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David Miyashiro  
Executive Director

March 23, 2023

Hawaii State Board of Education  
Special Meeting  
Bruce Voss, Chairperson  
Kaimana Barcarse, Vice Chairperson

Aloha Chair Voss, Vice Chair Barcarse, and Members of the Board,

Founded in 2017, HawaiiKidsCAN is a local nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that Hawaii has an excellent and equitable education system that reflects the true voices of our communities and, in turn, has a transformational impact on our children and our state. We strongly believe that all students should have access to excellent educational opportunities, regardless of family income levels and circumstances.

**HawaiiKidsCAN would like to offer comments for Discussion Item A:  
Presentation on measuring student achievement: pandemic impacts and  
recovery.**

When Smarter Balanced Assessment and NAEP results were released last year, we were encouraged by how Hawaii's students had seemingly weathered the storm better than many of their peers around the country. We greatly appreciate the analysis of Tony Alpert and Damian Betebenner on the impact of the pandemic on academic achievement, which sheds some light on how schools achieved this result and how our system can maintain a sense of urgency to address opportunity gaps that existed before the pandemic.

This analysis confirms some of what HawaiiKidsCAN observed during the pandemic. For example, we've long believed that the loosely defined "empowerment model" for schools does not utilize the inherent advantages built into Hawaii's single school district. While educators and leaders should absolutely have buy-in to create the unique character of the schools, key operations, communications, and strategies should not be shrouded in mystery. The pandemic forced much-needed transparency and clarity across the system, and today's presentation speaks directly to the value of strong

leadership. Similarly, another finding focuses on the importance of community and collective action. HawaiiKidsCAN has long called for greater community engagement, including harnessing the power of programs such as tutoring, ‘āina-based education, and partnerships with non-profits to add capacity to the system and move from a deficit-based mindset to abundance-based approach. For example, while they may be shortages of licensed educators for certain roles, there are extremely knowledgeable and wise educators in our communities represented by our kupuna, industry partners, and other public servants.

We sincerely hope today’s presentation empowers the BOE and DOE to unapologetically double down on what has worked. The pandemic was an extremely challenging and traumatic shock to our broader community and education system, but let’s make sure it is the catalyst for positive change to outpace where our schools were before the pandemic, which included missing many of the key goals of the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan.

**HawaiiKidsCAN would also like to offer comments for Discussion Item B: Update on Hawaii Public Education 2023-2029 Strategic Plan (Phase II), Implementation Plan: Key Performance Indicators and stakeholder engagement update.**

HawaiiKidsCAN has been eager to finally review the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), as these will represent the tangible progress our system makes over the duration of the 2023-2029 Strategic Plan. Overall, we appreciate the specificity of the KPIs, and we believe they measure the most impactful metrics. We humbly offer a few notes for consideration:

- For **KPIs 1-5**, it may be helpful to further tease out goals based on the grade levels for assessments. For example, being able to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of reading interventions at the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level versus 11<sup>th</sup> grade could lead to more productive discussions between the BOE and DOE. At the early grades, there is more importance on the use of materials and practices based on the “science of reading” and proper phonics instruction, while high school may require intensive tutoring or extended learning time.
- For **KPIs 6 and 7**, we believe the BOE may want to look closer at the potential of distance learning to provide flexible solutions. For example, life circumstances may constrain the ability for students to attend consistently in-person, such as illness and family emergencies. In cases where a student unexpectedly cannot get to campus, the option to participate in learning virtually on a limited basis could help students keep up academically. Similarly, this kind of participation during suspension for behavior could help these students from falling further behind.

- For **KPI 10**, the BOE may want to consider the value of including a measure like FAFSA completion. As the DOE correctly notes, it can be difficult to account for the various options students may have upon graduating. A measure like FAFSA completion is much more clearly in the locus of control for schools and correlates strongly to college enrollment.
- For **KPIs 11-14**, we find it strange that only complex area and state office staff are actually held accountable for their performance. In contrast, the professionals closest to the classroom are measured in this plan by their credentials. By this logic, why not gauge the percentage of complex area and state office staff with degrees directly related to their job titles? Since this clearly wouldn't make sense, we urge the BOE to consider tying the plan to the actual effectiveness of our educators.
- For **KPI 18**, we appreciate the intent of this metric. As an organization that works directly with parents, HawaiiKidsCAN has found that there is wide disparity on the quality of communications options across the system. Some schools have multiple social media channels, informative websites, and an up-to-date public calendar, while others have none of these elements. Establishing norms and expectations across the system would help close this gap.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Miyashiro  
Founding Executive Director  
HawaiiKidsCAN

Susan Pcola-Davis Testimony  
Board of Education Special Meeting  
March 23, 2023

## II. Discussion Items

*NOTE: Testimony relevant to each agenda item will be taken before the Board considers the item.*

### A. [Presentation on measuring student achievement: pandemic impacts and recovery](#)

My overall perspective of this presentation:

- How much was spent on their contracts?
  - Executive Director: Center for Excellence and Tony Alpert: Smarter Balanced
- You contracted the Smarter Balanced “Center” to conduct a non-biased analysis.
- The data doesn’t exactly represent what the numbers are reflecting.
- Explain how using an N=50 is statistically significant.

### OVERALL Slide 5

1. Hawaii students learned at a faster rate post pandemic than they did before the pandemic.
2. Mathematics needs a steeper recovery than English Language Arts (ELA).

My Observations:

ELA (Slide 6)

Grades remained very stable when comparing to 2019.

**Why? How was this accomplished?**

Math (Slide 7)

**Elementary Math, Grades 4, and 5 scores were close to 2019.**

**Secondary Math, Grades 3, 6, 7, 8, 11 struggled most.**

**Why was 12<sup>th</sup> grade left out?**

### ACADEMIC IMPACT (Starting with Slide 12)

These slides indicate N=50

**What was the N for each grade?**

**How is that statistically significant?**

Slide 12

**How do you explain?**

ELA: **ELL grade 4** [Recovery: Improvement]

MATH: **Special education Grade 7** [Deterioration: Moderate to none]

### ACADEMIC RECOVERY Disadvantaged (Starting with slide 15)

ELA

Special Ed Grades 5,6 8 [Deterioration]

ELL Grades 5, 8 [Deterioration]

MATH

ELL Grade 8 [Deterioration]

What are the interventions for these children?

### **EXEMPLAR SCHOOLS Slides 17-18**

16 schools (247 total) approximately 6.4% of schools

What do these findings tell us?

Some initial findings:

**Distributive leadership** works well in normal situations, being decisive and providing clear direction was necessary during a crisis.

- o Everyone was in crisis mode from March 2020-August 2020.
- o Strong leadership adapted existing / implemented new programs quickly and effectively.

**Strong leadership** was resourceful in finding funds to meet needs (e.g., food distribution, masks, other health services).

- o Strong leadership focused on the whole school community including parents and staff.

### **My Summary of report**

Hawaii's recovery was exceptional, according to analysis by the Center on Assessment. These data provide positive signs that Hawaii schools attended to the learning needs of their students. However, given that the pandemic created unprecedented effects on students, more data is required to project the long-term trajectory of students' learning.

## **2. DESCRIPTION**

To better understand the effects of the pandemic, the Department **contracted the Center for Assessment (Center) for an in-depth analysis of the impact of the pandemic on academic performance and the extent to which recovery efforts are bringing about intended results.**

Dr. Damian Betebenner is the Center's lead investigator and will present the preliminary results of the Center's findings (Attachment A, slides 9-18). As the Executive Director of Smarter Balanced, Tony Alpert has a deep understanding of summative assessment technical requirements and how the SBA provides common and comparable measures across schools and students, including student subgroup data.

The Smarter Balanced and Center for Assessment's presentation will highlight critical factors associated with academic recovery following the global pandemic.

While 2021 participation rates were lower and had lower levels of reliability and validity, the 2022 results are reliable and valid and can be compared with pre-pandemic levels.

### **Pandemic Academic Impact and Academic Recovery**

"**Pandemic academic impact**," which is sometimes referred to as learning loss or unfinished learning, is one of the significant consequences of the pandemic.

“Academic Recovery,” which is sometimes referred to as learning recovery, is the increase in student learning that is significant enough to mitigate the previous academic impacts caused by the pandemic.

The Center’s analysis of 2022 SBA data reveals several positive trends in Hawaii’s academic performance. In both ELA and Mathematics, the rate of learning acceleration was significant enough to be considered to be “stabilized,” and in many instances, it **could be viewed** as a genuine recovery from the academic impact of the pandemic.

In comparison to the other 12 states analyzed by the Center, Hawaii emerged as the top-performing state in terms of academic recovery from the pandemic. However, results from 2023 data will be critical in assessing whether the excellent learning rates observed are being maintained or even exceed pre-COVID levels.

These schools are considered “exemplars” in terms of impact and recovery.

The Center investigated the implementation of school activities, as a potential factor responsible for the outlier status.

- One finding suggests that while distributive leadership may work well in normal circumstances, being decisive and providing clear direction were necessary during the pandemic. This finding highlights the importance of adaptability in leadership styles based on the situation.
- Another finding indicates that funding was not a significant limitation for academic recovery during pandemic. Schools had access to federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds.
- Also, strong leaders demonstrated resourcefulness and identified needed funds, whether from the community, school funds, or foundations. This finding highlights the importance of resourcefulness and creativity in securing funds for necessary programs and services during a crisis.

B. [Update on Hawaii Public Education 2023-2029 Strategic Plan \(Phase II\), Implementation Plan: Key Performance Indicators and stakeholder engagement update](#)

One word: Fantastic

Thought: For once we look at the positive!!!

My Evidence of moving forward in a positive direction:

DOE Strategy:

While the Board developed its Strategic Plan, the Department established an internal workgroup to develop;

- Constructs
- Measures and
- Outcomes

Anticipating:

- Design
- Assess potential measures for consideration as to the;
  - Viability
  - Accuracy, and
  - Impact of the results

DOE Integrity:

1. Strategic Plan KPIs will represent key data points **but will not capture all important aspects of education and educational progress.**
2. Some of the draft KPIs would require new data collection or significant changes in calculating the indicator.

#### **Description of Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

Goal 1.1

KPI #1: Language Arts Proficiency Rate

KPI #2: Math Proficiency Rate

KPI #3: Science Proficiency Rate

#### **Positive Growth in Looking at Assessments;**

Reporting additional measures to supplement the statewide assessments would be possible but **would require the collection of data from students, teachers and/or schools and may also require developing assessments for the purpose.**

Goal 1.1

KPI #4: Improvement in Academic Proficiency

**Provide bar chart for:**

- **Mathematics improvement in academic proficiency: +7**
- **Science improvement in academic proficiency: +5**

#### **Looking at Data with a Different Perspective:**

Reporting on academic proficiency does not provide information about improvements made by students who are well below or well above the thresholds. Other measures, even based on the same source

information, can provide more insight.

**Breakthrough:**

Some improvement measures that have been discussed are:

- Reducing the proportion of students scoring at the lowest level of proficiency on statewide assessments (among the four levels), comparing the current year with prior year.
- Counting the number of students who moved to a higher proficiency level on statewide assessments compared with the prior year (for example, “Transition Matrix Model”).

Goal 1.1

KPI #5: Equity in Student Learning

**Looking at Data with a Different Perspective:**

To report on whether different student groups are experiencing equitable outcomes, Goal 1.1 KPIs will be reported by different student groups, **including those that have a pattern of lower performance on statewide measures.**

**Breakthrough:**

- When educational outcomes are equitable, students’ academic achievement and/or improvement are **not correlated with their demographic characteristics.**
  - **Improving equity in outcomes requires information for further analysis, action and reporting.**
- Goal 1.2**

KPI #6: Consistent attendance

**Looking at Data with a Different Perspective:**

- The Attendance Rate is based on the number of students attending 90% or more instructional days throughout the school year: 162 or more of 180 days. [attended at least 90% of the days of instruction]
- For secondary school students, a student is considered an attendee if he/she did attend at least 50% of scheduled classes that day.

**Breakthrough:**

Discussion: The reason that a student is absent informs student support, interventions and policy changes that are appropriate to return a student to school.

An issue for consideration is whether schools should get “credit” when absent students have an excused absence.

**Consider revising the department's policies on absences/attendance to align with KPI #6.**

Goal 1.2

KPI #7: Positive Behaviors



**Looking at Data with a Different Perspective:**

The measure of positive behaviors is based on the percent of students who exhibit positive behaviors (do not have serious disciplinary offenses; i.e., no Chapter 19 Class A or B offenses).

**Breakthrough:**

Positive behavior is based on the number of students enrolled at a school (denominator) for the Full School Year (FSY). The numerator is the number of students who did not have a Class A or B offense. A school environment with positive behaviors is foundational to and reflective of safe, healthy, culturally responsive and inclusive learning environments, which encourage students to attend and connect to school. The school environments have systems that address concerns before they escalate to serious disciplinary offenses.

## Goal 1.3

KPI #8: On-Time High School Graduation

**Looking at Data with a Different Perspective:**

Discussion: Concerns regarding the on-time graduation measure prompted proposal of KPI #9 to account for more types of high school completion than earning a high school diploma.

## Goal 1.3

KPI #9: Extended High School Completion

**Looking at Data with a Different Perspective:**

This is a high school-only measure that expands the amount of time and types of completion that are “counted” beyond the on-time graduation rate. Further data analyses and data sharing needs to be conducted to produce this KPI.

**Breakthrough:****Discussion**

This measure seems well received in recognizing that some students’ Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) prescribe different high school experiences and in recognizing high school equivalencies as an alternative to earning a high school diploma.

#### Goal 1.5

KPI #10: Postsecondary Education and Training Immediately After High School

##### **Looking at Data with a Different Perspective:**

##### **Discussion**

The discussion about postsecondary education and training rates generally has two aspects:

- Desire to measure other post-high outcomes, such as military enlistment, apprenticing in a federally recognized Registered Apprenticeship Program or gainful employment. Unfortunately, data about students' post-high participation in these other measures is not readily available.
- The extent to which the Department and high schools are responsible for the post-high outcomes since the actions that students need to take to enroll in college or become employed are almost always after a student leaves high school

#### Goal 2.1

KPI #11: Classes Taught by Teachers Prepared for Assignment

##### **Honest Evaluation Leads To Breakthrough**

Meeting the expectation that all teachers are HQ for every class is challenging due to:

- Persistent shortage areas.
- Requirement for content area specialization in every subject taught. Secondary special education teachers sometimes teach all subjects in fully self-contained classrooms, those teachers rarely meet HQ requirements in all of the subjects that they teach.

#### Goal 2.2

KPI #12: School Support Positions Filled by Qualified Hires

School support staff play an important role in ensuring students are learning in a safe and supportive learning environment.

#### Goal 2.3

KPI #13: Schools with Prepared Principals

Studies show principals' contributions to student achievement were nearly as large as the average effects of teachers.

#### Goal 2.4

KPI #14: Effective Complex Area and State Staff

Percent of effective complex area and state staff. Effective staff are those earning a "meets," "exceeds," "effective" or "highly effective" on annual performance appraisals, as appropriate to the rating used for the role.

**How does the Board review these performance appraisals?**

**Suggest these two are separated some way. (15 & 16)**

Goal 3.1

KPI #15: Deferred Maintenance

Goal 3.1

KPI #16: Safe Facilities

Safe facilities are represented by schools having current vulnerability assessments (**i.e., every two years**). Vulnerability assessments are a formal evaluation process that assesses the physical safety of a school, identifies weaknesses on school campuses, and provides recommendations to mitigate security challenges.

**Consider changing to every year. More frequently if an actual event occurs, analyze current threat assessments and make changes/update accordingly.**

Goal 3.2

KPI #17: Key Administrative Systems

#### **DOE Integrity**

This is a state-level reporting requirement that **needs further development**.

- The status of the functionality of reports on administrative systems (e.g., fiscal, human resources, information technology, school food services, transportation, data) will be reported.
- Reporting focuses on identified initiatives across the system, and the reporting of progress towards these initiatives, as well as impeding factors encountered.
- The status of key milestones and functionality objectives are presented where applicable.
- An inventory of systems with each system's reporting scope in the area of status, initiatives, and progress, **will be established in the early period of year-one implementation**.

Goal 3.3

KPI #18: Access of Information for Families

Percent of schools that have at least three communication mechanisms for families with at least one via two-way communication.

Strategic Plan Goal 3.3 focuses on families' information and involvement in planning and decision-making processes, more so than family engagement in learning.



March 23, 2023  
Special Meeting

Dear Chair Voss and Members of the Board,

We would like to comment on Discussion Item II A., Presentation on measuring student achievement: pandemic impacts and recovery and II. B., Update on Hawaii Public Education 2023-2029 Strategic Plan (Phase II), Implementation Plan: Key Performance Indicators and stakeholder engagement update.

### **Measuring Student Achievement**

We commend the department for being recognized as having an exceptional recovery from the pandemic by the Center on the Assessment. The decision to move quickly to all in-person instruction was a good one and it is reflected in the data. **We also credit the school principals, teachers, and staff at the schools for their hard work and dedication to lift up our students during and post-pandemic.**

While it is important to recognize the gains made in 2021-2022, it is also critical to analyze the student performance trend prior to the pandemic to have a deeper perspective. From the DOE's ARCH web portal, we compiled eight-year trend charts of Meeting Standards in English Language Arts, math, and science and graduation rates for all students and high-needs students. This is shown in Appendix A. The trend shows a flat line for Meeting Standards prior to the pandemic, a dip during the pandemic, and a recovery after the pandemic, but not to the levels of pre-pandemic. It also shows that the achievement gap is persistent throughout the period. Graduation rates were stable throughout the eight years, but the gaps between all students and subgroups also remained consistent throughout the pandemic. In sum, **the system has not improved during these eight years.**

Our education system will not improve unless we understand why we are not improving. And it is too simplistic to conclude that it is due to insufficient resources. Deep analysis is needed to do this, but what we see from the department thus far does not even scratch the surface. This three-year analysis, done by outside consultants, only concludes that that adaptive and resourceful leadership contributed to the rapid recovery. Shouldn't we have the capacity to do the analysis ourselves instead of spending precious resources to outside consultants that offer insights that are cursory?

### **Key Performance Indicators**

The department did a fine job in aligning the Key Performance Indicators to the BOE's priorities and goals. We prioritize students so Priority 1, High Quality Learning for All is the most important for us. We particularly like the two indicators #4 Improvement in academic proficiency and #5 Equity in student learning as it addresses improvement in all subgroups. However, **we strongly disagree with using 2020-**

**2021 as a baseline because it was an abnormal drop in performance due to the pandemic. The starting point should be the 2014-2015 year.**

We also do not think that it is appropriate to lump the English-medium assessment with the Hawaiian medium assessment for a combined Language Arts indicator. **We believe the two distinct languages which have two distinct proficiency assessments methods should have two distinct indicators.**

Will the department treat all indicators with equal weighting? We are particularly concerned about the direction to principals. **We are afraid that if everything is a priority then nothing is a priority and the principals will be directed to “focus on everything”, which is not strategic nor even possible.**

During the DOE’s data presentation on October 5, 2022, it showed a slide on **College completion: Earned a college-issued credential (degree or certificate) within 6 years of high school graduation.** We feel that this indicator is far more useful than Postsecondary education and training immediately after high school. The reason is we want to know that we have prepared our students to complete college if that is their choice.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Cheri Nakamura  
HE’E Coalition Director

## 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.*

# Appendix A

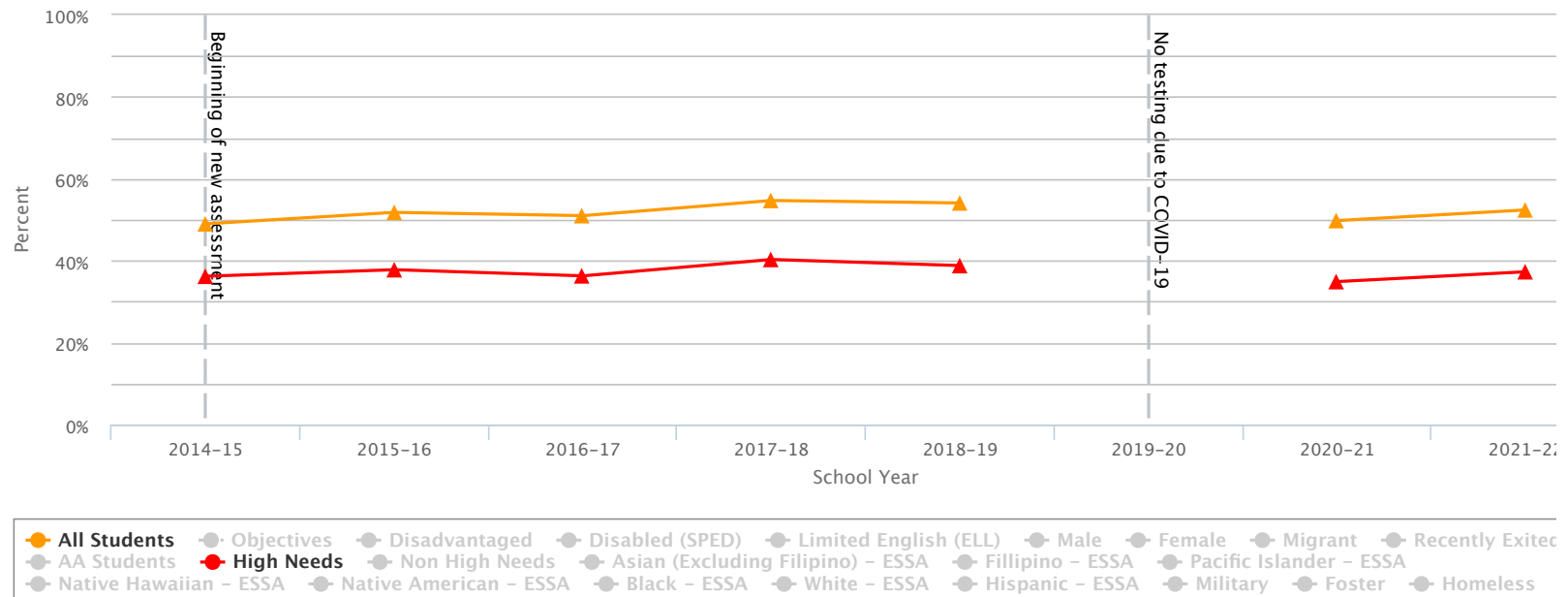
## ELA Meeting Standard

By Subgroup & Year for FSY ⓘ

State of Hawaii

Table

Data Info



Show All

### School Divisions

Statewide

State of Ha...

### Subject

ELA

### Type

By Subgrou...

### School Year

2021-22

### Show

Last 8 Yrs

### Type of Data

FSY

Advanced ▾

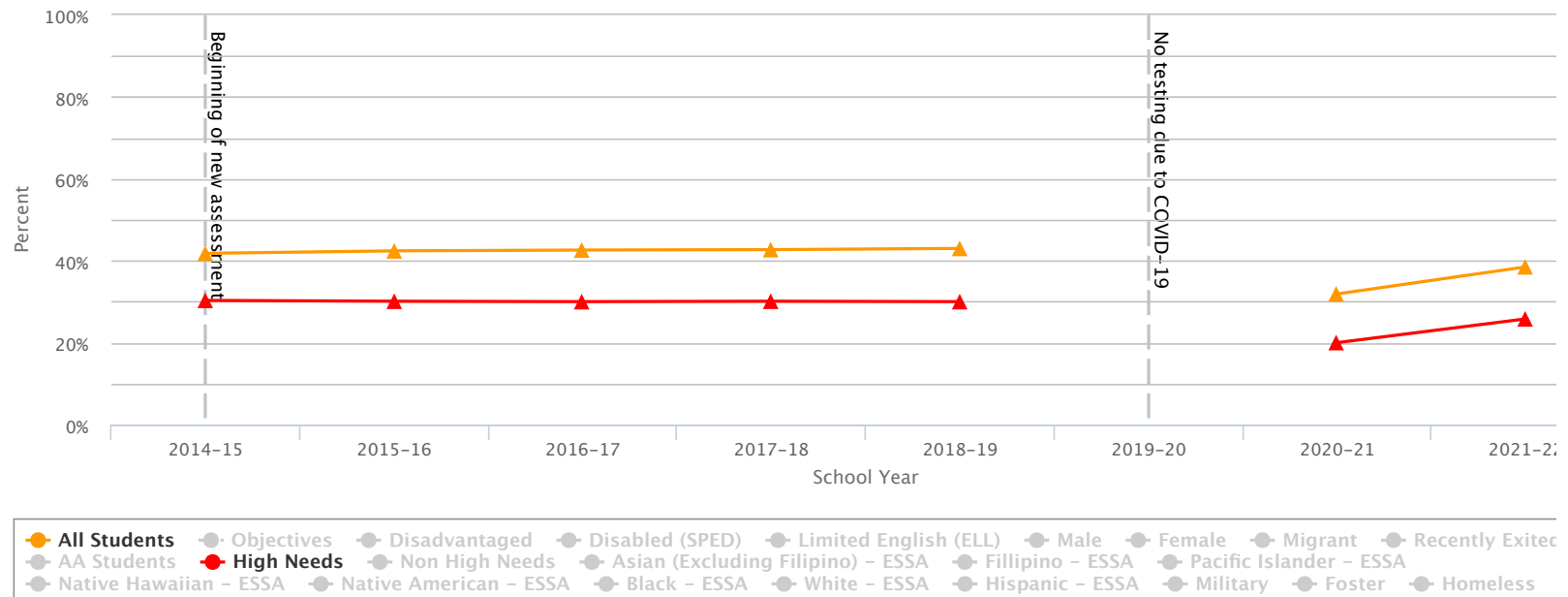
# Math Meeting Standard

By Subgroup & Year for FSY ⓘ

State of Hawaii

Table

Data Info



Show All

## School Divisions

Statewide

State of Ha...

## Subject

Math

## Type

By Subgrou...

## School Year

2021-22

## Show

Last 8 Yrs

## Type of Data

FSY

Advanced ▾



### School Divisions

Statewide

State of Ha...

### Subject

Science

### Type

By Subgrou...

### School Year

2021-22

### Show

Last 8 Yrs

### Type of Data

FSY

Advanced ▾

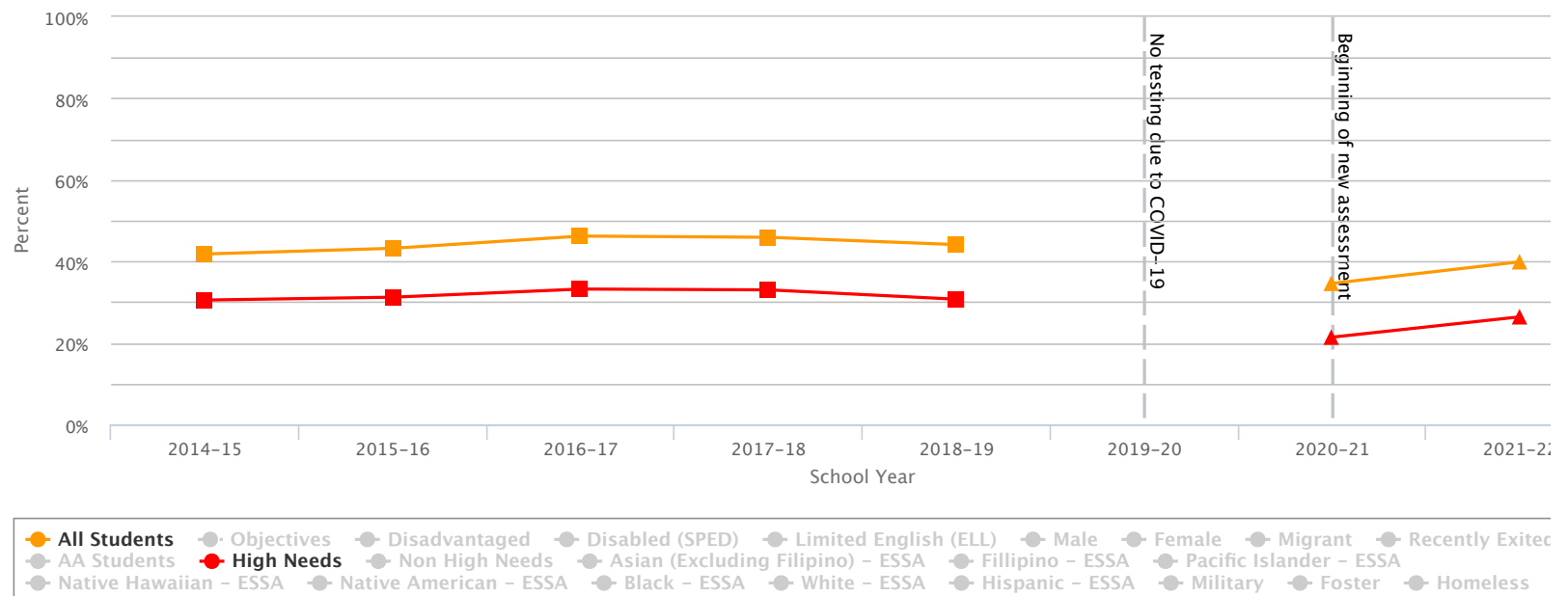
# Science Proficiency

## By Subgroup & Year for FSY ⓘ

### State of Hawaii

Table

Data Info



Show All

### School Divisions

Statewide

### Type

Graduation

### School Year

2021-22

### Show

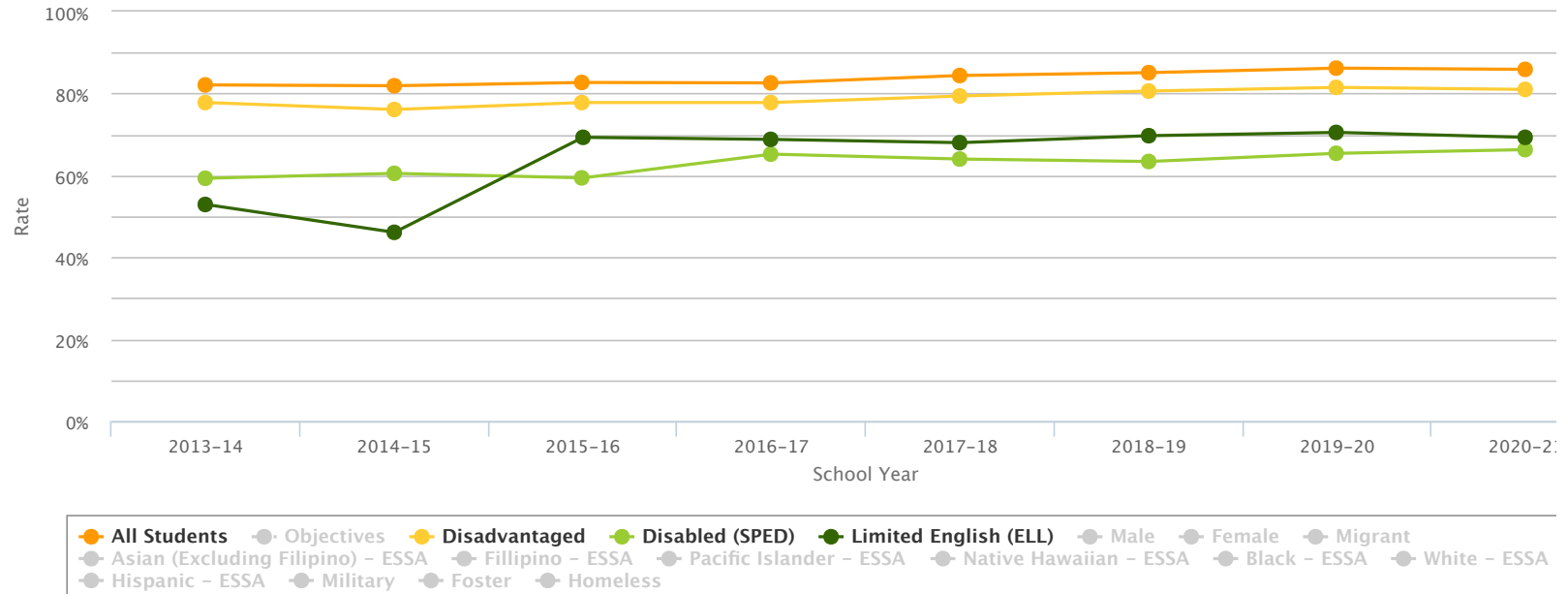
Last 8 Yrs

# Graduation

State of Hawaii

Table

Data Info



Show All