

## Testimony

1 message

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To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Aug 8, 2023 at 2:00 PM

Alec Marentic  
School Psychologist, Hawai'i Department of Education  
Student Achievement Committee  
Agenda Item A  
Comments

I support the Department's goal to ensure all students learn in a safe, nurturing, and culturally responsive environment; however, I am concerned the approach to building capacity is not properly aligned with its related goal addressing staffing issues.

For example, there is currently a significant shortage of School Psychologists in the State due to inadequate recruitment and retention programs. One facet of effective recruitment and retention programs, competitive wages, was raised earlier this year when many of the complex area superintendents and deputy superintendents were given raises with backpay by a unanimous board vote. Since that vote, there has not been a substantive plan outlined by the DOE to address this issue. When HGEA tried to address this issue for educators in bargaining unit 13, the DOE declined to take any action.

In closing, I want to emphasize that if the DOE wants substantive results for its students, it must also address the staffing issues for all educators, including school psychologists, speech-language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, social workers, and behavioral health specialists. The DOE needs to prioritize addressing these issues to maximize the chance our students have of meeting the goals outlined in their strategic plan.

Alec H Marentic, **Ed.S.**  
(Pronouns: He/Him/His)  
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*"In my early professional years I was asking the question: How can I treat, or cure, or change this person? Now I would phrase the question in this way: How can I provide a relationship which this person may use for their own personal growth?" -Carl Rogers*



August 8, 2023

Board of Education Student Achievement Committee  
Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

re: **Aug-10, 2023 SAC meeting Agenda Item III. B. Update on Strategic Plan, Desired Outcome 1.2.3, “All students experience a Nā Hopena A’o environment for learning”**

Aloha Student Achievement Members,

How nice that the DOE is “preparing our graduates for Hawai‘i’s future depends on a united, collective effort — ne‘epapa — grounded in Nā Hopena A’o and embraced by our communities, dedicated educators and support teams.” However, Mr. Hayashi’s report seems shallow. The DOE should practice what it preaches to the keiki. How can Superintendents and Principals who have no regard for others possibly teach HĀ.

As you know, I’ve sent many letters to Mr. Hayashi recently to defend the right of a handicapped teacher to work in classroom large enough to accommodate her wheelchair. This disability accommodation was granted years ago, yet for no good reason, the Principal took it away this year. I think it is to purposely make the teacher’s working life so difficult that she will quit.

Hayashi, the Civil Rights Compliance Director, the Complex Area Superintendent have all stood silently by and done nothing Mr. Hayashi does not even have the respect to respond to me after I’ve written 5 letters and made 3 phone calls to him about this. Where’s the HĀ in such disrespectful behavior?

Nā Hopena A’o Statements HĀ: BREATH

1. Strengthened Sense of Belonging:

I stand firm in my space with a strong foundation of relationships. I am able to interact respectfully for the betterment of self and others.

- d. Care about my relationships with others
- e. Am open to new ideas and different ways of doing things
- f. Communicate with clarity and confidence
- g. Understand how actions affect others

2. Strengthened Sense of Responsibility:

I willingly carry my responsibility for self, family, community and the larger society. A sense of Responsibility is demonstrated by a commitment and concern for others. I am mindful of the values, needs and welfare of others.

- e. Make good decisions with moral courage and integrity in

every action.

h. Honor and make family, school and communities proud

3. Strengthened Sense of Excellence:

I believe I can succeed in school and life and am inspired to care about the quality of my work.

g. See failure as an opportunity to learn well

h. Assess and make improvements to produce quality work

4. Strengthened Sense of Aloha:

I show care and respect for myself, families, and communities. A sense of Aloha is demonstrated through empathy and appreciation for the symbiotic relationship between all. I am able to build trust and lead for the good of the whole.

c. Make others feel comfortable and welcome

e. Respond mindfully to what is needed

g. Share the responsibility for collective work

h. Spread happiness

5. Strengthened Sense of Total Well-being:

I am able to meet the demands of school and life while contributing to the wellbeing of family, 'āina, community and world.

g. Engage in positive, social interactions and has supportive relationships

h. Promote wellness in others

I think the adults in the DOE need an education and ACCOUNTABILITY for practicing HĀ more than the children. They have an innate sense of fairness, justice, and what's morally right. Too bad it is so deficient in administrators.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Vanessa Ott

Board of Education  
SAC Committee  
August 10, 2023  
Testimony: SUSAN PCOLA-DAVIS

## Discussion Items

A. Update on Strategic Plan, Desired Outcome 1.2.2, “All students demonstrate positive behaviors at school”

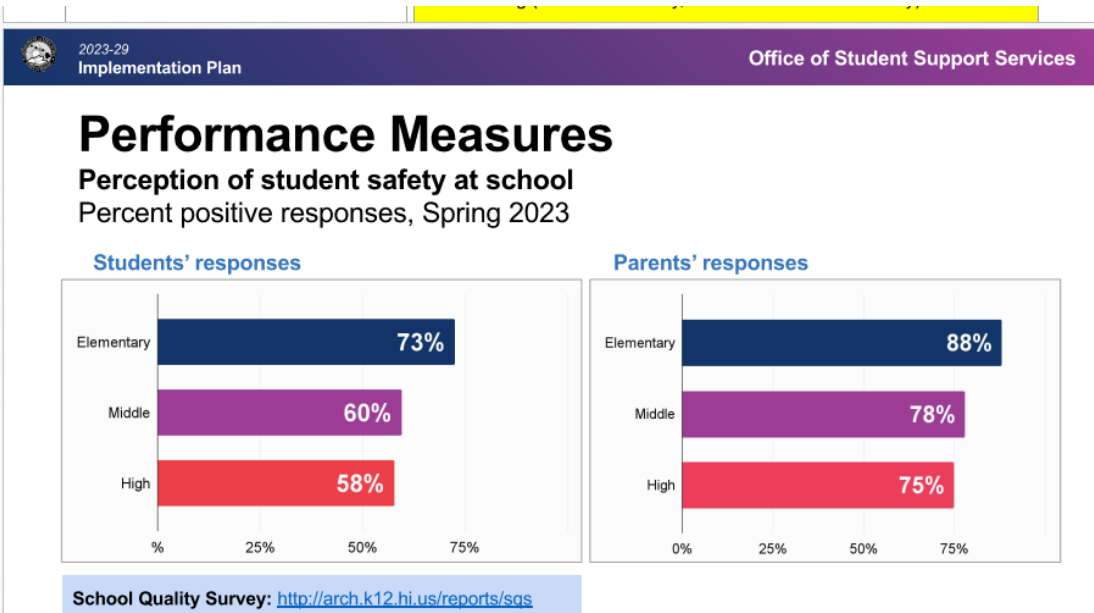
### **Questions/Comments only:**

There are two primary initiatives that support timely identification and response to student needs with interventions and supports:

- The Hawaii Multi-Tiered System of Support (HMTSS) is a student-centered, data-driven, team-based decision-making framework for achieving positive outcomes for every student through a layered continuum of evidence-based practices. In HMTSS, students are provided targeted support for well-being and mental health based on their needs.
- “Here to Help” is a multi-year plan to train and coach staff to support student well-being and to provide equitable access to mental and physical health for all students in schools statewide.

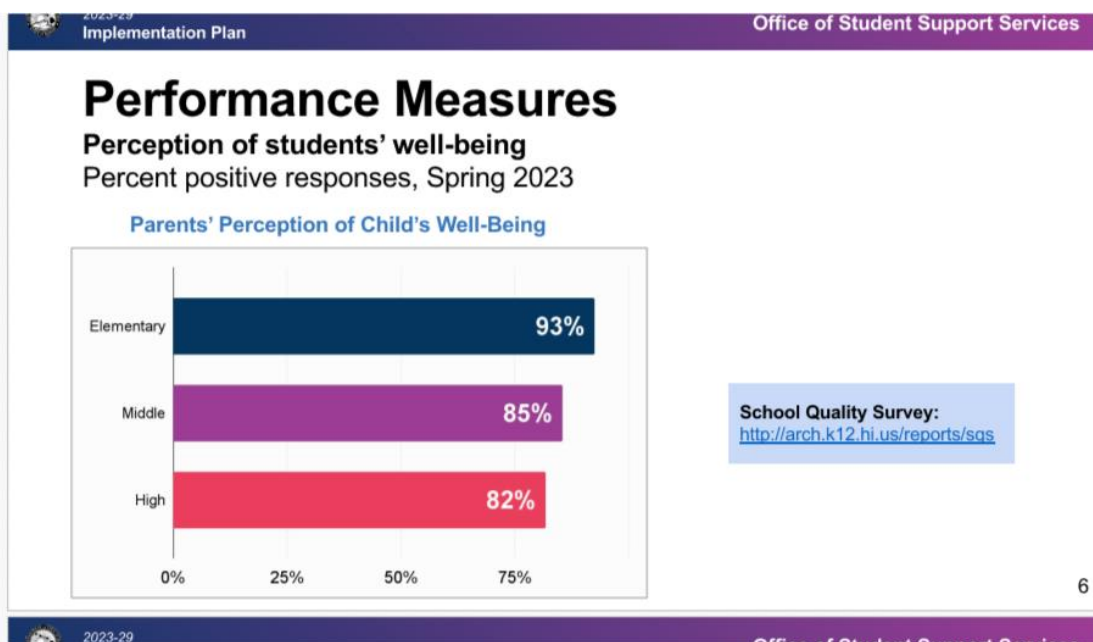
### **Question:**

Do these two initiatives reflect how the perceptions of safety of students? See slides below.

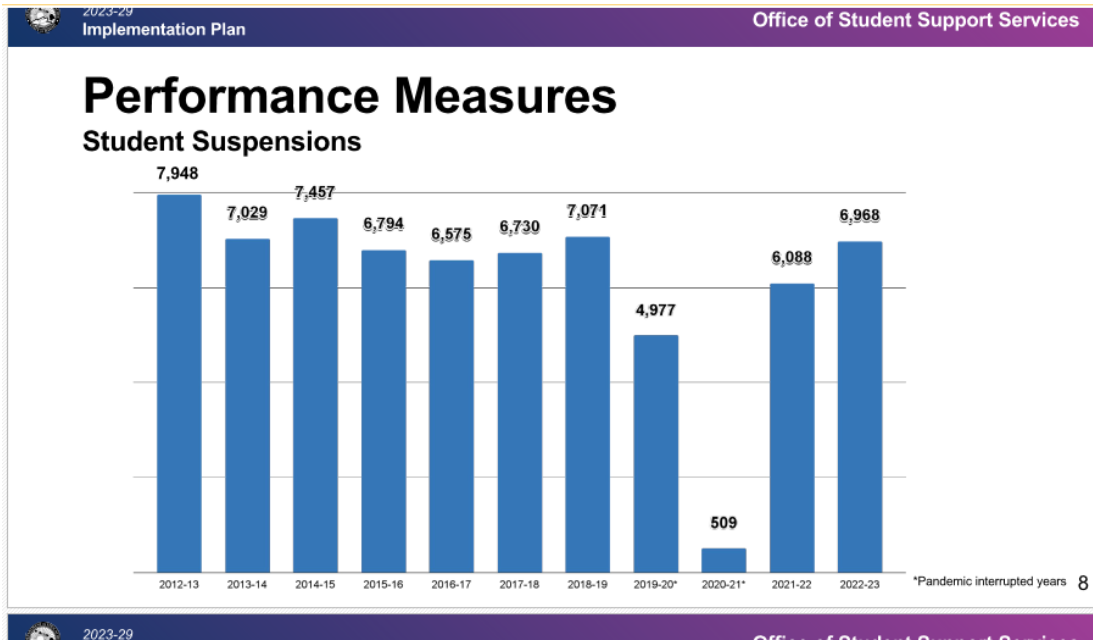


There is a significant difference between the students' perspective and the parents. The same for school levels. This perception lowers as students transition to higher levels.

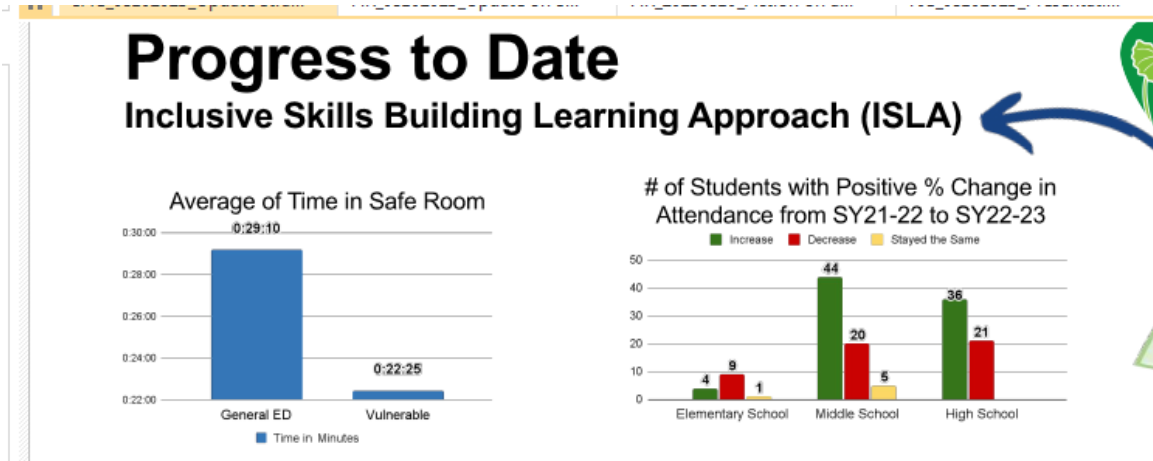
Chart below shows that this perception lowers as students transition to higher levels.



**Question:** Why? How do you determine a suspension? See if there needs to be a process review and/or change. And where is the data on restraints?



**Question:** What is a SAFE room? What is the purpose?



B. Update on Strategic Plan, Desired Outcome 1.2.3, “All students experience a Nā Hopena A’o environment for learning”

**Comments/Questions:** Looking forward to how all of these progress over time.

**Question:** What is the goal of this training?

HIDOE Group	2015 - February 2023
HIDOE schools	61%
Hawai'i public charter schools	45%
Complex area offices	100%
HIDOE state offices (at least one branch within the office received training from the Office of Hawaiian Education)	100%

6

**Question:** What is this slide telling us?



# Performance Measures

## Where are we at?

'Āina Aloha	# of Schools in SY 2022-23	Projected Schools or Organizational Units in SY 2023-24
Kupuna Component or 'Āina Aloha Pathway Schools for elementary and middle schools with grade 6*	142	146
Schools with grade 6 that are not implementing 'Āina Aloha but indicated a school-specific implementation of Hawaiian studies*	17	14
All schools with Grade 6 that could not find a kupuna or did not respond to Hawaiian Studies survey*	48	47
'Āina Aloha Pathways for State, Complex Area, and 7-12 Schools	21	30

\*There are 207 HIDOE elementary and middle schools with 6th grade