

Aloha Chair Payne,

I am a high school English teacher and this testimony is in regards to the 1/20/2022 general business meeting for discussion item V. B. Please make the current state of our school situation regarding absences (both teachers and students) an ACTION item. More needs to be done besides insisting that in-person learning continue.

Since we've returned from winter break three weeks ago, I've averaged about a quarter of my students not showing up for class due to the surge in cases. The majority of the reasons I've heard range from parents being afraid to send them to school, catching COVID or finding out they are close contacts and needing to be quarantined. In addition, kids who were showing up are now getting sick or becoming close contacts and not coming back and while they are being replaced by students who have been absent, those kids come back, lost, confused and overwhelmed with having to catch themselves up in multiple classes. Add in the fear of getting other family members sick as well as the other pressures that come with being a kid into the mix and you've got a recipe for a disaster.

If clarifications can be made as to how sitting in a cafeteria or gym, amongst large groups of students, with a multitude of distractions and if you are a lucky, a packet from the regular but absent teacher is provided for you to work on, is considered receiving a quality education while an adult monitor (most likely without a highly qualified teaching credential) ensures hell doesn't break loose, what difference does it make at this point if we temporarily pivot to distance learning? At least our kids were safer at home and if anything, we teachers were able to have virtual meetings with them safely and help them when they needed it. I see no difference between last year and this year because learning gaps are still occurring and our mental health and physical safety are being compromised. Kids are still missing out on valuable academic as well as socio-emotional experiences in the classroom because of the lack of structure and consistency due to these unforeseen events. How do you expect teachers to move forward onto different academic units when half the class is missing? I would love some clarification with this as well as strategies and training to implement into my classroom since my teacher program never prepared me to become an essential worker and teach through a global pandemic.

Believe me, I understand the importance of having the kids physically present at school and I'm not saying distance learning needs to be the final solution to finish out the year but the system we have in place right now is not working and action needs to be taken. It's not just for the staff who are holding themselves together by a thread to be here, it's also for our kids who are equally just as frustrated with the broken system and mixed messages they keep hearing.

Please advise Mr. Hayashi that stonewalling HSTA is NO longer an option and that an MOU as well as more consistent guidelines comparable to last year are established so we can put an end to this chaos and help our kids.

Mahalo nui loa for reading.



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Red Hill- close the tanks immediately!

1 message

Herb Hussey <herbhussey@gmail.com>

Wed, Jan 19, 2022 at 2:37 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

The Navy fuel tanks in Red Hill are a dagger pointed at the heart of Hawaii.

:We have no alternative water source to the aquafer.

:When there is a large fuel leak, the ENTIRETY of Honolulu will be without fresh water for years.

: Honolulu businesses will close, the hotels will permanently shutter. Hawaii families will move away to find work.

: The schools will close because families will move away. Thousands in the DOE will lose their jobs because school enrollment will drop.

: State retirees will lose their pensions because there is no tax base to pay income taxes.

Do we want to change our future?

Then, defuel the tanks.

Close the Red Hill facility permanently.

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Covid outbreak

1 message

Joanne Hiroshima <joanne.hiroshima@k12.hi.us>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 19, 2022 at 2:48 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you about the concern on covid outbreak that has been increasing these past weeks. I am an employee at Niu Valley Middle School as an Educational Assistant. Been here close to 20 years. Working with close contact with students in wheelchairs with numourse disabilities. I am hands on 1 to 1 with a student that needs constant assistance. I am always asking for help with my co-workers which requires two person transport to the bathroom, stander, lifting to adjust seating,.ect.

Ever since coming back from Winter Break the case of covid numbers has increased. One of the co-worker whom I work closely with contacted me on Saturday that she was diagnosed Positive with covid. So I made an appointment to get tested. The earliest was Tuesday. Then another co-worker on Sunday was also Positive with covid. With that note... I was reluctant going back to school knowing that the coworker I was closely working with both were Positive, which I got my result on Wednesday. I didn't go back to work till Thursday.

We were informed today that the only teachers were allowed the Covid leave. The rest were to use sick leave or personal leave.. I was taking precautionary measures to avoid any spreading of the virus. So... why are we being treated so differently because Certified differs from Classified staff?!?! We all work in DOE and it should be treated equally.

Sincerely,

Joanne Hiroshima

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Testimony to
Board of Education

January 20, 2022

1:30 PM

Virtual Meeting

COMMENTS: AGENDA ITEM V.A

Presentation on Red Hill water contamination effects on Department of Education schools, staff, students, and the community

Aloha Chair Payne, Vice Chair Uemura, and members of the Board of Education,

The Sierra Club of Hawai'i offers the following **COMMENTS** regarding the agenda item V.A..

As described in this agenda item, the current water contamination crisis arising out of the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility has had a tremendous detrimental impact on school funding, operations, staff, students, and families, with additional unknown health and learning impacts. **The Sierra Club of Hawai'i fully supports immediately providing affected schools with the resources necessary to mitigate these impacts to the fullest extent possible, as well as pursuing remedies, including but not limited to reimbursement of costs, from the U.S. Navy as the party responsible for this crisis.**

In addition, as unacceptable as the current crisis may be, the Sierra Club emphasizes that the ongoing storage of well over 100 million gallons of fuel 100 feet over the principle drinking water source for O'ahu only threatens to further impact the lives and futures of all Department of Education students throughout the island, and potentially throughout all of Hawai'i. This threat is both real and imminent; as the state Department of Health has found:

"The weight of the evidence establishes that the Red Hill Facility, as currently situated, is a metaphorical ticking timebomb located 100 feet above the most important aquifer on Hawai'i's most populous island. The Red Hill Facility has already damaged human health and the environment and, as currently situated, inevitably threatens to do so into the future. The Navy lacks the ability to control the substantial risks associated with the Red Hill Facility, as currently situated."

The catastrophic contamination of the Moanalua-Waimalu aquifer from just a fraction of the fuel contained in just one of the 14, 12.5 million gallon capacity, WWII-era fuel tanks in the Red Hill Facility – eight of which have not been inspected under the Navy's inherently unreliable inspection and repair process for over two decades – would have consequences far, far worse

than what we are currently experiencing. At worst, the drinking water system for O'ahu may become contaminated; at best, 20% of the island's water supply, from an aquifer which has long served the region spanning from Hālawā to Maunaloa, would no longer be accessible. Not only would the majority of the island's schools be directly at risk of experiencing the challenges now affecting the schools on the Navy's water system, but the economic, public health, and overall societal consequences of such a catastrophic event would foreclose the future opportunities and quality of life that our public education system is preparing our students for.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club respectfully urges the Board of Education to consider, in addition to providing adequate resources to currently affected schools, taking the following actions at its next meeting:

- 1) Adopting a position in support of the immediate defueling and permanent closure of the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility;**
- 2) Approving the submission of a letter to the United States Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Defense, and the United States President, informing them of the ongoing crisis and continued existential threat posed by the Red Hill Facility, and urging their swift intervention to ensure the defueling and decommissioning of the Facility; and**
- 3) Authorizing further actions by Department of Education administration, schools, and staff, as may facilitate the timely defueling and decommissioning of the Red Hill Facility.**

Mahalo nui for your consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Tanaka".

Wayne Tanaka, Director

Sierra Club of Hawai'i



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Presentation on Red Hill water contamination on Department of Education schools, staff, students, and community

1 message

James Love <jameselove@mac.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 19, 2022 at 6:48 PM

To whom it may concern,

As the father of 6 children who were born here in Hawaii; grew up here and benefited from our public school system ...
As a retired US Naval serviceman ...
As a retired physician ...

I am beyond appalled / I have no words that are able to adequately express my upset and concern about the Red Hill water contamination issue.

The inappropriate and insincere response and inaction from the Navy is embarrassing.

The Navy / the men and women that I served with for 4 1/2 years in demanding and stressful times could, would and did rise to every challenge on every occasion ... and we always did the 'right thing'.
We cared about each other.
We always worked together.

There was nothing that we could not do.
There was no situation that we could not handle.

The delays ...
The lack of proper allocation of urgency and acuity here is inexcusable ...
I hesitated ... to make this statement because we are dealing with what we have / where we are in the serious situation ...
Yet, I am upset.

We need to close the Red Hill storage facility.
We need the 'best of the best' from the Navy and from Hawaii working together now!

Most Respectfully,
Jame E Love, MD Retired

Testimony for the Hawai'i Board of Education January 20, 2022 Meeting

From Retired [REDACTED]

I would like to add my comments for the Hawai'i State Board of Education discussion on the impact of the contamination of the water supply by the U.S. Navy's Red Hill jet fuel storage system to schools and to students in their homes.

As a 20-year resident of Honolulu and a water drinker, I believe it is important to review the dangers from the Red Hill jet fuel storage tanks that have already contaminated the drinking water for 93,000 residents of Oahu and that are forecast to contaminate even more drinking water and have a disastrous impact on Oahu schools and their students, parents, teachers and administrators if the storage tanks are not shut down:

The [facts presented in a lawsuit](#) filed by the Sierra Club against the Navy present the evidence of the dangers of the 80 year old tanks. These dangers include:

- 1). Eight of the tanks, each containing millions of gallons of fuel, have not been inspected in over two decades; three of these have not been inspected in 38 years;
- 2). Leaked fuel and fuel components have already been found in the groundwater below the facility;
- 3). The thin steel tank walls are corroding faster than the Navy anticipated due to moisture in the gaps between the tanks and their concrete casing;
- 4). The Navy's system to test and monitor tanks for leaks cannot detect slow leaks that may indicate a heightened risk for larger, catastrophic leaks; cannot prevent human error that has led to large releases of fuel in the past; and cannot prevent an earthquake, like the one that spilled 1,100 barrels of fuel when the tanks were brand new.

The [statement of the Oahu Water Protectors coalition](#) provides even more information about the leaks from the storage tanks:

- In 2014, 27,000 gallons of jet fuel leaked from Tank 5;
- In March 2020, a pipeline connected to Red Hill leaked an unknown quantity of fuel into Pearl Harbor Hotel Pier. The leak, which had stopped, started again in June 2020. Approximately 7,100 gallons of fuel was collected from the surrounding environment;
- In January 2021, a pipeline that leads to the Hotel Pier area failed two leak detection tests. In February, a Navy contractor determined that there is an active leak at Hotel Pier. The Department of Health only found out in May 2021;
- In May 2021, over 1,600 gallons of fuel leaked from the facility due to human error after a control room operator failed to follow correct procedures;
- In July 2021, 100 gallons of fuel was released into Pearl Harbor, possibly from a source connected to the Red Hill facility;

- In November 2021, residents from the neighborhoods of Foster Village and Aliamanu called 911 to report the smell of fuel, later found likely to have come from a leak from a fire suppression drain line connected to Red Hill. -The Navy reported that about 14,000 gallons of a fuel-water mixture had leaked;
- The Navy's own risk assessment reports that there is a 96% chance that up to 30,000 gallons of fuel will leak into the aquifer over the next 10 years.

The Navy has warned that the 80-Year-Old Leaking U.S. Navy Red Hill jet fuel tanks are vital for U.S. national security.

But citizen activists, including the newly formed Oahu Water Protectors coalition, maintain that the real national security issue is the security of the water supply for 400,000 residents on an island 2300 miles from the closest continent and an island considered a key military location for projection of power. If the Honolulu aquifer is contaminated, water would have to be transported from the other aquifers on the island and perhaps even shipped from the continent.

It is ironic that the major test of human security vs. national security centers on the drinking water contamination of the military families and military members that provide the human element of the US military strategy in the Pacific..and that the safety of the 400,000 who drink from the aquifer of [970,000 civilians who live on Oahu](#) will be determined on how the State of Hawai'i and the federal government force the US Navy to eliminate the major catastrophic danger to the islands water supply by finally shutting down the Red Hill jet fuel tanks.

The Red Hill jet fuel must be closed and the fuel drained from the storage tanks for the safety and security of all the residents of O'ahu, it's schools and it's students and teachers.

I hope the Board of Education will support the permanent closure of the Red Hill jet fuel tanks.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the author.

General Business Meeting
Discussion Item V.B

Since we came back from winter break, I have covered at least one class every day. Sped teachers, especially new ones, are asked more frequently. Sped is tough as it is but when no direction, compensation, or value is given to sped teachers, how do you expect us to stick around?

Admin is doing their best. They are in the office until 9pm trying to figure out the Covid mess. There's no support whatsoever and hardly any subs available, so sped teachers are heavily leaned on to fill the gaps. We continue to fill the gaps because there's no one else, but it's way too frequent and it's stressing us all out. Getting subs here was tough before covid, but now it's next to impossible, so, if sped teachers and other faculty members are asked to cover on a consistent bases, we need to be fairly compensated (i.e., overage), just like other teachers are in other states. This is getting ridiculous and it's been like this since the beginning of the year. I always hear the saying "we're in this together" but it sure doesn't feel like it.



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Red Hill

1 message

Edna Hussey <ednah@midpac.edu>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Jan 19, 2022 at 9:04 PM

My name is Edna Hussey. I am sending my testimony supporting the shut down, de-fueling, and relocation of fuel above the Red Hill aquifer. I am terrified of the potential next leak, which could be more disastrous and destroy our clean water source for most of Oahu. The need is imperative and crucial today, not the future. We cannot wait for future action as there may be no future for families today.

Respectfully
Edna L Hussey
44-139 Kahinani Way
Kaneohe HI 96744

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony against Red Hill

1 message

i. v. <isabella.vincent98@gmail.com>

Wed, Jan 19, 2022 at 9:03 PM

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

Aloha,

My name is Isabella Dearaujo and this is my testimony of my experience at work since the Red Hill leak.

I work at Hickam Elementary School on Hickam Base. For the past month the school has been completely turned upside down by the water crisis.

I am an RBT that provides services to children with autism. My client depends on regularity in their day. My client struggled with the changes as this was outside of the routine. Many students including my client were moved to hotels. School uniforms are no longer required because families can't do laundry consistently. Some of my clients friends developed rashes from the water.

When we first received news of the water crisis all of the hand washing stations were unavailable. Parents and teachers were donating water jugs so that students could wash their hands. All restrooms and sinks in the school were taped off. Kids have been using baby wipes (not ones with antiseptic) to "wash" their hands when the water jugs run out.

Kids ate the same pizza for 2 weeks for school lunch. Because there was no clean water, kitchen staff was limited to what they could cook. Kids who depended on the school for lunch slowly ate less and less as they were getting nauseous from pizza day after day. This is also prepackaged pizza, not fresh. The consistency of the cheese was similar to glue.

Many kids moved because of the impact of the water at home. Some of the children in my clients 6th grade classroom lost friends that relocated to different areas. These children had to start at a new school in the last two quarters of 6th grade.

Before winter break there was a huge breakout of COVID, the Omicron variant. Many teachers and students got ill and continue to be sick. While there was a boost in cases all over island I firmly believe the limited resources led to less hand washing by the children which spread the germs from classroom to classroom.

This school is incredibly well funded. This is my 4th Hawaii elementary school I have worked at and the staff have handled this the best they could. The principal is always dropping off water bottles and all the kids recycle. However my past schools have been less funded and I wonder if this school is still struggling with all these resources and staff working constantly to help- how have the other schools with less funding fared?

I personally drank the water alongside many faculty members and students. I see how the teachers have struggled with COVID and the rise in cases on top of struggling with the water crisis. All of these children have a family member in the military. These kids are already sacrificing so much with deployed parents and constant moving. They deserve justice and clean water.

Mahalo,
Isabella Dearaujo

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-Isabella Dearaujo
Field Director for the David O. McKay Center for Cultural Understanding
Brigham Young University Hawaii
(949) 214-9184
idearaujo98@go.byuh.edu

"We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies." - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



NO PERSONAL INFORMATION1 message

Wed, Jan 19, 2022 at 11:08 PM

[REDACTED]
To: "Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony for General Business Item VB

Submitted by: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] (request personal information not be shared)

Dear Board of Education Members,

I am a teacher, a parent of two teenage sons and a wife of a teacher. Together we are at four different public schools on Kaua'i. From our daily conversations, I feel I have a good perspective on what is really happening in our schools despite the rosy picture that is painted for the public. This is not to say that schools are not trying. In fact, I feel that everyone is trying extremely hard. However, Covid case counts are higher than they have ever been, the new variant is highly contagious, and guidelines for Covid safety have been loosened rather than tightened. There are many uncertainties and questions. I am writing to seek clarity and ask for your support in assuring safe learning environments.

With the new guidelines, vaccinated employees seem to have less protections and privileges than non-vaccinated. This does not encourage vaccinations. Vaccinated close contacts are not required or encouraged to stay home. While this may be good for some, it puts many in an uncomfortable position, having to decide whether to take sick leave to keep others safe, while forgoing duties and putting the burden on others OR attend work feeling concerned about being a carrier that could infect others. Close contact situations vary greatly. A teacher would know if their situation has a higher risk of exposure and whether they should quarantine. That decision should be honored with gratitude. Furthermore, according to the new guidelines, vaccinated employees cannot use quarantine leave when considered a close contact. Why do vaccinated teachers need a doctor's note to take quarantine leave and non-vaccinated teachers get the automatic pass? This is unfair and unequal treatment.

DOH and DOE guidelines for health and safety in schools are vague and leave much to interpretation. "Symptoms improve" could mean slightly less coughing as long as no fever. The "extent possible" allows schools to simply say it isn't possible. Three feet distancing is a strong recommendation however there are MANY classrooms who are not spacing students at all. Both my children reported sitting "right next" to their classmates and one was a close contact on two occasions in two weeks. This means there was not three feet between him and the student who tested positive. I also need to ask WHY???... is the classroom the exception to the six feet rule? In-person learning is not a covid prevention method. Classrooms do not provide safety from a virus. It is difficult not to question this when every other setting continues to have a six feet distancing requirement and many workplaces, including state departments, are moving to more virtual learning environments.

This brings me to notifications of positive cases and close contacts. We were recently informed that the DOH is no longer contact tracing for the DOE. This notice came on the same day that I was informed my son was a close contact for the second time. The call came on Tuesday morning on the way to school/work. The possible exposure was the previous Thursday, five days prior. Too late to even consider safety measures for our home and too late to take a home test before being among teachers and students. If there were other unvaccinated close contacts, they were in school when they should not have been according to the Return to School/Work Criteria. How can we say schools are safe when we are not able to keep up with notifications and required quarantining? Asking parents to notify the school is far from a reliable method. Additionally, five days of isolation is not fully safe. Doctors have long said that viruses can and often do last two weeks, yet we are allowed back after five days. I cannot imagine that this virus is any different. The CDC admitted that the change was because not all people follow the 10 days of required quarantine. Mr. Hayashi explained that it was to address staff shortages. While there was some evidence that the virus is less contagious after five days, it seemed to be a decision not based primarily on safety.

While I can only speak on my own behalf, I also hope to advocate for other teachers, parents and students. I also feel some if not most administrators are feeling pressured to keep schools open which is a heavy burden. This may result in decision making that is less safe or that does not follow the safety requirements. When every case is so secretive for confidentiality purposes, there is no one checking or questioning decisions. There should be a system of checks and balances where a single administrator is not the only one to know the situation. There should be other non-administrative

employees notified of all the cases and when needed, involved in determining next steps. No one person should have all the power or all of the burden.

Parents are sending their children to school with assumptions. Assumptions that allow them to believe their child is safe in school. I have heard that "ALL" students and staff are wearing masks at one school and that there is "100% masking" at another, however we all know that is not true. There are always students and even staff who wear masks incorrectly or inconsistently, and those that have ill-fitting or unapproved masks. Parents believe there is social distancing in classrooms and lunchrooms. This is not always the case. Parents assume they will be notified in a reasonable amount of time if their child is a close contact. None of these are guaranteed.

It is disheartening when school and work are scary places. I worry every day. Schools are places we have little control over. Others are present with us who choose not to get vaccinated, who choose not to be careful, who may not even believe that Covid exists. I am not for or against moving to distance learning. I am only for providing a safe environment for learning. It has been said that when schools cannot provide that, there needs to be changes. There were swift changes to loosen requirements and statements that the pandemic was ending before Winter Break. Since then things have changed for the worse, way worse. Yet, the state continues to "monitor" the situation and takes no steps to make schools safer based on new information on the Omicron variant and the once unimaginable amount of cases.

Please ask the DOE to revisit guidelines and take necessary measures to provide employees and students with a safe and healthy working environment. Thank you.



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony- BOE Position on Redhill

1 message

Noel Shaw <noelkshaw@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 12:34 AM

Aloha,

My name is Noel Shaw and I am a mother and community member from Kalāwahine Hawaiian Homestead. I am writing today in support of the BOE taking a position strongly opposing the US Navy's continued use of the Redhill Fuel Tanks. The threat to our O'ahu community's wellness and future is too great for them to continue to store fuel only 100 feet above our water aquifer that supplies 77% of our island with water.

The ramifications of past, current, and future leaks from the tanks will include sick children, staff, and parents, unusable school campuses and add further difficulty to access quality learning. If clean drinking water isn't ensured, education cannot be achieved. The two go hand in hand.

As a mother, I worry about the toll this will take on families, especially those who are carrying so much added responsibility of living during pandemic times. The public education systems are in place to support families in nurturing our keiki and part of doing that includes advocating for access to quality essentials like clean water.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and am hopeful that the BOE will stand in strong opposition of the US Navy's continued use of the Redhill fuel tanks.

Mālama pono,
Noel Shaw

#shutdownredhill #olaikawai

--

Noel Kaleikalaunuoka'oia'i'o Shaw

619-261-5894



Testimony Re Multiple Agenda items

1 message

liberty furchgott <libertypoetez@yahoo.com>

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 7:33 AM

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

RE Discussion Item III.A

I am writing to submit testimony in reference to the extra compensation for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language programs; also known as differentials.

I am a special education teacher who is teaching at a school deemed hard to staff and to be honest I think about quitting everyday. This year has been the hardest in my 14 years of teaching; I do not feel valued, appreciated, respected or heard.

Although there are many issues that would increase the retention of qualified teachers such as reevaluating current systems in place the differential is pretty much the only thing keeping me going, and in conferring with colleagues they say similar things suggesting that if the differentials are not funded then they too will quit.

The differentials are an effective incentive to keep teachers in those hard to staff schools and filling hard to fill positions. And although they are not a fix all, they are a good start and need to remain in place; otherwise the department will witness even more teachers; good, effective, qualified, and passionate teachers, leaving the profession.

Thank you for your consideration
Liberty Furchgott; Special Education Teacher
Honoka'a High & Intermediate School

RE Discussion Item III.B

I have been working in the Department of Education through the reigns of multiple Superintendents and the last one along with this interim one have been the worst yet.

To those conducting the search for a new superintendent please consider the negative impact of selecting an individual whose most recent profession was far removed from working on the front lines in our local schools.

What we need is someone who knows and remembers what the teaching profession is like in the classroom, someone who can have open dialogues and collaborate with stakeholders to make the most effective and beneficial decisions, someone who has the ability to effectively communicate and set policies which reflect clear planning, logistical considerations and input from those most affected by such decisions. Someone who is driven by true empathy and compassion for the future of our keiki and not governed by money, power or personal gain.

Thank you for your consideration
Liberty Furchgott; Special Education Teacher
Honoka'a High & Intermediate School

RE Discussion Item V.B

This year has been the hardest in my 14 years of teaching; I do not feel valued, appreciated, respected or heard. In the beginning of this school year I fretted because precautions were not clear and not consistently in place at my school and positive cases led to many disruptions and loss of learning opportunities for my students.

Since we have returned in this second semester of the school year our school has seen 33 positive cases and we have only been back less three whole weeks. The communication about cases seems to be steady although cannot be trusted and the contact tracing initially seemed good but inquiry and notification has stalled as cases grow.

I have asked our administration at what point we will provide remote options or alter our schedules to hybrid or temporary closures due to students at home, lack of staff or no busses but I was told there is no number and that the superintendant is keeping schools open.

This 'no plan' as the plan is hurting our students and faculty alike. The stress and anxiety caused by not having a plan and knowing things will just keep getting worse but we will just stay the course seems ridiculously ignorant. How is it that the DOE had all of this time and funding to plan but then just decided well lets just see what happens?

My class attendance is at less than half and without hybrid or remote options those kids at home are not receiving their free and appropriate education. The DOE, under this interim superintendant who refuses to come up with or implement effective contingency plans, is failing our students and teachers.

Thank you for your consideration
Liberty Furchgott; Special Education Teacher
Honoka'a High & Intermediate School



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony against Red Hill

1 message

Lisa Kau <lisawzkau@gmail.com>

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 7:50 AM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

I work for the VA as a clinical psychologist and have seen firsthand how my patients have been negatively affected by the contaminated water. Having to relocate and experiencing medical issues due to drinking and exposure to the contaminated water has exacerbated their mental health issues. This is unacceptable and must stop! Shut down Red Hill!

Aloha,
Lisa Kau, PsyD

TESTIMONY FOR THE BOE MEETING ACTION ITEM III.A

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 2022

Presentation on Teacher Positions Filled; 5-year Teacher Retention Rates; and Effectiveness of Teacher Shortage Differentials in the Areas of Special Education, Hard-to-Staff, and Hawaiian Language Emersion Programs on Teacher Vacancies and Retention.

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, we have a special needs daughter, and I am the primary provider in my family. I am in my third year as a licensed Special Education teacher. Prior to becoming a Sped teacher, 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 Hawai`i'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 17 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 and a career I love. (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 just 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.

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 pour my heart and soul into my classroom and the results are reflected in the improvement of their behaviors and their academic growth.

Besides teaching, I also started and lead a weekly staff cohort called Aloha Response based on the foundations of ALOHA, to strengthen connections among staff, families, and our

community. Aloha Response has become an integral part of successful teacher collaboration and empowering students and families. Taking on another job I would not allow me to commit to these committees and programs in my school.

I implore you, please keep the differential in place.

This being my third year, I have fulfilled the stipend contract and monies I received from the state to pay for my schooling to becoming a Sped teacher. Taking away the differential would place an undue burden upon my ability to provide for my family, my health, and my students and families. Board members, please 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
Complex, Honolulu District of O`ahu



Red Hill

1 message

Colleen Everett <everettc@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 8:20 AM

Aloha,

As a Kanaka Maoli I am a lifelong resident of 'Oahu. I have spent all my life here on the island of 'Oahu raising my children and my grandchildren. As an involved and voting member of my community I am concerned about the current handling of the Red Hill bulk fuel storage facility.

The United State military has had a long and troubling history in Hawai'i from the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom to the use of Kaho'olawe as a target for bombing practice. It appears that in many respects some things never change. While the Navy suspended the use of the Red Hill facility on November 28, the public continued to drink from this water source up to December 1.

Many people within the community reported chemical smells coming from their water as well as health concerns they were experiencing. The Navy's response to this was to refuse to acknowledge a potential health concern, and it was the state Department of Health who advised residents to not drink the clearly contaminated water.

Soon after the Navy conceded and stated that it had detected diesel in its 'Aiea Hālawā well at levels more than double the DOH safety limit, we now know that those levels are over 350 times the safe level.

The Navy continues to not be transparent despite agreeing to the Administrative Order of Consent, which requires them to be more forthcoming about operations at the Red Hill facility.

I am here to state my support for the BOE in asking for the shut down of the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility.

As stated earlier as a native to this place I understand the absolute importance of clear water. I want to continue to raise my progeny in a place where the basic necessity of life, water, is clean, pure and safe. There is no substitute for pure water.

In the words of George Helm, "We are in a 'revolution of consciousness' What we (are) looking for is the truth . . .there is man and there is environment. One does not supersede the other . . . Man is merely the caretaker of the land that maintains his life and nourishes his soul. Therefore, the 'āina is sacred."

Mahalo,

Colleen Everett MEd

James B. Castle High School

Academy of Innovation Lead



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Red Hill

1 message

Dylyn Burns-Joseph <burns-josephd22@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 8:20 AM

Aloha, as a resident of Oahu I am concerned about the Red Hill water issue. I am here to state my opposition to Bill 48 Requiring a Permit for facilities like the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility. I oppose this issue because for eighty years these massive underground tanks have existed with little oversight to see if these tanks are safe and secure. We know now that these tanks were leaking and have contaminated the drinking water. I am a senior in high school and have lived here all my life. My community hasn't been severely affected but our land and a lot of the people of this island have due to this contamination. I am asking the Honolulu City Council Committee on Transportation, Sustainability and Health to break down and stop using the Red Hill tanks for jet fuel. Lastly I hope these tanks will be taken down and the people can safely use the water again.

Sincerely, Dylyn Burns-Joseph

James B. Castle High School % 2022



Red Hill

1 message

Braydan Kanehe <kaneheb22@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 8:21 AM

Aloha,

I was born and raised on the island of Oahu and am a concerned citizen and as a resident of Oahu I feel a sense of duty to point out what is wrong.

I am here to state my support for Bill 48 Requiring a Permit for facilities like the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility.

I support this bill because I care for the land I have been living on and if we keep hurting it we are only hurting ourselves. In order to survive on this land we have to help it not hurt it.

This impacts me and my community because the affected aquifer supplies twenty percent of the island's water. I care about this issue because it is harming our water and we need water to sustain our way of life.

I am asking the Honolulu City Council Committee on Transportation, Sustainability and Health to pass Bill 48 so that my future community, and Ohana will continue to live their lives unaffected by contaminated water.

I would just like to state that as a representative of my community I am reaching out to the Honolulu city council to please fix this problem.

Mahalo, Braydan Kanehe

James B. Castle High school

Academy of innovation lead



red hill

1 message

Caroline Lilia Paikuli-Stride <paikuli-stridec22@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 8:23 AM

Aloha, my name is Caroline Lilia Paikuli-Stride and I am an eligible voter. I am a senior in high school and I have been learning about the problems at Red Hill. I am here to state my support for the board of education in asking for the shutdown of the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility. I support there have been too many problems in relation to red hill. The water is contaminated now because of the fuel storages in the mountain. This is an issue that is going to affect all of us. It may not affect us on the Eastside right now but it is going to affect us in the future. All that fuel is stored only 100ft above our aquifer. The fuel has already leaked into the pump that supplies 20% of the water on this island. This issue is affecting our community on the other side of the island very greatly. I am asking the BOE to handle this problem accordingly and to make sure that the fuel doesn't leak into the community's water anymore. There are local families that are being affected that are on their own and are not receiving help from the navy so the quicker this is fixed the better. Water is the most important thing to this island. If it is undrinkable because of contamination we will not survive and the whole island will suffer and be uninhabitable.

Mahalo - Caroline lilia paikuli-stride



Testimony Testimony parent red hill water crisis: Error corrected please use this

1 message

Lindsay Ladnier <lindsayladnier@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 9:36 AM

My name is Lindsay. I have two children enrolled at Red hill elementary school. My home on AMR is among those impacted by the Red Hill water contamination. One of my greatest concerns is the vapors we've observed in my home (as a result of running the tap and the flushing that occurred in close proximity to my front door). We've experienced symptoms such as headaches, dizziness, stomachs aches, loss of concentration, dropping of items, altered and double vision. These vapors remain a constant in our home despite not using any of the water and as a result we are unable to remain in our home at all.

On November 30, I was called to pick up my child from school due to not feeling well. During this time I witnessed a government vehicle parked alongside a fire hydrant. This fire hydrant was opened up and water was being flushed from it into the parking lot, on the side walk and down the storm drain. When I picked up my child I could smell the chemicals from the water inside the office building through the closed double doors.

My children have experienced headaches, stomachs, bloody noses, loss of concentration, stuffy noses, and coughs while attending school and I have been called to pick them up numerous times out of covid precautions. They were not covid positive this fall. I have since learned during the evidentiary hearings that high levels of hydrocarbons such as jp-5 were in the water from may 2021-the present. I am very concerned that the communication from the DOE, DOH, and the navy lacked with regard to keeping both students and staff safe while attending this school.

I asked to be notified when the flushing of the school was to be done so that staff and students would be safe from the vapors. I was notified after the flushing was done (that it was completed after school hours), however staff and students were present the next day. The vapor from the fuel is of great concern and needs to be addressed. The communication lacking from the DOH, EPA, navy with regard to student and staff members is unacceptable. We need the regulators to regulate.

Thank you

--

Lindsay Ladnier lindsayladnier@gmail.com

--
Lindsay Ladnier lindsayladnier@gmail.com



Testimony for Kapukaki Aquifer

1 message

Brynn Akamine <akamineb22@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 10:21 AM

Aloha,

My name is Lu'ukia Akamine-Pelekai and I am a resident of Oahu. I am a senior in high school and I am the future generation that is going to live and raise my kids here. I am here to state my support for the shutting down of Red Hill.

I am supporting the shut down on Red Hill because I want to have a future here in Hawaii. Water is life and our water is contaminated. Something that is supposed to be giving us life is hurting us because the navy did not take care of it. Twenty percent of Hawaii's drinking water comes from the Kapūkākī aquifer and that water was 350 times above what is considered safe to drink.

While my drinking water does not come directly from this aquifer, I still feel its effects. All the water in Hawaii is connected, our water comes from a natural cycle. Everything in Hawaii is connected, soon this water could be in all our plants, our animals, and our people. I plant and farm my own food, and I want to be sustainable but I can't do that if my food source is poisoned.

Future generations who live in Hawaii should not have to live with the consequences of our actions. We should be taking care of the aina because the aina takes care of us.

I want to leave you with this olelo No'eau "**I ka wā ma mua, ka wā ma hope**. The future lies in our past."

Mahalo,

Lu'ukia Akamine-Pelekai
James B. Castle High School c/o 2022



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

(no subject)

1 message

Salena Rafael <rafaels22@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 10:25 AM

Aloha board of education members.

I am a senior at Castle high school and I am the future of this community. I am here to state my support for the shutdown of redhill. I support the moving of the fuel tanks because we the people of Oahu are gonna have to pay to fix this problem. The fact that it is 350 times above what is safe to drink and only no there trying to change. It's crazy that these huge tanks of fuel are just 100 feet above the main water source. The least the navy could do is move the tanks since they technically don't use them. I don't want to have to worry what my future kids are drinking and if it's safe. I care about this issue because I know someone that has been affected by it and when I walked into her bathroom I could barely use it. The smell of the water started to make me dizzy and nauseous and to think that this is the water we are putting in keiki and pets. This is not just for the people with this contaminated water but also bad for people that live here. It's already expensive and now it's gonna get more expensive to fix this. I am asking the Honolulu City Council Committee on Transportation, Sustainability and Health to do what's right and malama the aina and be thankful for all that it provides for us. We have to stick together and help out everyone.

Mahalo/Sincerely Salena Rafael

James B. Castle High School c/o 2022



Testimony for Kapukaki

1 message

Cadence Tangonan <tangonanc22@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 10:35 AM

Aloha Board of Education members,

I am a lifetime resident of Oahu, and I'd like to speak on the recent troubling water occurrences on the island. This letter is strictly to express my support for the closure of Red Hill.

The navy initially saw this in 1995, but ignored it until November 28, 2021, when it was brought up again. However, this time it's much worse. It was recorded on Thursday, December 9 that the petroleum levels were 350 times the safe limit at Kapukaki. They had been aware of the issue for more than two decades. They were aware that their gasoline storage tanks were leaking, yet did nothing to address the situation? Given the history between Hawai'i and the Navy, it's unsurprising that they aren't taking much responsibility for this.

As a Kanaka Maoli, I am deeply worried about the safety of our aina and people. There was no private ownership of the aina, wai, or any other natural resource that brought life to the people here way back when. These were given to us by the Gods, and it was up to us to look after them. But it's now in whose hands? The Navy's. Western contact. It breaks my heart to know that this aina will no longer be a desirable living area for the future generations, despite the fact that many of our ancestors lived and flourished on it many years ago.

I am asking the Honolulu City Council Committee on Transportation, Sustainability and Health, and anyone else who is involved and can effectively help us to take the precautionary measures to treat contaminated drinking water at the Red Hill shaft.

I want to leave you with this 'Ōlelo No'eau. "Mōhala i ka wai ka maka o ka pua," meaning, "Unfolded by the water are the faces of flowers." Flowers thrive where there is water, as thriving people are found where living conditions are good. Without good living conditions, there's nowhere for us to thrive which would cause the decline in Hawai'i residents. Think about it.

Mahalo,

Cadence Tangonan

James B. Castle High School % 2022

Good afternoon and Happy New Year.

My name is Rebekah Garrison and I am a water drinker who calls O‘ahu home. I am also a member of O‘ahu Water Protectors and a community organizer for Hawai‘i Peace and Justice. Hawai‘i Peace and Justice is a grassroots organization that strives to create a more peaceful, just and sustainable Hawai‘i. One of our priorities is protecting the islands from the negative environmental and social impacts of militarization.

Thank you to the Board of Education for prioritizing the protection of the island’s most precious resources—clean, unpolluted drinking water and the health of our keiki, the next generation of island leaders. Hawai‘i Peace and Justice strongly supports the Board of Education joining the efforts of O‘ahu Water Protectors in calling for the immediate draining of the tanks at Kapūkaki, also widely known as Red Hill, and the permanent decommissioning of the entire Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility.

Hawai‘i Peace and Justice stands in solidarity with schools seeking reimbursement for all of their expenses related to handling the water crisis and also supports a resolution outlining clean water as a prerequisite for student achievement. In our efforts to strengthen relationship with the Hawai‘i State Teachers Association, Hawai‘i Peace and Justice notes how the military’s negligence to adequately maintain its decaying fuel farm of 20 corroding fuel tanks holding 200 million gallons of fuel a mere 100 feet above O‘ahu’s sole-source aquifer has burdened teachers, staff, and perhaps most importantly, the learning environment of students.

History has proven that the navy cannot protect the water from the leaking fuel in its antiquated fuel storage system. This crisis is real and we know it. This crisis has not been resolved and we know it. As students and staff still wash their hands with bottled water in makeshift sinks, the fuel remains perched above the aquifer. Drain the tanks, shut down the facility, and prioritize the lives of all children who call O‘ahu home.

As we all know, in addition to being a human right, access to clean, unpolluted drinking water is a basic necessity for a safe learning environment. Believing that every school’s drinking water should meet Environmental Protection Agency requirements for clean drinking water, the 2008 Hawai‘i State Teachers Association convention passed the Clean Drinking Water in Public Schools. Let us not forget that clean drinking water does not include jet fuel. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for taking up this very important issue at the Board of Education.

Ola i ka wai. Water is life.

Sincerely, Rebekah Garrison, Hawai‘i Peace and Justice



January 20, 2022

TO: General Business Meeting: Agenda Item V. Presentation on Red Hill water contamination effects on Department of Education schools, staff, students, and community

FR: Kanaeokana Kula Hawai'i Network

RE: Requesting Board of Education to take a strong position on protecting the health and safety of public schools students, teachers, and staff impacted by the US Navy's fuel tanks in Kapūkaki (Red Hill)

Aloha e Hawai'i Board of Education,

Kanaeokana, the Kula Hawai'i Network which includes membership of all 17 Hawaiian Focused Charter Schools (HFCS), DOE Hawaiian Medium Education schools, and over 50 other Hawaiian education organizations, urges Board of Education members to take a clear and strong position to protect the health and safety of public schools students, teachers, and staff impacted by the US Navy's fuel tanks in Kapūkaki (Red Hill) and to recognize its impact on learning for students at schools directly impacted the fuel leaks into our clean drinking water at Department of Education schools.

Beyond the hazards that consuming or being exposed to contaminated fresh water poses to students, teachers, staff at our schools, the hardships being encountered at schools such as no running water for washing hands or drinking, the challenges that some keiki have to pump or access potable water from tanks located on campuses, and the displacement some from homes that some keiki are experiencing have created a situation that hampers learning for these students.

The Board's mission to "promote excellence and equity in Hawaii's public schools and enable all students to meet their own unique and varied potential" is jeopardized by the Red Hill fuel tank leaks and this will continue to happen until the Navy shuts down their storage facilities and relocates it permanently.

Therefore, we humbly ask the Board of Education to clearly and strongly condemn the US Navy's spill and its impacts on public education and ensure Hawai'i's families that the Board of Education and the Department of Education will advocate on their behalf to protect the health, well-being, and optimal learning of its students.

Me Ka 'Oia'i'o

Kanaeokana Kula Hawai'i Network
advocacy@kanaeokana.net



Red Hill

1 message

Marley Pokipala <pokipalam23@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 12:26 PM

Aloha,

I am Marley Pokipala, born and raised in Kaneohe. I am a Junior at Castle High School in the Natural Resources Pathway. I am here to state my support towards shutting down Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility.

One reason why I chose to support it is because 20% of O'ahu residents receive this water. It all comes down to safety and when tests were done, the water was 350 times above the safe drinking level. This means that a huge part of the island is not able to bathe, drink or have safe pure water like they were able to before. This is a critical issue because simply, water is life. I also care about my community well-being along with the land being handled correctly. As a community contributor in my own ahupua'a, I go out either to Papahana Kuaola or to Kako'o 'Oiwai and learn why the wai is so important and how it is all connected.

I am asking for your support in shutting down Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility because the people of the community that are suffering from this tragedy deserve justice and this will also help to avoid problems like these in future.

Like I said, "Ola I Ka Wai", water is life. There is no other choice but to put the people first and put a halt to the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility.

Mahalo,

Marley Pokipala



Red hill

1 message

Leah Katke <katkel24@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 12:27 PM

Greetings,

My name is Leah Katke, I've recently moved here from the mainland, my parents have been residents here for a few years, both of my parents are military as well. I am a student at Castle High School. I am here to support the shutdown of Red hill.

I support this issue because of the way these tanks have affected our environment and community. People are getting deeply sick by the pollution, in that our kids and pets are getting skin issues as well. I also care about this issue because it's affecting the military base as well. Families that are living on base are getting water that's not at the appropriate water safety level. The water coming from that supply is 350x what the water level safety should be. It's also affecting our pets as well as drinking or bathing in that water. I am asking the Board of education to support the shut down of Redhill.

I think taking care of our future generations, and making sure that they have acceptable water for the future to come is extremely important and we need to start making changes/corrections now to fix the problems in the past.

Sincerely,

Leah Katke

James B. Castle Highschool 2024



Red Hill

1 message

Gary Okumura <okumurag23@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 12:27 PM

Aloha,

I'm Gary Okumura and I am a junior at James B Castle High School located in Kāneohe. And want to let you know that I am here to state my opposition the Red Hill. The reason why I oppose this Red Hill gas leak is because I heard there have been leaks before and eventually in the future there is going to have one, maybe not in 2 years but maybe 10 years. And another reason is the military should have thought about the fuel leaking or even exploding because that would have cost 77% of people to lose their water. When I get older I don't want my kids to have to suffer with the water to be shut down and I still have to pay for it if I can't shower my kids with fuel because it's dangerous. I feel like that is mean to the citizens of Hawai'i because they have nowhere to go and the military is only paying the military family so if they stay somewhere that is wrong of them they should pay for everyone at least half the cost of where they stay. I am asking the Honolulu City Council Committee on Transportation, Sustainability and Health to tell the military to remove the Red Hill fuel tanks and move it to where it is a safe place where it won't ruin water that goes into the pipes and stay away from the city and don't let anyone know so no one can explode the tanks and then it would be safe for the Red Hill water tanks from fuel. All I want to say is if your family is in the area that is affected I feel bad for you but the military should pay the people for water and even bring water to the houses that are affected. It's wrong for them to just help out military families aren't they supposed to help all people after all

Mahalo/Sincerely Gary Okumura

Testimony 1-20-21
General Business Meeting
Andrew Henderson
DOE Teacher and Parent
Support

III. A. Human Resources Committee Report on: (1) Presentation on teacher positions filled; 5-year teacher retention rates; and effectiveness of teacher shortage differentials in the areas of special education, hard-to-staff, and Hawaiian language immersion programs on teacher vacancies and retention

Aloha e Papa Ho'ona'auao,

My name is Drew Henderson and I am the Math and Computer Science Department Leader at Kohala High School. I have taught in the Hawai'i DOE for the past 15 years, have twin boys in 3rd grade at Kohala Elementary, and 2 of my children have graduated from Kohala High School. I appear before you today to speak on behalf of myself, my children, my students and my coworkers. Forgive my nervousness as I have never participated in anything like this before. I am using my forced time-off to participate in democracy but we will discuss that during a later agenda item.

Right now I am here to discuss two issues regarding teacher pay:

- 1) Salary Compression
- 2) Differentials

Salary compression has been my priority issue on every HSTA survey since the Abercrombie administration and still nothing has been done. My wife who started 1 year before me in 2006 is actually 2 salary steps ahead which in itself accounts for a ~\$2,000 annual discrepancy in pay. I don't need to go through all the numbers, but the point is that teachers that "took one for the team" during economic downturns of the Lingle and Abercrombie Administrations are not paid proportionally to their experience relative to newer teachers. I have only received 3 step increases in 15 years of service. Had the annual step raises provided for in earlier contracts "subject to legislative approval" been granted I would be looking at a \$20,000 increase in annual salary and my wife who works with me as a High school Counselor would be earning another \$19,000 + annually which would increase our total household income by almost \$40,000 annually!

We are fortunate enough to have been receiving differential pay for the past couple of years and it has made a real difference in our ability to sustain ourselves financially. In addition to both of us teaching full time, we also run an aquaponic lettuce business to make ends meet. Between our \$21,000 in lettuce sales and the combined \$10,000 in differential pay last year, we came close (~\$9,000 short) to what we should be making as a base salary for just teaching, and had the first year in our lives (in our forties!) where we didn't accumulate additional debt. It took us

15 years of teaching, a successful side business, and 2 hard-to-fill salary differentials to reach a basic level of financial solvency and people wonder why we have a teacher shortage!

Unfortunately most people haven't been able to pull off what we have and I have seen countless talented coworkers come and go as a result. Too many to name in fact. I was thinking about the TFA (Teach for America) teachers alone last night and I counted 9 at one school over about 6 years! Maureen, Simone, Qi, Amber, Monet, Santana, Jason, the sparkley blonde girl whose name I can't even remember, and the one a student threw a chair at. They are only a drop in the bucket of squandered opportunities and wasted resources.

We lost our best math teacher and department head last year because she had a baby, couldn't afford her rent and moved back to Indiana after 5 years of service. Students cried, she cried, and I cried typing this.

COVID-19 brought on a mass exodus of early retirement because people don't think it is worth it to keep working despite the risk of exposure in addition to the regular stress load that our profession entails. Our tiny school alone lost about a quarter of its most experienced faculty in the past 3 years.

Our students (my children included) need stability now more than ever. I urge you to do what is necessary to recruit and retain as many high quality teachers as possible as an investment in our future and our childrens' future.

In summary I am exactly half-way through my career, I am one of the oldest and most experienced teachers at my school at the ripe old age of 41, I have more responsibility and am working harder than ever before, I am underpaid by ~\$20,000 per year, and my wife is sitting beside me in the same boat (except 2 salary steps ahead because of a clause that 1st year teachers didn't receive those rare steps the year I was hired) hoping things will get easier with time.

Mahalo for listening.

Testimony 1-20-21

General Business Meeting

Andrew Henderson

DOE Teacher and Parent

Comment

V. B. Presentation on COVID-19 Update for 2021-2022 school year: data on positive student and staff cases, staff and student attendance rates, status of school-hosted vaccination sites, status of COVID-19 testing, Department employee and student vaccination rates, status of Department workforce shortages, supports for students, masking requirements, supports for school safety protocols

Aloha e Papa Ho'ona'auao,

My name is Drew Henderson and I am the Math and Computer Science Department Leader at Kohala High School. I have taught in the Hawai'i DOE for the past 15 years, have twin boys in 3rd grade at Kohala Elementary, and 2 of my children have graduated from Kohala High School. I appear before you today to speak on behalf of myself, my children, my students and my coworkers, and my community. I am using my forced time-off to participate in democracy. I testified earlier about teacher salary compression and differentials which directly affect why I am here today instead of in my classroom.

I received a letter in my son's backpack last night that states he is not allowed to come to school for the rest of the week because there is no substitute teacher to cover his class. He is just as upset as his mother and I, which is compounded by the fact that his twin brother is at school right now in a separate 3rd grade class. Meanwhile I am spending my whole day writing and delivering testimony in between helping my son learn partial-products multiplication while my Algebra 2 and AP Computer Science students (those who are actually in school) are catching up on work in a class with no teacher. I'm not sure that people consider this common domino effect.

I'm here today as a voice from the trenches announcing that staffing shortages and DOE policies (or lack thereof) are affecting our childrens' education in extreme ways. It seems that Principals' only real directive is to keep schools open at any expense to health and safety, and regardless of how many students, teachers, and staff members are absent. I understand first-hand the economic and social imperatives to keep our keiki in school, but I ask in the face of critical shortages, who is the arbiter of which students are able to attend and which are not? There are many unanswered questions and a lack of transparent policy that are widening the rift between our institution and its stakeholders, especially those who were already wary and are now choosing to keep their children at home simply due to lack of trust in the systems (or lack

thereof) in place. The DOE's unwillingness to follow collective-bargaining laws are only one indicator of this.

The first obvious solution aside from teacher retention which I testified on earlier, is to increase our pool of substitute teachers in order to maintain equitable access to school (not to mention federally mandated meal access). One of my 8 year old sons has been studying economics in his 3rd grade class (which is thankfully in session today unlike his brother's). He was explaining supply and demand and I couldn't help but see the irony, in relation to our current substitute shortage, of a third grader understanding this simple concept. I find it tragic that the current solution in place is to lower the bar on educational requirements and in-turn the quality of applicants, when the clear solution is to increase substitute teacher pay. I also believe that a substitute teacher daily pay differential for rural and hard-to-fill positions would entice people to commute in order to fill these vacancies.

During the height of the pandemic when schools were closed but teachers were required to report to campus for seemingly no other reason than a lack of trust in professional responsibility and accountability, teachers with children across the state faced a major dilemma... childcare. Being the father of twins in a rural area I didn't even have the opportunity to pay the equivalent of a mortgage payment every month for childcare. I had accumulated enough sick leave throughout my career to take a whole quarter off but I didn't want to do that to my students. Everything was going as well as possible when my wife and I were working from home and our children were participating in their online classes in a different room but then the former superintendent decided that we "need smartboards", and mandated that we return to empty classrooms to do the same things we had been doing from home. This forced us to team up with other parent/teachers at our school to rotate sick days to watch each others' kids at the expense of our students. Many teachers decided to work from home while on sick leave or extended leave without pay simply because they are dedicated to helping their students. Mandating teachers to report to campus when school is closed is a losing situation for all stakeholders and is indicative of a general lack of trust and respect for teachers' professionalism. Principals should be able to grant the ability to telework and monitor their employees as they see fit, including for reasons of child care when schools are closed or teachers are not allowed on campus due to close contact status, etc.

It seems that despite being 2 years into this pandemic, we are still taking a reactive approach and slapping band-aids on gaping wounds instead of making proactive policy decisions. Our stakeholders are demanding transparency and quickly losing trust and respect for our educational institution. The omicron variant is burning like wildfire through our schools, our attendance rates are at rock bottom, and all we hear from the top is to keep schools open and follow the "safety protocols". I most definitely want to keep schools open and believe we should follow the examples of other institutions who have found success with regular, mandated testing of all students and employees. I also want **all** healthy students to be able to attend school when it is "open".



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony part 2 Parent red hill elementary

1 message

Lindsay Ladnier <lindsayladnier@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 3:21 PM

We are not being offered transportation. The army set up transportation until Dec 17. We have not had transportation since. We have had zero communication from DOH, EPA, DOE, John Erickson (our superintendent), regarding the safety of the school with regard to the vapors, needing more water, worrying about the difficulty of kids having not being able to reach the hand washing station if the stations are even present anymore.

Why didn't DOH or DOE know the levels of diesel and gasoline were high all summer and this fall. Who is monitoring our schools water? Who is protecting staff and students.

As a result of not hearing from these entities and the high covid cases I was concerned about sending my kids into an unsafe environment the first week back to school. We missed school for a few days the first week, I sent my kids back to school 1/7/2022, then the kids and our family got covid. I have asked for alternative learning methods. I have been told I can homeschool by the admin. I have not been given any other options. My children are dyslexic and need good education and a safe physical environment. I think the superintendent is detached from what is actually going on with regard to the struggles the teachers and families and students are having.

Thank you,
Lindsay Ladnier

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Lindsay Ladnier lindsayladnier@gmail.com



public testimony, ref: Red Hill contamination

1 message

pete doktor <dok@riseup.net>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Fri, Jan 21, 2022 at 11:11 AM

- Pete Doktor: parent, former DOE teacher/PTT, member of O`ahu Water Protectors & Veterans for Peace Hawai`i Ch. 113
- General Business MeetingL January 20, 2022, 1:30
- **Discussion Item V.A:** [Presentation on Red Hill water contamination effects on Department of Education schools, staff, students, and community](#)
- Position: Support BOE action to protect O`ahu's sole source aquifer

Aloha BOE Members,

As a parent, it's been almost traumatizing worrying since the 2014 fuel leaks if my keiki's development will be stunted or disabled like children in Flint, Michigan due to governmental failure to prioritize the protection of public water. We live about a mile from the Red Hill Naval Underground Fuel Tanks at Kapūkaki.

As a former tenured DOE teacher, I feel the BOE is obligated to address this issue, as one of our general learner outcomes, specifically GLO 6 "the ethical use of technology" is a standard the Navy has continually failed with all its misleading of the public. If this outcome is part of DOE mission, then we should hold this standard to institutions that threaten the well-being of our students to do so.

Prior to the recent pandemic, I was a PTT at a DOE Hawaiian Immersion school, my daughter's school; it makes me nauseous reflecting on one of my daily duties: monitoring and encouraging elementary students to drink water after recesses from school drinking fountain. As you know, we have many communities across Hawai`i where bottled water is not an affordable, practical option for the purposes of maintaining hydration for optimum learning.

It is the BOE kuleana to protect the welfare of our youth from harm they could incur at schools. Discussion is a good start: but it must be followed up with action, such as a resolution at minimum supporting decommission of the Red Hill Fuel Tanks, as the Board of Water Supply, HSTA and other state agencies have agreed that any such fuel tanks above our sole source aquifer is reckless and short-sighted.

As a military veteran, I am appalled by the Pentagon's position that so-called "national security" trumps the public health and safety of our citizens. I insist the BOE pursues its mission of public education and not kowtow to military pressure, given the Constitution clearly specifies civilian control of armed forces and not the other way around. Veterans for Peace hopes that the inclusion of a military liaison on the board of our education administration does not incur bias or double standards for the DoD, as this is the kind of collusion we see in authoritarian governments in Burma, Sudan, N. Korea, etc.

The BOE needs to keep facts straight: This was NOT just an 'isolated or unfortunate situation,' but rather an on-going systematic problem of military base operations worldwide that was forewarned but ignored creating illnesses for some of our communities — please do not make same mistake and put our keiki in jeopardy. The Navy's own studies confirms past and future annual leakage that civil society cannot find acceptable. It is imperative that the DoD reimburse the DOE for all expenses incurred by this latest crisis.

As a part of O`ahu Water Protectors and the Wai Ola Alliance, I underscore that talk is not enough and must be translated into policy. Please affirm your commitment to the well-being of our students and teachers, and join the growing chorus of concerned agencies and institutions calling for permanent decommission so we do not have to live continuously with this catastrophic threat.

If we value the lives of our students and school staff, we must join the UN General Assembly in recognizing water as a basic human right. We must come together as a community on this.

Māhalo nui loa BOE for advocating the public health and safety of our keiki, it is our shared kuleana.

Pete Doktor
Moanalua

(note: the call-in system for televised meetings does not work. When I was called for oral testimony my presence was not recognized ("off-line") and I was not able to speak despite being unmuted. I had to rush home to a computer to testify in BOE meeting.)



Red Hill

1 message

Dylan Silva <silvad22@knights.k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jan 20, 2022 at 8:21 AM

Aloha,

I am a long-time resident born and raised in Oahu. I currently go to Castle Highschool and I am a senior. I am here to state my support for bill 48 Requiring a Permit for facilities like the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility. I support bill 48 because there is jet fuel leaking in the aquifer and all that water is purified water.

That water is now contaminated and the people on Red Hill can't use their water and a lot of people got sick from the contaminated water. I care about this issue because we as Hawaii residents should care about the water we drink. Fresh and purified water is the thing we all deserve on Oahu.

Since we found out Jetfuel was leaking into the aquifer the water was unusable. We are in the agriculture program and we care for the aina. I am asking the Honolulu City Council Committee on Transportation, Sustainability, and Health to clean out the water and fix the leaking jet fuel in the storage tanks. I would like to see the people in Red Hill back in their homes and use fresh clean water again.

Mahalo,

Dylan Silva

James B. Castle High school c/o 2022