



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony

1 message

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To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Thu, Sep 7, 2023 at 1:32 PM

Aloha,

Emailing testimony regarding the special meeting being held today at 1pm. A lot of friends and family are very concerned about the students and their whereabouts after the Lahaina fires. There are a lot of rumors flying around about them being trafficked away, the missing school busses, the 75% drop in enrolled students just in one of the schools etc.

How can we be reassured that the unaccounted children are safe, and will we know the actual numbers of those poor souls that have passed for to the fires? A lot of locals cannot sleep without knowing this, even though we live on the other islands.

Thank you,
Carol N



Testimony

1 message

Mara H <marahollaway@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Sep 7, 2023 at 1:53 PM

Aloha Chair Haruki, Vice Chair Barcarse, and the Members of the Hawaii Board of Education,

My name is Mara Hollaway. I am writing to testify on the September 7th, 2023 Special Meeting, Agenda item II, Maui Wildfires Impacts. I am writing to comment on the report from Superintendent Hayashi and the actions and inactions of the Hawaii Department of Education as pertains to the educational options offered to West Maui families.

First let me point out that the Superintendent and other DOE representatives need to ensure that they are clearly communicating that they are not reporting physically missing, potentially kidnapped, or deceased children when they report the "missing students" who are actually just not yet re-enrolled in alternative schools. The incomplete and sometimes sloppy communication on this is feeding into misinformation spreading across the world.

Have any school representatives gone door-to-door to speak with those residents still residing in the Lahaina area, some of whom do not have consistent power or internet connectivity.

Superintendent Hayashi has come with slides covering what the media has already reported on:

The Hawaii DOE had meetings and made plans for educational options BEFORE consulting with the parents of students still residing in the areas typically districted to the 4 closed or destroyed campuses.

Hayashi and other DOE representatives only visited the Lahaina area to get input from those parents after they had already announced their list of available options.

Only after the fact have they opened more accessible routes of communication, the most recent being internet based and therefore not that easy for some in the Lahaina area to access as they have nonexistent or inconsistent electricity or internet connections. These folk have really no options as their children cannot reasonably enroll into the distance learning option, which is not even staffed up yet

Acquaintance from the area has pointed out that with the busing option, elementary students as young as Kindergarten would need to wake up by 5am to eat breakfast, get ready, and be driven to the bus pickup point. These same children will not be back to the drop off point until 3:15pm, and not home until almost 4pm. Since such young children need 10 to 12 hours of sleep per day, they will have almost no time for play, homework, leisure, dinner and family time before having to be asleep between 5pm and 7 pm so they can be well rested for the next day of learning. And all of that assumes the Pali is not closed and the bus trips are not delayed, but it is my understanding the Pali closes frequently and the busses are sure to be delayed frequently.

As you can see, there are really no reasonable options for families still living in Lahaina area. These families need to be consulted and alternate options arranged that will actually work for these families.

Out of the box ideas need to be proposed: Greater access to learning hubs at State owned properties closer to the Lahaina area, provision of a fresh set of consumable workbooks and other curriculum materials

and the employment of local Teachers and Substitute Teachers as neighborhood based tutors, provision of home-learning packets for the interim and a plan to offer free Summer School options to every child that wants to attend from the West Maui area. These are really only a few ideas I have brainstormed since communicating with my West Maui acquaintance this morning and learning of the challenges families are experiencing there. I am sure the parents in Lahania could provide more pertinent suggestions, and they are the ones who need to be consulted before the Superintendent and his team go back to the drawing board and come up with more reasonable options.

The Hawaii DOE has made a huge push toward Student choice and student voice. Right now they also need to prioritize Parent voice.

Mahalo for your attention to my concerns!

Mara Hollaway



9/7/23 meeting Lahaina

1 message

Mariadonell Thomas <mariadonell.thomas@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Sep 7, 2023 at 2:23 PM

Aloha,

I am speaking as a grandparent, caretaker, a member of the community and teacher.

There has been minimal communication between the DOE/BOE and people of Lahaina. Some hubs have not had communication from the DOE.

The teacher/staff meeting did not support the teachers - there was no training. All it did was have some PhD's try to lecture about trauma but ended up triggering teachers who are suffering PTSD from the fires. Some lost family, their homes and everything. One week of breakfast and lunch with nonsense words.

Our community is hurting, our teachers are hurting.

One parent meeting isn't enough to help the community. We have to think outside of the box.

At our teacher meetings for our academic plans we planned for new innovation schools, schools of the future, future vision - why can't we use those ideas now?

Please listen to the people of Lahaina and come to Lahaina to communicate with Lahaina.

Mahalo,
Donell Thomas

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Testimony on Maui Fires

1 message

Haley Van Noord <alohahaley@icloud.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Sep 7, 2023 at 2:41 PM

I am an educator at Lahaina Intermediate School and a member of HSTA. I am testifying as an individual.

I have been on administrative leave off and on since the fires and have been staying busy volunteering and coordinating donations. I have not been privy to information regarding what I will be doing after Friday 9/8. We have not heard from our employer and have not been contacted about distance learning nor being temporarily assigned. Today is Thursday 9/7 and I don't know if I'm working next week, this is anxiety inducing, makes planning for child care impossible and is frankly unacceptable.

I was told I could volunteer at local intermediate schools where my students may have been sent and was contacted via email by a former student who personally asked me to volunteer at Maui Waena. I contacted Principal McCandless at Maui Waena and was told she did not have a "host" teacher for me to volunteer with so I would not be allowed to come. I found a "host" teacher that was very appreciative of my offer to volunteer less than 12 hours later. Principal McCandless turned down 4 female teacher volunteers from my school but accepted one male telling him, "she didn't want anyone too emotional that might disrupt or unleash the kids emotions and be a crying mess."

I know 31 of the approximately 120 students I taught last year are safe because I have seen them, been contacted by them, or reached out myself. I haven't been able to sleep at night not knowing how my students are. The DOE and the BOE must to do better for our keiki and their families.

Mālama pono
Haley van Weemen van Noord

Sent from my iPhone



Testimony BOE <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony

1 message

Kelly Shimabukuro <kshimabukuro@napueo.k12.hi.us>
To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Thu, Sep 7, 2023 at 5:42 PM

Good Day,

I am a second grade teacher at Kamalii Elementary School. Due to our low enrollment, we have been designated as one of two elementary schools to take in the students displaced from Lahaina.

While I completely understand and agree with the need for these students to be in school, we need more staff members to accompany them! Our classes are busting at the seams, and our resources are being stretched thin. We are exhausted, both mentally and physically. We want to be able to meet the needs of these students and their families, but we need help!

Please, when you make decisions for these students, consider also providing resources and support for the schools who are expected to provide relief! We implore you to provide more teachers and educational assistants to help meet their needs!

Mahalo for listening, and I hope you will offer support,
Kelly Shimabukuro
Kamalii Elementary
Second Grade Teacher