



Testimony for 11/16/23 Meeting

2 messages

Ami Pearce <ms.pearce808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Tue, Nov 14, 2023 at 6:35 PM

Aloha Board Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

I am a parent, community member, and teacher for the HIDOE.

The purpose of my testimony is to inform the board of concerns present at Wailuku Elementary School on the island of Maui.

The issues I bring forth today are not an exhaustive list.

Most crucial is the health and safety of students and staff, inadequate FAPE for both our SPED and gifted student population, as well as a failure to provide reasonable accommodation under title 1 of the ADA to qualified staff.

I (and others) have gone through the indicated channels of reporting these problems with no success.

Some of the people I have reached out to are principal Nikan Arapoff, acting VP Nicole Heinlein, the Civil Rights Compliance Branch, Complex Area Superintendent Desiree Sides, and Superintendent Keith Hayashi.

All of whom have failed to respond appropriately or offer any meaningful relief for our students and staff.

We have lost numerous staff and students because of the chronic and ongoing ineptitude of the leadership at our school.

Please don't allow these serious problems to continue to be swept under the rug.

An audit of the school needs to take place.

With Appreciation,
Ami Pearce

Ami Pearce <ms.pearce808@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Wed, Nov 15, 2023 at 11:06 AM

Please edit my testimony to add:

After bringing these issues to Complex Area Superintendent Desiree Sides, I was placed on administrative leave.

I, and subsequently my attorney have asked for meetings to resolve the matter and she has refused to meet with us.



[REDACTED]
1 message

[REDACTED] Wed, Nov 15, 2023 at 3:13 PM

To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Teacher, Konawaena Elementary School
General Business Meeting
Report of the Superintendent - Maui Wildfire Impacts

Comment: I am writing to share a concern over fire safety at DOE schools. The wildfires in Lāhaina were devastating. In addition to countless homes, four schools in the area were heavily impacted, with one school being a complete loss after the fires. Unfortunately, Lāhaina is not the only area in Hawai'i with the potential for deadly wildfires.

As of this month, Konawaena Elementary School has been without a working fire alarm system for 4 years. We are currently in position #20 on a list of schools to receive a new system. Our school has been told the cost for a new system is \$90,000-\$100,000, a price tag that we cannot afford without assistance from the department. The department has stated that it will be fixed, however there has been no timeline provided and no sense of urgency, even after a fire broke out on our campus in January 2021. At one point the DOE claimed the system would be replaced over winter break in 2022. That did not happen.

Our school is on the slopes of Mauna Loa and surrounded by pasture land. A fire that starts on any of the adjacent properties would quickly spread to our campus. Last week, Hawai'i County issued a Red Flag Warning over the potential for wildfires spanning from North Kohala to Ka'ū. Our school is in the middle of this hazard zone.

I urge the Board of Education to examine why we have 20+ DOE schools without working fire alarms. This is an issue that threatens the safety of thousands of students and public school employees across the state. If the DOE continues to ignore the very real issue of fire safety in their schools, it is only a matter of time before another tragedy occurs.