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State of Hawai'i
Board of Education
Student Achievement Committee
Thursday, October 6, 2022
Queen Lili'uokalani Building

October 3, 2022

'Aha Pūnana Leo Testimony Agenda Item
V. Recommendation for Action

A. Committee Action on Kindergarten entry assessment in accordance with Act 210 (2021)

Aloha Committee Chairperson Namau'u and Vice Chairperson Arakaki and members of the Student Achievement Committee,

Ka Papa Alaka'i
Board of Directors

Kauanoë Kamañā
Pelekikena

'Alohilani Rogers
Kākau'Ōlelo

Larry Kimura

William H. Wilson

Ki'ope Raymond

Hulilau Wilson

Keawe Lopes

Ka Luna Ho'okele
Chief Executive Officer

Ka'iulani J.K.N. Laehā

Ka Luna Ho'okō
Chief Operating Officer

K. Sean Kekina

Nā Papahana
Pūnana Leo

Pūnana Leo Programs

Aukukui

Ne'epapa

Kula Kamali'i

Pūnana Leo o Hilo

Pūnana Leo o Kaua'i

Pūnana Leo o Maui

Pūnana Leo o Moloka'i

Pūnana Leo o Wai'anae

Pūnana Leo o Kona

Pūnana Leo o Waimea

Pūnana Leo o Mānoa

Pūnana Leo o Ko'olau Poko

Pūnana Leo o Lahaina

Pūnana Leo o Hāna

Pūnana Leo o Nu'uano

Pūnaana Leo o Waialua

My name is Ka'iulani Laehā, Chief Executive Officer of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo.

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo is the largest provider in Hawaiian language medium early learning in the state. The overwhelming majority of our graduates continue to papa mālaa'o in either DOE kaiapuni or in Hawaiian medium charter schools. Although not too often, we have had graduates leave Hawaiian language education and continue in English kindergarten when families move and Hawaiian language medium is not an option.

The Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) being planned for 'ōlelo Hawai'i must not be a translation of an English assessment. There is no shortage of research on this topic; it is clearly understood by those of us in the Hawaiian language medium education field that such translations of English assessments are useless and at times, contradictory to our language revitalization efforts. We also caution the use of these English assessments for keiki with prior Hawaiian medium experience like the Pūnana Leo, and that in the rare case, continue in English programs. When the keiki are assessed in English, in particular in the language and literacy domains, they will be inaccurately labeled and may be treated as deficient by the teacher. As the assessment data is to be used to close the school readiness gap at mālaa'o entry; inform instruction in the early elementary grades; and inform parents of their child's status and to involve parents in decisions regarding their keiki's education it is important that our keiki in 'ōlelo Hawai'i are not marginalized or labeled at the onset of their education journey in 'ōlelo.

There is no purpose for administering KEA to keiki in Hawaiian language medium programs; whether entering into Kaiapuni schools from a Pūnana Leo or otherwise, these assessments will only produce inconsistent data, wrongfully inform instruction, and misinform parents. Ultimately, requiring KEA for Kula Kaiapuni, and for teachers of Kula Kaiapuni to be trained on administering an assessment that is inappropriate for Hawaiian immersion programs does not in any way benefit our keiki, kumu, 'ohana or kaiaulu.

We therefore urge the Board of Education to allow for a Hawaiian Language Program Exemption/Waiver.

We support the right of 'ohana to choose 'ōlelo Hawai'i pathway. The Mālaa'o enrollment forms in Kula Kaiapuni in DOE and Charter already inform makua of their decision. The enrollment captures the keiki's prior experience. Kumu papa mālaa'o already conduct interviews with 'ohana in 'ōlelo Hawai'i for those that 'ōlelo and in English for those that do not 'ōlelo.

Finally, until a Hawai'i assessment based on Hawaiian (language) Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS) are developed a KEA aligned to Hawaiian language medium pathway cannot be considered valid and reliable.

The state's Hawaiian language college should be involved in the development of the HELDS (HME) along with others as determined appropriate.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on agenda item V.A.


Ka'iulani Laehā

**Board of Education Student Achievement Committee Meeting 8:30
October 6, 2022
Susan Pcola-Davis
Testimony**

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes of April 21, 2022 Student Achievement Committee meeting

There have been a number of times where I have mentioned that the Board does not have a tracking mechanism to follow up on items that have been requested, by whom, from whom, and by when and its status. Without some sort of spreadsheet and with the amount of work both the DOE and BOE has, it is necessary to develop a tracker.

Here are some **examples from the minutes of the April 21, 2022 Student Achievement Committee meeting.**

What: Board Member Fallin requested information on what are the impacts for the 3-1-1 initiatives. She emphasized that she has consistently expressed concern about chronic absenteeism and attendance but the information provided is unclear because if students are not in school how will the students learn.

By whom: Board Member Lynn Fallin

From who: Mr. Hayashi

By when: Upcoming meeting

Status: Unknown

What: Identify strategies that are working and those not working for specific target groups.

By whom: Board Member Lynn Fallin

From who: Mr. Hayashi

By when: Upcoming meeting

Status: Unknown

What: Mr. Voss asked the Department to please explain what causes this inconsistency in the data for elementary schools because it shows significant increases for improvement on ELA and math but unfortunately the percentage of students receiving failing grades increased which is not what you would expect from this data.

By whom: Board Member Voss

From whom: Mr. Hayashi

By when: Will provide this information at the next meeting.

Status: Unknown

What: Provide the impact of the ESSR funds for schools because the numbers are daunting for elementary level students. He asked what beyond screener data has the Department considered to get better real time information whether the efforts have an effect and if not what can be done to change. (Academic return on investment based on the funds invested).

By whom: Board Member Voss

By whom: Mr. Hayashi

By when: At the next meeting and will include a long term plan

Status: Unknown

What: Some schools recruited bilingual/bicultural school home assistants otherwise known as B/BSHA and she would like to see the data to see if this was a positive support for schools. She stated that getting students to school is good but the Department needs to look at whether support staff is helping to address language barriers.

By whom: Board Member Asher

From whom: Mr. Hayashi

By when: Not specified

Status: Unknown

What: Provide an explanation on how chronic absenteeism is calculated (the chronic absenteeism data may reflect students who are out on long term medical leave versus the students who just do not want to come to school).

By whom: Board Member Arakaki

From whom: Mr. Hayashi

By when: Not specified

Status: Unknown

(Mr.Hayashi stated that for chronic absenteeism it is important to note that once a student is identified as chronically absent the designation is not taken off until the following school year so the number continues to increase at schools so the Department looks at average daily attendance as an indicator.)

What: Additional information about specific strategies implemented in the schools to help students of Micronesian and Native Hawaiian communities to be provided at.

By whom: Board Member Namau'u

From whom: Mr. Hayashi

By when: The next meeting

Status: Unknown

V. Recommendation for Action

A. Committee Action on Kindergarten entry assessment in accordance with Act 210 (2021)

APPROVE with COMMENTS

I appreciate the time that the Department spent to determine a Kindergarten Assessment that meets the Legislature's requirements (HRS §302A-1165).

Communication to additional stakeholders

- The Department will facilitate robust discussions about best practices for successful implementation that are necessary to meet the diverse needs of the Department's schools and the charter schools.
- **Particularly Complex Area Superintendents, principals** and kindergarten teachers and elementary school administrators, is needed to ensure successful implementation.

The discussion will be held with the Office of Talent Management and relevant stakeholders **Complex Area Superintendents, principals** regarding training details.

- All teachers administering this assessment complete seven online learning modules, as well as two mastery assessments, to complete the training.
- The JHU provides all of these learning modules, as well as Train-the-Trainer training to facilitate district leadership and sustainability.



October 6, 2022
Student Achievement Committee

Dear Chair Namau'u and Members of the Committee,

We would like to comment on Items III. A., Approval of Student Achievement Committee (SAC), April, 21, 2022 Minutes and V.A. Committee Action on Kindergarten Entry Assessments (KEA) in accordance with Act 210.

Item III. Approval of April 21, 2022 SAC Minutes

We noticed that there are a number of answers the DOE owes the BOE regarding the use of ESSER Funds and its impact on student performance.

1. Committee Member Payne asked if more resources will be provided to the schools but just have not been allocated at this time. Superintendent Hayashi replied that funds have been allocated and he will follow up with that complex area on what additional supports are needed.
2. Committee Member Fallin requested information on what are the impacts for the 3-1-1 initiatives. Ms. Fallin said that information was missing to help understand the impact and actions of how money is being spent to get students who need the most help and that reports to the BOE needed to show the actual impacts and not broad statements. Superintendent Hayashi expressed appreciation and stated that he will prepare this information for the upcoming meeting.
3. Committee Member Voss stated that there is inconsistency on data for elementary schools because it shows significant increases for improvement on ELA and math but unfortunately the percentage of students receiving failing grades increased which is not what you would expect from this data. He asked the Department to please explain what causes this inconsistency in the data. Mr. Voss also asked what beyond screener data has the Department considered to get better real time information whether the efforts have an effect and if not what can be done to change. Superintendent Hayashi stated that this information will be provided at the next meeting and will include a long-term plan.

Five months have passed since this April 21, 2022 DOE Memo, and there has not been any report about student data from the DOE to the BOE. We even heard that the results of Smarter Balanced Assessment, which was administered in the Spring of 2022, were not available to the schools in August 2022, when school started. One of the DOE's strategic pillars is "Action-Oriented Decision Making." If schools do not

have pertinent student data at the start of the year and if reports are not made on a regular basis to the BOE, we have difficulty in understanding how this pillar is being executed.

Item V. A., Committee Action on Kindergarten Entry Assessments (KEA) in accordance with Act 210.

We are pleased to see that the DOE has chosen a state-wide KEA in accordance with Act 210. We understand that the DOE has been under extreme time pressure to choose an assessment, train more than 1000 kindergarten teachers, and launch the assessment in every kindergarten classroom starting July 2023. We offer some comments.

1. We are concerned about the burden on elementary schools and kindergarten teachers with the introduction of the new KEA. The large influx of federal funds and the Superintendent’s four strategies has created more training and required mandates at the school level. As this is a legislative mandate, the DOE must prepare for a July 2023 launch. We urge the DOE to create a sound “strategic plan” for the KEA implementation.
 - a. The DOE memo states that the DOE convened stakeholder workgroup as a part of the process of locating and reviewing the existing kindergarten entry assessment tools. However, elementary school principal and kindergarten teacher representatives appear to have been absent. Cross-functional teams must be convened to ensure that the valuable input from the field is incorporated into the plan.
 - b. As part of the Race to The Top Grant in 2011, Ohio and Maryland adopted the John Hopkins assessment.¹ With over 10 years of developing and refining the assessment, we hope that the DOE has reached out to these states to learn from their implementation. Ohio and Maryland had the advantage of years to develop their plans and their products are extremely informative. Both the Ohio and Maryland Kindergarten Assessment Reports since 2014-2015 are publicly available.²
2. We agree with the concerns of the Kaiapuni schools regarding the appropriateness of the John Hopkins assessment for Kaiapuni students. Since an appropriate assessment for the Kaiapuni schools will be developed, we do not think that it is necessary to offer the English KEA as an option. If a waiver does not exist for Kaiapuni schools, the DOE should work with the legislature to amend the requirement in the statute. We do not want to burden the Kaiapuni schools and their Kindergarten teachers to do training in the English assessment if it is not needed.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Cheri Nakamura
HE’E Coalition Director

¹ <http://about.kready.org>

² <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/kindergarten-readiness-report>; <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Kindergarten/Ohios-Kindergarten-Readiness-Assessment>

HE'E Coalition Members and Participants

Academy 21
Alliance for Place Based Learning
American Civil Liberties Union
Atherton YMCA
*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 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.*