



Testimony on use of ESSER funds to restore 21 hours, provide retention bonus and decompression.

1 message

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Wed, Dec 15, 2021 at 8:17 PM

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Aloha Chair Payne and members of the Committee,

My name is Justin Hughey and I teach third grade Special Education at King Kamehameha III Elementary in Lahiana.

This proposal is a perfect example of why Keith Hayashi is completely in over his head and should not remain Superintendent. We are facing the worst situation ever and have significant funding to address major problems. The DOE proposal is gross incompetence.

I just had a conversation with a Principal that said the DOE is doing nothing to address teacher shortage and sub shortage when that is the most pressing issue for all schools. You must have warm bodies to keep the schools open. High schools that have multiple general education teachers on sick leave can put those students all in a gym or cafe, but Elementary Schools can't. At King Kamehameha III Elementary first quarter we had 326 staff absences, 7.2 staff absent a day and we went without 1.5 subs per day. Two teachers just informed me they are retiring because the job isn't safe anymore. Retirement wasn't on their radar. Omicron infectious rate is doubling every two days around the world. It is here and cases are rising fast. You have this moment, right now to use these funds to make the most impact humanly possible. You can't afford to miss this opportunity.

PROBLEM: Over 220 million of the money is being used for summer school and proposals from complex area superintendents that haven't been created yet. Summer School attendance is down. 160 million on proposals that the BOE and the public haven't seen. You don't know what you are even agreeing to.

We should be reinstating the 21 hours of paid professional development time that was taken out of the teacher contract-1.5 percent pay cut when the state agreed not to cut salary in order to accept these funds in the first place. **(13 million per year, 26 for two years)**

We should be providing funding for retention bonuses for teachers to stop them from leaving the profession during these dangerous times. The legislature already passed a bill to provide 2,200 bonus to all teachers, which the Governor vetoed. **(29.7 million)**

We should be solving the decompression issue, adjusting the steps for years served. A lot of teachers leave when they find out they don't automatically get step movements for years of service like on the mainland. It is in our contract but subject to funding from the legislature that has yet to make public education a priority. **(45 million)**

You can do all of that and still have 60 million for CAS proposals without touching the summer school money.

Good Luck & Happy Holidays,

Justin Hughey