



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
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OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

January 16, 2020

TO: The Honorable Catherine Payne  
Chairperson, Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto   
Superintendent

SUBJECT: **Presentation on Intent to Conduct an Experimental Modernization Project (in accordance with Hawaii Revised Statutes Section 78-3.5) to Provide Extra Compensation to Licensed, Tenured Teachers to Address Equity and Compression of Salaries**

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) §78-3.5, Experimental Modernization Projects (EMP), I am planning to conduct an EMP in response to concerns reported by the Department of Education (Department) and the Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) over equity and compression in teacher salaries that is impacting the retention of licensed, tenured teachers who are essential to closing the achievement gap to ensure equity and excellence for each student.

The EMP is the second phase of the Department's strategic plan to address the overall teacher recruitment and retention issues that will focus on bold managerial discretionary action to address the retention of existing licensed teachers. The EMP will be referred to as "Addressing Equity and Compression in Teacher Salaries Pilot Project." Besides the traditional practice of teacher reclassification, the EMP project will allow for discretionary, employer-initiated technical pay adjustments based on internal alignment, if warranted, to address equity and compression to address the retention of licensed tenured teachers.

The internal alignment will provide the Department with a strategic basis to initiate employer discretionary pay adjustment to the salary of an existing teacher where it is determined through thorough analysis that the subject teacher's salary is less than and/or equal to less experienced teachers in comparable or similarly situated teaching positions.

While the new employer-initiated compensation tool will be a focal point, collective bargaining will continue to control and provide teachers with en-masse pay raises in the future. Additionally, these employer discretionary pay adjustments will not be considered as a collective bargaining cost item under HRS, §89-10.

## 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

The desired effective date to implement the compensation adjustment(s) for certain eligible teachers is the first day of the 2020-2021 school year (SY). The effective date will be contingent upon the Department receiving sufficient legislative appropriations to fund this EMP.

## 3. DISCUSSION

### a. Conditions leading to the need for the project

Pursuant to HRS, §78-3.5, the Superintendent of the Department has the authority to engage in “Experimental Modernization Projects” to determine whether specific changes in its human resource program would result in a more desirable program for the Department. Utilizing an EMP to address pay compression and equity through internal alignment has been performed by other jurisdictions and, most recently, by the State of Hawaii, Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD) in the EMP for Licensed Health Care Professionals in August of 2016. Prior to implementing an EMP under HRS, §78-3.5, the Department shall:

1. Develop a plan identifying the purposes of the project, the methodology to be used, the duration of the project, the criteria for evaluation of the project, and the cost of the project if any;
2. Consult with the employees who would be involved in the conduct of the project; and
3. Negotiate with the exclusive representative if a modification or waiver of any provision in a collective bargaining agreement is necessary to conduct the project.

In this regard, I will notify and explain to the Board of Education (Board) the statutory requirements noted above before the project is finalized and implemented.

The Department’s School Code, Policy #5100 Recruitment, Employment, Retention and Termination Policy, Section Teacher Recruitment/Retention/Employment, states in part:

*The Department shall develop and implement a strategic plan to recruit and retain qualified teachers which (1) identifies recruitment and retention goals, (2) implements strategies to achieve these goals, (3) identifies specific teaching shortage areas and geographically hard to fill areas, and (4) establishes a continuing community outreach program to encourage and assist resident of communities experiencing high teacher turnover to become teachers.*

Furthermore, the Department’s Strategic Plan is the governing document for the public education system in Hawaii and “provides a common foundation of expectations and supports for public education, centering on closing the achievement

gap to ensure equity and excellence for each student.” Without qualified teachers in every classroom across the state, the Strategic Plan will not be successful. Student success indicators require qualified teachers in the classroom. This includes teachers who are both licensed by the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board and qualified to prepare, deliver, and assess the content they are assigned.

Research shows that teacher experience positively affects student learning. A study published by the Learning Policy Institute in 2016 showed the following:  
<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/does-teaching-experience-increase-teacher-effectiveness-review-research>

“Based on their review of 30 studies published within the last 15 years that analyze the effect of teaching experience on student outcomes in the United States and met specific methodological criteria, the authors found that:

1. Teaching experience is positively associated with student achievement gains throughout a teacher’s career. Gains in teacher effectiveness associated with experience are most steep in teachers’ initial years, but continue to be significant as teachers reach the second, and often third, decades of their careers.
2. As teachers gain experience, their students not only learn more, as measured by standardized tests, they are also more likely to do better on other measures of success, such as school attendance.
3. Teachers’ effectiveness increases at a greater rate when they teach in a supportive and collegial working environment, and when they accumulate experience in the same grade level, subject, or district.
4. More-experienced teachers support greater student learning for their colleagues and the school as a whole, as well as for their own students.

Although the research does not indicate that the passage of time will make all teachers better or incompetent teachers effective, it does indicate that, for most teachers, effectiveness increases with experience. The benefits of teaching experience will be best realized when teachers are carefully selected and well prepared at the point of entry into the teaching workforce, as well as intensively mentored and rigorously evaluated prior to receiving tenure. These efforts will ensure that those who enter the professional tier of teaching have met a competency standard from which they can continue to expand their expertise throughout their careers.”

The Department is falling further behind in “teacher positions filled” (Table I and II) at the start of the school year. The retention rate of qualified educators also continues to be a major challenge. Our current Hawaii based teacher education programs are not attracting and/or graduating enough teachers to fill the gap in the shortage of teachers, so one key component needed to raise our retention numbers is to find ways to entice mid-to-late career teachers to remain in the profession.

Table I

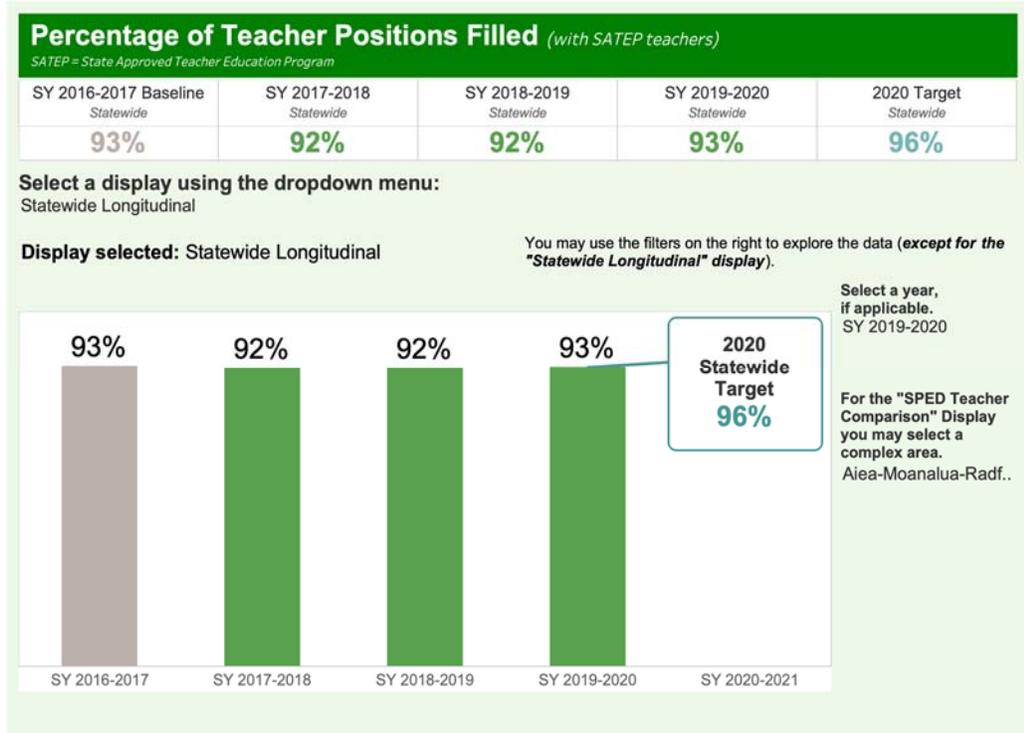
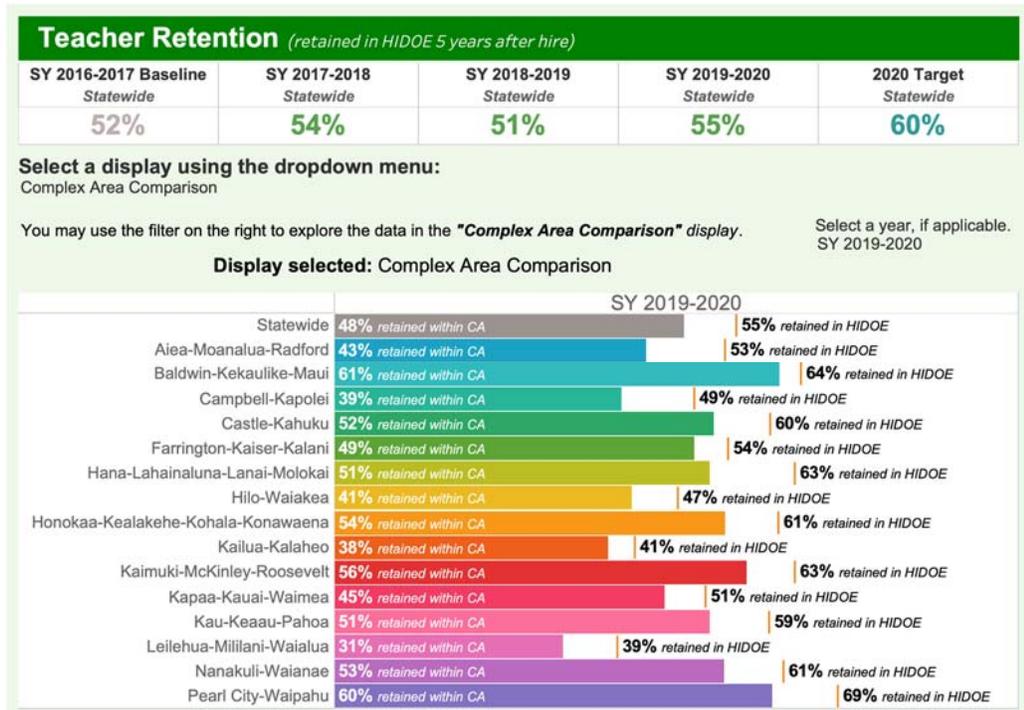


Table II



The current distribution of teachers on each step of the salary schedule is inconsistent and compressed, contributing to senior teachers leaving. In many cases, we have teachers who have 10 or more years of experience difference are on the same step. Current data shows that 5,942 teachers with between 0 and 24 years of service are clustered between steps 9 through 11.

The Department needs to explore options and alternative ways to address the salary compression and equity issue. It is important to recognize that, on average, the most effective 20-year teachers are significantly more effective than the most effective first-year teachers—and these positive effects reach beyond the experienced teacher's individual classroom to benefit the school and community.

The experienced teachers bring a multitude of professional growth, knowledge, skills, and abilities to their classroom. And the increasing scope and complexity of a teacher's work, especially in the last 20 years, only emphasizes the need to address the salary compression and equity issue through an internal alignment and correction on a teachers' step placement on the salary schedule.

Our most experienced teachers are expected to model, mentor, and lead our best educational practices, including but not limited to:

- Engage in critical thinking, problem-solving and decision making to meet student needs within a complex system of budgetary limitations, state and federal laws, policies and procedures;
- Develop and deliver curriculum, assessing students' achievement and making modifications as needed;
- Engage in data-driven decisions to support instructional practices;
- Ensure inclusive instruction for students of different cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities;
- Collaborate frequently with others to support student learning; lead, model, and mentor other professional educators, including teachers, educational assistants, Paraprofessional Tutors, and Part-Time Temporary Teachers.
- Integrate technology into the classroom;
- Foster and maintain positive parent-teacher relationships;
- Continue to develop professionally as a lifelong learner, including maintaining and updating licensure status.

b. Previous action of the Board and Committee(s) on the same or similar matter:

The Board approved shortage differentials for classroom teachers in special education, hard-to-staff geographical locations, and Hawaiian language immersion programs to start on January 7, 2020, at its December 5, 2019 Board meeting.

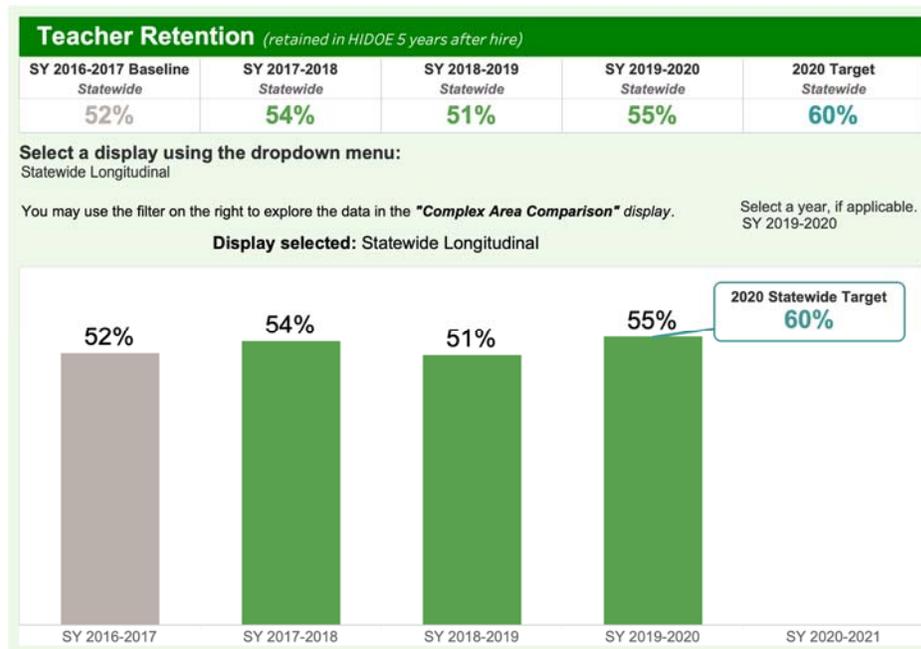
c. Other policies affected:

None.

d. Arguments in support of the recommendation:

Data shows that our retention rates statewide have remained at a combined average of 53% over the past five years. However, we believe these pay adjustments will improve overall teacher retention, especially teachers who are “home-grown,” and many of our most experienced teachers who may otherwise elect to leave teaching rather than remain.

Table III



e. Arguments against the recommendation:

Since the adjustments will not impact all teachers, perceptions of compensation inequity may surface among those teachers not receiving any adjustments.

f. Other agencies or departments of the State of Hawaii involved in the action:

The funding for this project will be requested from the legislature via an increase in operational funds.

g. Possible reaction of the public, professional organizations, unions, Department staff, and/or others to the recommendations:

The HSTA has been consulted on this proposal and is committed to working with the Department and the Board in finding solutions to address and end the teacher shortage crisis.

h. Educational implications:

Addressing teacher pay compression and equity issues will positively impact the filling of existing vacant teacher positions and the retention of experienced teachers beginning in SY 2020-2021. This may also provide increased equitable access to quality education for all our students.

i. Personnel implications:

None.

j. Facilities implications:

None.

k. Financial implications:

The Department's ability to implement this EMP is contingent upon receiving sufficient funds via a legislative appropriation.

CMK:sb