meeting%20Material%20Library/Data%20Retreat_11072019_Presentation%20Inquiry%201%20and%20Appendix.pdf

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

HE'E Coalition Members and Participants

Academy 21
Alliance for Place Based Learning
American Civil Liberties Union
*Castle Complex Community Council
*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS
*Education Institute of Hawai'i
*Faith Action for Community Equity
Fresh Leadership LLC
Girl Scouts Hawai'i
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation
*HawaiiKidsCAN
*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance
*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars
*Hawai'i Children's Action Network
Hawai'i Education Association
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition
Hawai'i Scholars for Equity and Social Justice
* Hawai'i State PTSA
Hawai'i State Student Council
Hawai'i State Teachers Association
Hawai'i P-20
Hawai'i 3Rs
Head Start Collaboration Office
It's All About Kids
*INPEACE
Joint Venture Education Forum

Junior Achievement of Hawaii
Kamehameha Schools
Kanu Hawai'i
*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council
Keiki to Career Kaua'i
Kupu A'e
*Leaders for the Next Generation
Learning First
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
Native Hawaiian Education Council
Our Public School
*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*Parents and Children Together
*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
Special Education Provider Alliance
*Teach for America
The Learning Coalition
US PACOM
University of Hawai'i College of Education
*Youth Service Hawai'i

Voting Members () Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*



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David Miyashiro
Executive Director

October 21, 2021

Hawaii State Board of Education
General Business Meeting
Catherine Payne, Chairperson
Kenneth Uemura, Vice Chairperson

Aloha Chair Payne, Vice Chair Uemura, and Members of the Board,

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 provides comments for Discussion Item A) Presentation on school performance results for the 2020-2021 School Year: Strive HI Performance System.

Along with the universal screener academic data presented today to the Student Achievement Committee, today's Strive HI results are extremely alarming. Learning loss is real and profound, and it should be clear that significant action is needed to get students back on track. This underscores the urgency of successful and impactful use of federal ESSER funds, and why we continue calling on HIDOE to provide the level of detail and specifics that assures us a single dollar won't go to waste.

While this new data is very concerning, I urge the BOE to take a step back to look at the big picture and longer trends. The reality is that progress on these measures has been fairly stagnant since 2015, and true analysis of this stagnation has not occurred in public. Convenings like the BOE's Data Retreat in 2019 could have been a forum for such candid reflection from HIDOE leaders, but we were disappointed those discussions never reached that depth.

When is the BOE going to demand we look at how the system has been operating? It's understandable the COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact, but our system had very little margin for error prior to the pandemic. Much has been made about the "empowerment model" adopted by HIDOE around the time of the appointment of former Superintendent Christina Kishimoto. While there should be room for place-based responsiveness and innovation in our schools, the BOE should question why it seems that this model has not produced results. In particular, this model seems to have put immense pressure on schools during the pandemic, with major decisions pushed down to the school level without accompanying support. For administrators we've spoken to, "empowerment" has often felt closer to "abandonment." Perhaps this is a good opportunity to evaluate whether this model is creating the conditions for success in our system, especially given the need for our system to be in lockstep in facing and recovering from the pandemic.

There are also other important discussions to be had, including a closer look at trends such as the notable growth in CTE concentrators. We do believe this is an exciting success story, jumping from 39% in 2015 to 61% in 2021. However, we are concerned that this growth has not seemed to drive similar growth in core academic metrics. Is there a way to ensure our career pathways and academies have a stronger link to supporting academic success? After all, basic literacy and math skills are indeed career readiness skills, with many employers still requiring applicants to pass basic competency tests. In terms of CTE programs, we would also encourage HIDOE to release data showing equity implications for participation. Are students having equal opportunities to participate in various programs and pathways? Are girls, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander students more likely to participate in pathways leading to less-available or lower-paid fields?

Another area that would benefit from closer exploration is chronic absenteeism. The data presented today only tells a part of the story, as it indicates when students have missed at least 15 days of school. Instead, HIDOE should break chronic absenteeism out into wider ranges to show how many days beyond 15 days were missed. We've heard from teachers this past year who shared some students nearly missed entire semesters. Given there is a big difference in terms of support students will need missing 15 vs 50 days of school, a fuller understanding of the problem would enable a more targeted and strategic discussion.

I truly hope today's discussion goes beyond simply acknowledging Strive HI results to actually creating a clear and transparent plan for changing course. For that reason, this discussion cannot be separated from debates over how to successfully maximize the impact of federal ESSER funds, successfully leveraging afterschool programs and community partners, and how to work more closely with the legislature to

move past a return to status quo spending to innovative practices and efficiencies. These are complex issues for complex times, and our talented teachers and system staff deserve a coherent plan of action.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Miyashiro
Founding Executive Director
HawaiiKidsCAN

Aloha Board of Education Chair and Members,

I would first like to thank all of you for your volunteer service, leadership, and commitment to our public schools and most of all, for your collective wisdom and skillfulness in allowing everyone an opportunity to provide input and participate in a democratic process during Board meetings. I have learned so much and am grateful for the time you spend preparing and how you seek to understand and not just be understood. Creative thinking and problem-solving are more important than ever and as someone once said, “you cannot leap a chasm in 2 jumps.” People will not always agree but your transparency, patience, and willingness to engage makes a difference in building trust, especially during uncertain and worrisome times. The Superintendent you select should do the same.

As a long time DOE educator, I offer a “what if...” idea in case it might help just as countless others have done and who truly want what may be best for future generations, whether they are parents or family members, community and educational organizations, businesses, or even other countries.

RE: Department of Education’s Multi-Year School Calendar (2023-2024 and 2024-2025)

Current Board Policy 106-5 Student Instructional Hours and School Year Requirements Policy and Waiver Process states, “Waivers shall be granted only in extraordinary circumstances. Waivers are intended to facilitate student learning and student achievement by enhancing school-level flexibility.”

While these waivers must be a school request, what if a complex (K-12) proposed a waiver to allow the school calendar to be quickly amended on an emergency basis or due to “extraordinary circumstances” such as a COVID surge in the community? When we have hurricanes and other natural disasters or even water main breaks, our schools have closed on a short-term basis in the interest of health/safety. Families want to and have assumed responsibility for their children when this is done. Families also assume responsibility for their children during a break/vacation ranging from one week to two months (summer), and make plans and decisions accordingly. When a child is sick and cannot attend school, families also have to figure out childcare until the child recovers. During a break, teachers also have choices and decide what they can and want to do, e.g., professional development, spend time with their families. School offices remain open during breaks and do not close. During a school break, other organizations offer childcare and educational activities for a particular duration, cost, etc.

So why not allow schools within a complex (or even complex area) to have the autonomy and flexibility to decide whether they should move to a break at a different time from other schools when needed by their respective community but make up the time when things are better and safer? As an example, a complex dealing with high COVID transmission in the community could switch to a week or more to a break schedule with the understanding the time off must be made up before the next school year begins, e.g., taking a 2 week break in September means not taking Fall Break in October and one week less in December. So there would still need to be 180 days of instruction as required by state law. The number of total days for breaks would remain the same and five-day weeks for students would also stay the same

A stressful and high anxiety environment is certainly not an ideal teaching or learning environment for anyone. Students may be in a safe “bubble” at school where public education can also level the playing field in providing equal access to a quality education, but students do not stay in that bubble 24/7 and never have, nor can we insist that they do so unless we have the staffing and facilities to offer this. We must stop the illogical and defensive insistence that our schools are totally safe when we know, just as everyone else does, that we cannot create a totally controlled environment nor a 24/7 bubble because students leave schools to engage with a larger community. We can and must shut down when health and safety and students’ lives are at stake or do so to minimize higher risks. We truly have a **shared** responsibility as schools, families, and communities and we need to increase and support transparent and open communication and collaboration both internally and externally.