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GOVERNOR



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CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
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DATE OF SUBMITTAL: April 13, 2023

DATE OF MEETING: April 20, 2023

TO: Bruce Voss, Chairperson, At Large
Board of Education

FROM: Cathy K. Ikeda, Chairperson
State Public Charter School Commission

AGENDA ITEM: Board Action on charter school requests for waivers from Board Policy 102-15, High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement for the term of each school's respective charter contract, for: Hawaii Technology Academy

I. DESCRIPTION

State Public Charter School Commission ("Commission") recommendation to the Board of Education (BOE) for a waiver from the high school graduation requirements set forth in BOE Policy 102-15, High School Graduation and Commencement for the term of Hawaii Technology Academy's Charter Contract.

II. POLICY CONTEXT AND AUTHORITY

On January 12, 2023, the Commission approved Charter Contract 4.0 for Hawaii Technology Academy, effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2028. Charter Contract 4.0, Section 19.7 Board of Education Authority, "Pursuant to its duties under Article X, Section 3, of the Hawai'i State Constitution, the BOE has the power to formulate statewide educational policy. The School shall only be subject to BOE policies expressly identified by the BOE as applying to charter schools. Should conflicts between an applicable BOE policy and a provision in this Charter Contract occur, the BOE policy shall control." BOE Policy 102-15 is attached as **Exhibit 1**.

A memo from the BOE dated May 13, 2019, *Process for charter schools to request waivers from Board of Education Policy 102-15, entitled "High School Graduation Requirements and*

Commencement,” details the waiver request process for charter schools and the waiver application requirements. This memo is attached as **Exhibit 2.**

III. BACKGROUND

At the June 7, 2016 BOE general business meeting, the BOE approved the Hawaii Technology Academy waiver request to Board Policy 104.1, Graduation and Related. Board Policy 104.1 was a predecessor policy to the current BOE Policy 102-15, High School Graduation and Commencement. This waiver was effective beginning with the 2016-2017 school year.

At the BOE’s May 3, 2018 general business meeting, the BOE granted Hawaii Technology Academy an extension to the waiver of Board Policy 102-15, to apply retroactively, for the graduating classes of 2017 through 2022.

At the BOE’s June 20, 2019 general business meeting, the BOE granted a waiver from the graduation requirements in Board Policy 102-15 to Hawaii Technology Academy and University Laboratory School for the graduating classes of 2023, 2024, and 2025, effective for incoming freshmen through the 2021-2022 school year.

At the BOE’s April 21, 2022 general business meeting, the BOE granted a waiver from the graduation requirements in Board Policy 102-15 to Hawaii Technology Academy for the graduating class of 2026, effective for incoming freshmen through school year 2022-2023.

IV. INFORMATION FOR CONSIDERATION

Hawaii Technology Academy is requesting to **continue its current exemption** to Board Policy 102-15. The current Graduation Waiver as attached as **Exhibit 3.**

Hawaii Technology Academy’s current exemption sets higher social studies requirements in Modern Hawaii History, Participation in Democracy, and Expository Writing 1 than is required by the BOE. If approved, the graduation requirement waiver would permit the awarding of 1 Carnegie credit each (rather than the typically awarded 0.5 for a single semester) for Modern History of Hawaii, Participation in Democracy, and Expository Writing 1.

If approved, the exemption would apply to incoming freshmen for the life of Hawaii Technology Academy’s Charter Contract 4.0, effective July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2028 (e.g. classes of 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, and 2031).

V. RECOMMENDATION

At the April 13, 2023 Commission General Business Meeting, the Commission took the following action, **“Move to recommend the Board of Education grant Hawaii Technology Academy a waiver from the High School Graduation Requirements.”**

Exhibit 1

BOE POLICY 102-15

High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement

Note: This version of Board Policy 102-15, High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement, shall take affect School Year 2011-2012, and shall apply to students beginning with the incoming eighth grade class.

POLICY 102-15

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND COMMENCEMENT

A. Requirements for High School Graduation. The purpose of high school graduation requirements is to establish rigorous standards of learning that will enable all public school students to meet the vision of a Hawaii public school graduate. All Hawaii public school graduates will:

- Realize their individual goals and aspirations;
- Possess the attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to contribute positively and compete in a global society;
- Exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and
- Pursue post-secondary education and/or careers.

Students who demonstrate proficiency in the State Standards and General Learner Outcomes in the required courses or proficiency based equivalents shall receive a Hawaii High School Diploma. Proficiency shall be determined in accordance with established Department of Education procedures.

The minimum course and credit requirements to receive a high school graduation diploma are:

Course Requirements	Hawaii High School Diploma
English	4.0 credits including English Language Arts 1 (1 credit), English Language Arts 2 (1 credit), and Expository Writing (0.5 credit) and 1.5 credits of common core aligned language arts electives or proficiency based equivalents
Social Studies	4.0 credits including U.S. History and Government (1 credit), World History and Culture (1 credit), Modern History of Hawaii (0.5 credit) and Participation in a Democracy (0.5 credit) and 1 credit of standards based social studies elective or proficiency based equivalent
Mathematics**	3.0 credits including Algebra 1 (1 credit), Geometry (1 credit) and 1 credit of common core aligned math elective or proficiency based equivalent
Science	3.0 credits including Biology and 2 credits of standards based science electives or proficiency based equivalents

World Language	2.0 credits in one of the specified programs of study or proficiency based equivalents
Fine Arts	
Career and Technical Education	
Physical Education	1.0 credit or proficiency based equivalent
Health	0.5 credit or proficiency based equivalent
Personal/ Transition Plan	0.5 credit
Electives	6.0 credits
Total	24.0 credits

A Hawaii High School Diploma shall be issued to students who meet the course and credit requirements.

High school diplomas may be granted to 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds who have qualified for graduation through adult schools.

*DOE will establish a process for developing and approving all proficiency-based equivalents similar to the process followed for all other new Authorized Courses and Code Numbers.

** A series of courses that satisfy the minimum learning expectations for all students as delineated in the College and Career Readiness Standards that are encompassed by the Common Core State Standards (“CCSS”) for Mathematics.

The graduation requirement for a high school diploma for students with disabilities shall be the same as students without disabilities.

B. Commencement Exercises. Commencement exercises may be scheduled any time after the last day of school for seniors. The last day of school for seniors shall be set by the Department of Education. Students shall be permitted to participate in commencement exercises if they: (1) meet the requirements for a diploma or a certificate; (2) have fulfilled their financial obligations; and (3) meet other conditions, established by the Department of Education, which meet the standards of clarity, reasonableness, and justifiability.

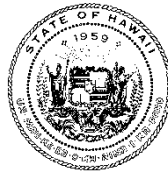
[Approved: 05/19/2015 (as Board Policy 104.1); amended: 06/21/2016 (renumbered as Board Policy 102-15)]

Former policy 4540 history: former code no. 5127; approved: 05/1947; amended: 01/1959, 06/1959, 06/1960, 02/1964, 08/1978, 03/1988, 03/1997, 06/2004, 03/06/2008

Exhibit 2

Board of Education Memorandum regarding the process for charter schools to request waivers from Board of Education Policy 102-15, entitled "High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement"

May 13, 2019



**STATE OF HAWAII
BOARD OF EDUCATION**
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

May 13, 2019

TO: John S.S. Kim
Chairperson, State Public Charter School Commission

Sione Thompson
Executive Director, State Public Charter School Commission

FROM: Catherine Payne
Chairperson, Board of Education

SUBJECT: Process for charter schools to request waivers from Board of Education Policy 102-15, entitled "High School Graduation Requirements and Commencement"

Charter schools can request, and the Board of Education ("Board") can grant, waivers from the state high school graduation requirements established by Board Policy 102-15. This memorandum outlines the process and provides guidance for requesting waivers.

Waiver Request Process

The process for requesting a waiver is as follows:

1. A charter school interested in applying for a waiver submits an application to the State Public Charter School Commission ("Commission") (see below for guidance on the application).
2. The charter school presents its waiver request at one of the Commission's meetings.
3. The Commission vets the request and votes on whether to recommend that the Board grant the waiver, recommend that the Board deny the waiver request, or decline to make a recommendation to the Board.
4. The Commission provides its recommendation to the Board through a written submittal, which the Board considers at a general business meeting. If the Commission makes a recommendation, its submittal must include a summary of the application for a waiver and the Commission's rationale for its recommendation to grant the waiver or not. If the Commission declines to make a recommendation, its submittal must include a summary of the application for a waiver and the Commission's rationale for declining to make a recommendation.

A representative of the Commission should be present at the Board's general business meeting to answer any questions. A representative of the charter school can also be present if the charter school decides it is necessary.

5. The Board considers the provided information and decides on whether to grant the request for a waiver.

If the Board amends Board Policy 102-15, the Commission should inform all of the charter schools it oversees, as the policy change would affect all public schools, including charter schools. If the changes to the graduation requirements occur during the period for which the Board granted a charter school a waiver from the graduation requirements, the Board will inform the charter school and Commission, and the charter school will need to apply for another waiver.

If a charter school with an active waiver plans to change its graduation requirements, the charter school will need to apply for, and receive, another waiver before implementing its new graduation requirements. If a charter school with an active waiver plans to continue using its graduation requirements beyond the expiration of the waiver, the charter school will need to apply for, and receive, another waiver in the final year of the waiver and before it expires.

To ensure a waiver request is able to come before both the Commission and Board in time for implementation, a charter school should submit a request no later than the April preceding the school year in which the charter school plans for the waiver to take effect. However, it is highly recommended that a charter school seeking a waiver submit a request no later than the October preceding the school year in which it plans for the waiver to take effect in the event the Board denies the waiver request. In such an event, the charter school would still have time to plan for the next school year using the graduation requirements set forth in Board Policy 102-15.

Waiver Application Requirements

The application that a charter school submits to the Commission (see step one in the process outlined above) must contain the following information:

- Name of charter school applying for the waiver, as contained within its current charter contract;
- The proposed Effective School Years that do not exceed length of current charter contract and the associated Applicable Graduating Classes (see the applicability of effective waivers described below);
- A chart, in a similar format to the chart in Board Policy 102-15, outlining the charter school's proposed graduation requirements and a description of the differences between the proposed graduation requirements and the graduation requirements set in Board Policy 102-15; and
- An explanation justifying how the proposed graduation requirements have a degree of rigor that is equal to or greater than the rigor of the graduation requirements set by Board Policy 102-15 for all high school graduates, or if

proposed graduation requirements have a lower degree of rigor, an explanation justifying how the proposed graduation requirements are more beneficial to the charter school's students than the graduation requirements set in Board Policy 102-15.

In the event applications have already been submitted and the aforementioned information was not included, the Commission should follow up with the charter school to obtain the information. In making its recommendation to the Board, the Commission should consider whether the application provides sufficient justification demonstrating that the rigor of the charter school's proposed graduation requirements is equal to or greater than the rigor of the graduation requirements set in Board Policy 102-15. If the Commission finds that the proposed graduation requirements are less rigorous, the Commission should consider whether the application provides sufficient justification demonstrating how, despite the reduced rigor, the proposed graduation requirements are more beneficial to the charter school's students than the graduation requirements set in Board Policy 102-15.

Applicability of Effective Waivers

Because it is unfair to change graduation requirements midway through a student's high school career, waivers from Board Policy 102-15 follow graduating classes from the time students enter the charter school as freshmen until they graduate from the charter school. Therefore, waivers have two effective dates tied to each other: one based on school years ("Effective School Years") and another based on graduating classes ("Applicable Graduating Classes").

The Effective School Years indicates the school years in which the waiver applies to the incoming freshmen class. The Effective School Years can be a range of school years but should never exceed final school year covered under the charter school's current charter contract term.

The Applicable Graduating Classes indicates each of the graduating classes to which the waiver applies based on the Effective School Years. The graduating classes within the Applicable Graduating Classes are calculated by assuming graduation in four years for each of the freshmen classes covered under the Effective School Years. For example, the Applicable Graduating Classes for a waiver with Effective School Years from the 2019-2020 through 2022-2023 school years would be the graduating classes of 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026. Therefore, even if the charter school's waiver expired after the 2022-2023 school year, it would remain effective for the graduating classes of the next three subsequent school years, but the graduating class of 2027 would need to follow the graduation requirements set by Board Policy 102-15.

The waiver applies to any students who transfer into the charter school after ninth grade in the same way it applies to their other class peers at the charter school. Conversely, any student in a charter school with an active waiver who transfers to a different public school will be subject to the graduation requirements of the school to which he or she transfers. It is the responsibility of any charter school with a waiver from Board Policy

102-15 to ensure its students and parents understand how the school's graduation requirements are unique from other public schools.

If charter schools have any questions regarding the waiver process, application, or applicability, they should contact the Commission. The Commission will work with the Board to address any questions.

Exhibit 3

Hawaii Technology Academy
Requested Graduation Requirement Waiver for Exemption to Board Policy 102-15



Hawaii Technology Academy
94-450 Mokuola St. Suite 200 Waipahu, HI 96797
Phone: 808-676-5444 • Fax: 808-676-5470
myhta.org • info@myhta.org

March 28, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

Hawaii Technology Academy Public Charter School (HTA) requests a graduation requirement waiver for the required courses **Modern History of Hawaii, Participation in Democracy, and Expository Writing 1**. HTA operates on a block schedule, which means that students are enrolled in only 3 or 4 courses per semester that run for “double” blocks of 75-100 minutes per day for a total of 400 minutes per week. In HTA’s blended learning model, this equates to 225 minutes (three 75 minute class periods) of face-to-face instruction per week, 75 minutes of virtual class time per week and 100 minutes of field studies, internships, community service, or career-based learning per week. The 400 minutes per week for an entire semester meets DOE Regulation 4530.1, which states that:

“one credit is awarded for each course meeting formally for approximately 200 minutes per week, and successfully completed by the student during the period of one year.” This calculates to approximately 120 hours per credit course (or 60 hours per 1/2 credit course).

At HTA, each single semester course is worth 1 Carnegie credit because the total number of instructional minutes per week and the content delivered over the course of the semester is equal to what would traditionally comprise a full-year single credit course. HTA does not offer any courses that run for a single quarter, which would equate, in typical DOE credits to .5 on the block schedule.

HTA built out the curriculum for these three courses to ensure that the content, assignments, assessments, and projects merited a full credit. Working with the common core standards for each course, HTA’s Social Studies and Language Arts faculty (working under the guidance of the Director of Curriculum & Innovative Learning) redesigned the courses to ensure that the scope of the classes extends learning through enhanced content, deep dives, multi-unit performance-based assessments, and experiential learning activities. Both courses have significant project-based learning components, internship opportunities and “real time” redesign elements to ensure that the students are considering current topics in local, national, and global political and social issues.

Students enrolled in Participation in Democracy, Modern History of Hawaii, and Expository Writing 1 are engaging in a full credit’s worth of class time, content, skill building, project-based learning, and performance-based assessments, HTA requests that the

Charter School Commission and Board of Education grant our request for a graduation waiver that permits the awarding of 1 Carnegie credit each (rather than the typically awarded .5 for a single semester) for Modern History of Hawaii, Participation in Democracy, and Expository Writing.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Matt Zitello

Matt Zitello

Interim Executive Director

mzitello@myhta.org

Name of Charter School: Hawaii Technology Academy Public Charter School
Charter Contract valid July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2028

Effective School Years: 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26, 2026-27, 2027-2028

Applicable Graduating Classes: 2027-2031

Course Requirement	Hawaii DOE Requirement	HTA Proposed Request
Modern Hawaiian History (Social Studies Requirement)	.5 Credit	1 Credit
Participation in Democracy (Social Studies Requirement)	.5 Credit	1 Credit
Expository Writing 1 (Language Arts Requirement)	.5 Credit	1 Credit

Rationale:

Hawaii Technology Academy Public Charter School (HTA) requests a graduation requirement waiver for the required courses of Modern History of Hawai'i, Participation in Democracy, and Expository Writing 1. HTA operates on a block schedule that allows students to complete the required number of contact hours but compressed into one semester rather than over the course of an entire school year.

The result of HTA's block schedule is that, each semester, students are enrolled in only 3 or 4 courses that run for "double" blocks of 75-100 minutes per day for a total of 400 minutes per week. In HTA's blended learning model, this schedule equates to 400 minutes per week of instruction: 225 minutes (three 75-minute class periods) of face-to-face instruction per week, 75 minutes of virtual class time per week, and 100 minutes of field studies, internships, community service, or career-based learning per week. This total of 400 minutes per week that HTA students complete in one semester meets DOE Regulation 4530.1, which states that:

"one credit is awarded for each course meeting formally for approximately 200 minutes per week, and successfully completed by the student during the period of one year. This calculates to approximately 120 hours per credit course (or 60 hours per 1/2 credit course)."

At HTA each single semester course is worth 1 Carnegie credit as the total number of instructional minutes per week and the content delivered over the course of the semester equates to what would traditionally comprise a full year single credit course. HTA does not offer any courses that run for a single quarter which would equate, in typical DOE credits to .5 on the block schedule.

HTA built out the curriculum for both courses to ensure that the content, assignments, assessments, and projects were worthy of a full credit. Working with the DOE standards for each

course, HTA's Social Studies and Language Arts faculty (working under the guidance of the Director of Curriculum & Innovative Learning) redesigned the courses to ensure that the scope of the classes extends learning through enhanced content, deep dives, multi-unit performance-based assessments, and experiential learning activities. Both courses have significant project-based learning components, internship opportunities, and "real time" redesign elements to ensure that the students are considering current topics in local, national, and global issues and politics. Examples of the manner in which the courses have been enriched are provided in Exhibit A of this letter.

As students enrolled in Modern History of Hawaii, Participation in Democracy, and Expository Writing 1 are engaging in a full credit's worth of class time, content, skill-building, and performance-based assessments, HTA requests that the Charter School Commission and Board of Education grant our request for a graduation waiver that permits the awarding of 1 Carnegie credit each (rather than the typically awarded 0.5 for a single semester) for Modern History of Hawaii, Participation in Democracy, and Expository Writing 1.

Exhibit A-1: Modern History of Hawaii

The Modern History of Hawai'i course uses a project-based approach to enhance students' use of information technology and their research and writing skills. As students move through the course they participate in place-based field studies, work with experts in Hawaiian History and culture, and dive into inquiry-based learning. Students create projects tied to the different periods within Hawaiian History: Early Hawaiian, Overthrow, Plantation Era, Pearl Harbor, and contemporary issues. Students present these projects to authentic audiences and work with community partners to dive more deeply into the research and analysis of the time periods.

Most high school students enrolled in this class come with no prior knowledge of Hawaiian History, necessitating that a brief introduction of early Hawaiian History be incorporated into the overall timeline of the course. This includes an introduction to early Polynesian Voyaging techniques as it relates to the modern day voyages of the Hokule'a, early Hawaiian social and political structures as it informs the rise and fall of the Hawaiian monarchy, and an exploration of current issues and events that continue to affect Native Hawaiians today.

The overall goal of this course is to awaken students to the dynamic and controversial history of Hawai'i as a means to better understand the ethnic and political tensions that surround them today. By engaging students in critical discourse through on-going virtual conversations and lesson discussion threads, students learn to articulate their personal opinions on such topics as the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy, Executive Order 9066, and Hawaiian sovereignty, and to cite historical evidence from primary documents as a means to legitimize their claims. Students finish this course with a clear understanding of why the issue of Hawaiian Sovereignty continues to be a struggle of Native Hawaiians and why it's so important to learn about where one lives.

How does it go beyond the HCPS III?

- Additional learning activities include Socratic Seminars that dive into the foundational text of the overthrow and debates related to contemporary issues and Hawaiian Sovereignty. The course is built on the foundations of student voice, community partners, and an exploration of Hawaiian History.
- Modern Solutions Project: Students engage in research to describe a major problem in modern Hawai'i and to develop their argument for the best possible solution to help solve that problem. Students work collaboratively to demonstrate their fully developed arguments and research through a creative medium of their choice.
 - Problem based
 - Argument writing
 - Multimedia presentation
 - Research and determining reliability of sources
 - Using evidence
 - Critical thinking and problem solving
 - Small group collaboration

Exhibit A-2: Participation in Democracy

Participation in Democracy at HTA takes a comprehensive look at the historical origins of democratic ideals, the formation and functions of American Democratic government, and the application of the Constitution over the history of the United States. In addition to the traditional Participation in Democracy single semester (.5 credit) curriculum, Through analysis of historical primary sources, current events, and the application of historical research students gain a deeper understanding of the role of democracy. The students will engage daily in experiential learning, hands-on activities within the government system. Field trips and service learning as well that will take part in addition to the regular class time.

How does it go beyond HCPS III?

- Additional content and learning activities include the democratic origins of the country, tracing the history back Ancient Greece not just the Enlightenment.
- Students examine the application of the Constitution through the study of Supreme Court cases, laws, and executive action
- Formative and summative assessments include an emphasis critical thinking and problem solving
- The course includes texts and content that are regularly used for AP classes (example: Mililani, Howard Zinn, etc.)

Exhibit A-3: Expository Writing 1

This course is designed to teach the diverse reading and writing skills that students need for success in the contemporary world. Students will hone their creativity as well as their critical thinking. Students will read different literary genres and will complete two major projects, one that tackles real-world issues and the second that asks students to engage with different conflicts in literature. These projects also connect students closely with our school's Core Values of Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, and Creativity.

How does it go beyond HCPS III?

This course includes two projects that engage with real-world matters and ask students to engage critically and creatively with the content and to apply a diverse set of skills.

Project 1 is to build your own planet. Students look at the different types of conflicts in literature—human versus nature, human versus human, human versus self—and use these to analyze what it takes for a planet to sustain life. During this project, we read a science fiction novel that encompasses themes about what it means to be human and students apply their own experiences to the planet's development.

Project 2 is "Writing in IRL," which focuses on real-world writing related to their post-high school plans, whether they are college or career-bound. Students start with the basics of letter writing and apply those to cover letters. From there, students dig into the development of resumes and how to apply for jobs while in high school. The last step is the personal narrative, which connects to the grad portfolio and the personal statement. We apply storytelling techniques and creative nonfiction elements to develop, write, and revise personal narratives.