



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

1 message

hughey2000@aol.com <hughey2000@aol.com>

Wed, Dec 15, 2021 at 8:17 PM

Reply-To: hughey2000@aol.com

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

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,

To: The Honorable Catherine Payne, BOE Chair & Members
From: Beatrice DeRego, Kahuku High & Intermediate
Date: February 16, 2021

Subject: Student Achievement Committee & Finance & Infrastructure Committee – Agenda Item A - Action on the DOE educational & fiscal plan to distribute federal funds from Round 2 ESSER funds and Round 3 ESSER funds

To Chair Payne Committee Chairs Namau'u, & Voss and Members of the Board:

I am Bea DeRego, Test Coordinator at Kahuku High and Intermediate and an educator in the Hawaii DOE for over 20 years. I have reviewed the DOE's Educational & Fiscal Plan for the use of the federal funds and compared the system wide data presented to our experiences with students at our school and I concur that students in the high needs categories of English language learner, students with special needs, and those from a low SES (predominantly students of color) have been severely impacted.

I also agree with the three focus areas: health & safety- which HSTA and community groups seem to care about more than the DOE, social-emotional learning for all school stakeholders, and the theory of accelerated learning- a term that needs to be clearly defined with specifics to align its expectations with the idea of a multidimensional learning experience with the learner in direct control of their content and performance.

I have a significant concern regarding the Department's lack of detail in their fiscal plan, and what appears to be a "complex slush fund" to the tune of about \$145 million dollars for proposals. None of these proposals are listed, the requirements for approval of these proposals is not detailed, the metrics to ensure all the students delineated by the department as priority for supports are not defined. I sincerely hope the Board is not going to sign a blank check to the complex area superintendents to spend in what appears to be a very subjective manner without demonstrating how the funds will reach the students with most need.

I would rather see these funds spent to address the supports for these students directly by providing tools and strategies that have been proven to work: professional instruction, meaningful choice for the students most affected, and innovative programs designed based on student voice.

Quality tutoring requires direct collaboration with the teachers in the areas where students need support. Since current conditions are already overwhelming teachers who received an illegal pay cut, some of these fund should be used to immediately restore the 21 hours of planning and collaboration time. The use of these hours must be directed by the teacher teams at each school after a careful analysis of their own students in need of emotional and academic strengthening and enrichment.

The remaining funds currently listed for Complex Proposals should be allocated to each school using a weighted student formula which prioritizes the students the department has identified as those who struggled the most with the ongoing pandemic. As each Complex Area Superintendent should have a strong idea of the complex wide strategies for the long-term continuum of academic progress, they would serve as the gatekeepers of the funds, with principal and School Community Council proposals for expenditures aligning to a preset list of requirements needing CAS approval. This is the best way to ensure that the ESSER funds are expended as designed by the federal government – to provide hope to students, school staff, families and communities that Covid will ultimately become a mere dip in student success.

Mahalo for providing a venue for teachers to give input into the process we were excluded from to date. Teachers appreciate the Board's consideration and concern.

Beatrice DeRego
Kahuku High & Intermediate Test Coordinator



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1 message

De Austin <dezireenaustin@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Dec 16, 2021 at 6:12 PM

Honorable Committee Members.

I am Dezireen Austin, public school educator, from Kalama Intermediate School, on Maui.

I am strongly recommending that the DOE fiscal planned use of ESSER funds include restoring the 21 hours of job-embedded professional development.

The HIDOE system already is a discouraging place to work, with its low wage, unsupported classrooms in terms of sufficient basic supplies and technology, and administrative demands. By removing one of the few spots of support, which is the 21 hours, you are slowly crushing life out of your employment pool. Young teachers will flock to other states, with more generous offers.

How can we improve our futures as an entire society, with teachers who are strapped and trapped, mentally, emotionally and financially?

Do you understand that feeding your plants helps them to grow? Don't you agree that encouraging your employees with financial support and encouragement promotes success?

Use these funds to fulfill the deceptive promise made by previous administrations about "loan forgiveness". What better way to encourage loyalty and enthusiasm? Think about it.

Hawaii cannot move its people forward until its school systems are generously supported, maintained, supplied and *appreciated*.

Respectfully,

D Austin