



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

Testimony

1 message

Gina Jones <gina.jones@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Sat, Jul 13, 2024 at 2:44 PM

Gina Jones
Teacher, King Kamehameha III Elementary School
Board Waiver of Minimum Instructional days and Hours

Dear Board Members,

As a teacher in the Lahainaluna complex, I think students should have August 8 and 9 off to participate in the community events relating to the anniversary of the Lahaina fire. I have students in my classroom who have lost their homes and family members, and should be able to grieve with their families at the great loss of their hometown without getting an unexcused absence. Additionally, teachers who have lost their homes and family members should get the same courtesy without worrying about acquiring a substitute teacher or risking not getting paid.

Everyone in the Lahaina community should be able to participate; teachers, students, families, everyone, without the risk of repercussions. This is the very least the board and DOE should allow since it did not approve any type of help during the last meeting as Lahaina teachers and parents cried and begged for help to no avail.

Thank you,

Gina Jones

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

Testimony 07/18

1 message

Sara Murphy <megalmaid@gmail.com>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Sun, Jul 14, 2024 at 9:31 AM

From: Sara R Murphy, Kūlanihāko'i High School, teacher
Meating: July 18, 2024
Item: Waiver for Lahaina schools on Aug 8, 2024
Position: Support AND Comment

Aloha BOE,

Thank you for taking the time to consider allowing those affected by the Lahaina Wildfire time to process what the year brought for them. As a former Lahainaluna teacher, with my partner still teaching at Princess Nahi'ena'ena, and my daughter attending at the same school I am in total support of giving the Lahaina community the day to come together, reflect, and mourn the loss of so much.

However, I feel that just allowing those in Lahaina schools only a day of reflection shows how short sighted the DOE and/or the BOE can be. While Lahaina's destruction and loss was the greatest, the whole island of Maui was affected and the whole of our island, teachers and students, should be given the day to grieve. Let me remind the BOE of some situations that may not have been thought about while moving this proposal from all of Maui schools to just the Lahainaluna complex.

- Kula also experienced a fire that destroyed homes and damaged King Kekaulike High School's campus causing that school community to also start late.
- There are individuals who lost homes in Lahaina but teach at other Maui schools. This caused a lot of problems for those individuals since they were not given the same time off as those who teach at Lahaina schools.
- Many Lahaina residents moved to Central Maui to live with family or try to get stable housing. These students are now scattered across Maui schools. They deserve a day to reflect without missing a day of instruction in the first week of school.
- At Kūlanihāko'i High School, I know of at least two students whose homes were not damaged during the Lahaina fire but chose to change schools due their trauma. These students deserve the same time as if they were still in Lahaina schools.
- I have close ties to Lahaina after teaching in the community for eleven years and I struggle with fire trauma even though I do not live in Lahaina or teach there any more. Many Maui residents feel this way.

All of this is to encourage the BOE to not just focus on Lahaina where the heartbreak is unmistakable but remember we are an ohana and we have all carried grief this last year. When first proposed this was for all Maui schools but now it has been changed for just some. Please allow all Maui schools the same love and care you want to show Lahaina.

Thank you,
Sara R Murphy



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

Testimony

1 message

Gina Jones <gina.jones@k12.hi.us>
To: testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov

Mon, Jul 15, 2024 at 2:06 PM

Gina Jones
Teacher, King Kamehameha III Elementary School
Board Waiver of Minimum Instructional days and Hours

Dear Board Members,

As a teacher in the Lahainaluna complex, I think students should have August 8 and 9 off to participate in the community events relating to the anniversary of the Lahaina fire. I have students in my classroom who have lost their homes and family members, and should be able to grieve with their families at the great loss of their hometown without getting an unexcused absence. Additionally, teachers who have lost their homes and family members should get the same courtesy without worrying about acquiring a substitute teacher or risking not getting paid.

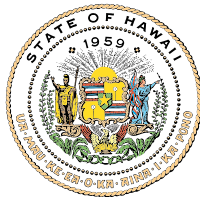
Everyone in the Lahaina community should be able to participate; teachers, students, families, everyone, without the risk of repercussions. This is the very least the board and DOE should allow since it did not approve any type of help during the last meeting as Lahaina teachers and parents cried and begged for help to no avail.

Thank you,

Gina Jones

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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
MAUI DISTRICT OFFICE

54 S. High Street, 4th Fl.
Wailuku, HI 96793

July 16, 2024

TO: The Honorable Roy Takumi
Chairperson, Board of Education

FROM: Rebecca Winkie *Rebecca Winkie*
HLLM Complex Area Superintendent

SUBJECT: Testimony in support of Agenda Item II, Special Board Meeting, July 18, 2024:
Board waiver of minimum instructional days and hours (pursuant to section 302A-251,
Hawaii Revised Statutes) for Lahainaluna Complex schools

I strongly support the Department's recommendation that the Board grant a waiver of the school days and student hours requirements of HRS §302A-251 for Lahainaluna complex schools - King Kamehameha III Elementary School, Princess Nahienaena Elementary School, Lahaina Intermediate School and Lahainaluna High School - for the 2024-25 school year to allow for closure of schools on August 8, 2024.

In recognition of and with utmost respect for all that the Lahaina community has gone through in the aftermath of the Lahaina wildfires, the date marking the one-year anniversary should be set aside for remembrance and healing. Our students, families and employees should all be free to participate in planned community events, in personal reflection or with family and friends without the worry of missing school or work. Approving August 8, 2024, as a waiver day for the Lahainaluna complex schools would demonstrate the Board of Education's commitment to the wellbeing of not only our students, but also our employees.

The Lahaina schools and community have experienced high levels of uncertainty and stress over the past year. We continue to grieve the loss of lives, family homes and businesses, a beloved elementary school and our historic Lahaina Town. Approximately one third of our students and staff members lost their homes and were displaced, with many experiencing multiple relocations. While dealing with their own personal grief and loss, our dedicated employees worked hard to re-open schools, welcome back students and provide a sense of normalcy amid ever-changing circumstances.

If not approved as a waiver day, we anticipate many Lahaina employees will be absent on August 8, 2024. This could potentially become a school safety issue due to insufficient staffing that in turn results in an emergency school closure with little to no prior notice. This would cause a hardship for parents, having to either find last minute childcare or take leave from work. With the one-year anniversary fast approaching, the uncertainty regarding whether or not Lahaina schools will be closed on August 8th creates yet another layer of stress and anxiety that could be easily avoided. It is simply not fair to add this burden of daily contingency planning to our school leaders and staff members, many of whom are also survivors of the Lahaina wildfires. We need to honor and support Lahaina students, families and employees by making a decision now to close the four Lahainaluna complex schools on August 8, 2024.