



Testimony 8/24 BOE meeting

1 message

10005413 <10005413@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Aug 24, 2023 at 1:40 PM

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thankfully I am one of those who is not affected from the horrific fire that took innocent lives and homes. I do want to express my displeasure at the DOE of even thinking of bussing our students to Kihei HS.

I thought it was so inconsiderate of the DOE to encourage boarders and displaced families to send to nearby home schools. They say it will help their mental health. I beg to differ. These students need to grieve and help the family. School is not important right now. A student told me this very thing. Maybe later in mid to late September this should be a discussion but not now.

Now the idea of bussing students from the West side Maui will cause more stress. Why? It's a new school that is prone to fires and the road between Lahaina and Kihei is subject to brush fires too. Please go on Google Maps and see how brown it is. If the students can't trust the county to fight fires, what if the same scenario happens again to fire prone area like Kihei. The parents will no doubt suspect there is a conspiracy to snuff out local families even though it is not the case.

As for teachers, please allow the ones living in West Maui more time to find temporary homes and allow them to grieve. We are not robots that can live without homes. I hear that people are getting told that they can't live at a place because they have pets or told to get out. Some of the hotels have not been malama to the people to those who malama them. Also, imagine the stress for the teachers if they are cut off because of the fire at the Pali or at Kihei. We were not traumatized before this fire but after hearing the head of MEMA said insanely things, we do not trust Maui County leadership anymore.

Thank you very much for listening to my testimony. If Lahainaluna High School is open again, I'll be there 100% because it is one of the few things that is old Lahaina. Students and staff will gather again when it reopens. LAHAINA STRONG!!

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

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Fwd: Lahaina School Options

1 message

Kara Scott <karamariescott@gmail.com>

Fri, Aug 25, 2023 at 1:15 PM

To: rebecca.winkie@k12.hi.us, keith.hayashi@k12.hi.us, testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Aloha DOE,

As parents of a King Kamehameha III Elementary student entering 3rd grade, we find ourselves in a predicament due to the wildfires destroying our campus and our town.

We have resided in Lahaina for 10 years - our son was born and raised in Lahaina, this is all he has ever known.

We were fortunate that our home is not damaged, I still have a job in Kapalua, and my husband still has his West Maui business.

However, we are mortgaged on our condo in Napili, which is bound to the north of the fire damaged area, hours away from the next nearest school. Not only has our son lost his school, but our after school program, Maui Music Mission, also burned down.

Before the fires, West Maui already faced both housing and child care crisis - now it's amplified. Parents and community members are willing to help and to volunteer, but in-person local solutions are needed fast. HTA seemed like a good solution, with parents forming pods and taking turns to supervise the students and work our jobs, but even they cannot handle the full demand and are talking about doing a lottery for admissions.

We still have no wifi, and when we use starlink, we are not able to stream video, so virtual school is not an option for us yet. And even when that is restored, parents like us still have to work, so we can't do virtual or homeschool options, unless we pool with other parents to hire a teacher to homeschool our kids in a pod. This is not affordable for most of our families, and will create a financial hardship, even as our economic opportunities have ground to a halt and remain uncertain.

Many families like ours are also afraid to bus our student hours each day to the other side of the island with staff and teachers they do not know during a time that our community is traumatized. West sides know that accidents happen on the highway frequently, and our students would be stranded on the bus with no updates to us, and we are not willing to accept this risk. As it was, before the fires, the bus ride was problematic, for various reasons, and now it would be amplified.

We can and will get it done, regardless of what HDOE does, or doesn't do to help us, but we implore you to implement emergency in-person solutions for our students. Please help us to give our children a sense of stability, and help our traumatized community to heal and rebuild, where we are.

We vote, we pay taxes, we volunteer in our community, and we are willing to do our part in the solutions, but please help us.

Thank you,
Kara & Brandon Scott
parents of Tyson Scott, 3rd grade