



Testimony Presented Before the
State of Hawai'i Board of Education
Thursday, February 2, 2023

By
David Lassner, President
University of Hawai'i
WRITTEN ONLY

III. – Board Action on Hawaii Public Education 2023-2029 Strategic Plan (Phase I)

Aloha Chair Voss and Members of the Board of Education,

Thank you for this opportunity to share some thoughts on the BOE's proposed *State of Hawaii Public Education 2023-2029 Strategic Plan*.

As you may know, in November the University of Hawaii Board of Regents approved a new Strategic Plan, also for the period 2023-2029, entitled *Hawai'i's University for Today and Tomorrow*.

First we appreciate the firm and clearly highlighted continuing commitment of the BOE up front in your vision to foster "creative and critical thinkers prepared for college and career success." This will be absolutely essential for Hawai'i to succeed. I suspect you are as alarmed as we are at the severe decline in the college going-rate of DOE high school graduates impacted by the pandemic. This does not bode well for the future of our islands and we are committed to work together with the DOE to gain back our losses and continue to improve. We know that students with only a high school education will face greater challenges in life than those who engage in almost any form of post-secondary education or training.

There is also a great deal of alignment among your BOE priorities and our UH imperatives. We share a commitment to elimination of equity gaps in student achievement. Our evidence so far is that collaborative programs such as Early College can be very effective in reducing gaps for groups such as Native Hawaiian students and economically disadvantaged students.

Along with preparation for college is the importance of preparation for careers. The new UH strategic plan highlights the need to "Meet Hawai'i's workforce needs of today and tomorrow." We believe can do this best in collaboration with the DOE through stronger alignment with school academies and CTE programs, also supported by intentionally designed Early College courses that show students and their families that college success is possible while launching them into the curricular pathways that will prepare them for good jobs.

Our commitment to meeting workforce needs includes the needs of the education sector, notably the DOE. We look forward to working together to be able to understand and address the shortages you face. We know that teacher retention is enhanced when we can prepare students to return to their own communities to teach, and we are committed to work with the Department to find ways we can help recruit and retain high-quality educators as well as effective administrators and support staff.

UH envisions students graduating from Hawaii's K-12 schools having engaged in pathways and work-based learning so that they are academically prepared to avail themselves of all the possibilities on all islands across our 10-campus system. The range of options not only include traditional degrees – associate's, bachelor's, and graduate degrees – but also include opportunities to earn credentials with labor market value and enroll in short-term training. While there are many pathways to success, in most cases, students benefit from additional education or training immediately after high school; It is still very uncommon for students with only a high school education to find a job that can support a family in Hawaii. In addition to earning more, we know that those with a college degree vote more, volunteer more, pay more taxes, are less likely to be incarcerated, are healthier, draw less on the social safety net, are less likely to lose their job in a recession and are faster to return to employment after a recession if they were laid off. And these benefits are inter-generational, as the children of college graduates are then more likely to attend college.

In short, we are pleased to see the alignment between our plans and look forward to extending and strengthening our collaborations to build a better Hawai'i through public education at all levels.



Testimony on 1.3.1

1 message

Gigi Pasaoa <gigipasaoa@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Feb 2, 2023 at 1:03 PM

Aloha,

My name is Gianna Pasaoa. I'm in 2nd grade at Ewa Elementary. I want to talk about goal 1.3.1 because students should be ready for the outside world and understanding others. This is why all students in Hawaii should learn a second language starting in elementary school. Speaking multiple languages is good for your brain. Why is it good? Knowing a second language is necessary for success in life. Why is it necessary? Because it helps your brain to grow, it helps you focus, it helps you improve problem solving, and it also helps your memory. On top of all of that it allows students to do better in all subjects! Another reason learning a second language early is important is because we are all connected and we have to understand one another. If you travel to another country that speaks another language you have to be able to communicate. This also is important because it makes it easier to get a job since you can talk to people around the world. One of the best ways learning a second language impacts a student is it helps you learn about different cultures and people from other places. Why do you need to understand other cultures? So we can accept people more easily and learn what's special to them. Children in other countries learn a second and sometimes even a third language starting in elementary school. In fact in many countries it's required. Here are some examples of countries that teach another language starting around age six: France, Italy, Sweden, Turkey, the Philippines, and South Korea. We can do the same thing in Hawaii. Students should have a choice out of three to five languages to learn. We can achieve this by hiring more teachers and using language apps such as Dinolingo, language programs like Rosetta Stone, and language books. Like we do in PE, music and art we can have a similar time called language time. By doing this we can impact the amount of people that speak more than one language in Hawaii. Thank you.