



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

June 3, 2021

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Catherine Payne  
Chairperson, Investigative Committee

AGENDA ITEM: Investigative Committee (a permitted interaction group pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes, Section 92-2.5(b)(1)) investigating issues relating to the search for a superintendent, including transition timeline and process, recommendation for an interim superintendent, search timeline and process, and composition of group conducting search: findings and recommendations on an interim superintendent

---

**I. BACKGROUND**

On March 18, 2021, the Board of Education (“Board”) took action and formed an investigative committee (a permitted interaction group pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes, Section 92-2.5(b)(1)) investigating issues relating to a search for a superintendent, including a transition timeline and process, a recommendation for an interim superintendent, a search timeline and process, and the composition of group conducting search (this investigative committee is herein referred to as the “Transition Committee”). The Board designated Student Achievement Committee Chairperson Margaret Cox, Human Resources Committee Chairperson Dwight Takeno, Finance and Infrastructure Committee Chairperson Bruce Voss, and me as members of the Transition Committee. The Board designated me as the chairperson of the Transition Committee.

On April 15, 2021, the Transition Committee reported its findings and recommendations to the Board on a timeline and process for transitioning to an interim superintendent and a timeline and process for searching for a long-term superintendent, which the Board adopted on May 20, 2021.<sup>1</sup> On May 20, 2021, the Transition Committee reported its findings and recommendations on the

---

<sup>1</sup> The Transition Committee’s findings and recommendations that it reported to the Board on April 15, 2021 are available here: [https://boe.hawaii.gov/Meetings/Notices/Pages/April-15,-2021-General-Business-Meeting-\(Virtual\).aspx](https://boe.hawaii.gov/Meetings/Notices/Pages/April-15,-2021-General-Business-Meeting-(Virtual).aspx).

composition of the group to conduct the search for a long-term superintendent (the “Search Committee”).<sup>2</sup>

This report is on the Transition Committee’s findings and recommendations for an interim superintendent.

## **II. FINDINGS**

The Transition Committee finds that the following challenges are the most important immediate issues that an interim superintendent will need to address:

1. Assessing learning loss and social-emotional needs of each student and developing plans to address these needs, including targeting supports to students who would benefit the most from enhanced learning;
2. Developing, adjusting, and communicating clear and timely plans to promote as much safe in-person learning as possible while still offering the flexibility of quality distance learning options or effective hybrid models; and
3. Restoring trust and confidence in leadership through clear, timely, and transparent guidance and communication to students, families, staff, and the public.

The Transition Committee sought candidates who could address these challenges, and the Transition Committee finds that ideal candidates must demonstrate that they possess the following characteristics essential to addressing the challenges:

1. Ability to lead the Hawaii Department of Education through challenges by applying a combination of a deep understanding of the system, tactical and strategic thinking, problem-solving skills, and humility;
2. Ability to identify, collaborate, coordinate, communicate, and develop strong relationships with internal and external experts and key stakeholders who can develop and execute plans for addressing the major immediate challenges identified above or provide the necessary resources to do so; and
3. Ability to create, build, and embody an empathetic organizational culture that respects, supports, and cares for students, families, and staff at both an individual and systemic level.

---

<sup>2</sup> The Transition Committee’s findings and recommendations that it reported to the Board on May 20, 2021 are available here: [https://boe.hawaii.gov/Meetings/Notices/Meeting%20Material%20Library/GBM\\_20210520\\_Report%20on%20Investigative%20Committee%20on%20Transition%20and%20Search%20Process%20findings%20and%20recommendations.pdf](https://boe.hawaii.gov/Meetings/Notices/Meeting%20Material%20Library/GBM_20210520_Report%20on%20Investigative%20Committee%20on%20Transition%20and%20Search%20Process%20findings%20and%20recommendations.pdf).

The Transition Committee included both the challenges and characteristics in an application form it released publicly on April 16, 2021.<sup>3</sup> The Transition Committee publicized the application on the Board's website and through an email announcement to the Board's email listing of individuals who signed up to receive electronic notices of the Board's meetings. The Transition Committee received 14 applications by the April 30, 2021 deadline. Of the 14 applicants, the Transition Committee opted to interview five candidates who showed the most promise of possessing the identified characteristics. The Transition Committee reviewed each candidate's application, cover letter, and resume and considered their overall body of work in addition to the answers they provided in the interview.

After careful consideration and much deliberation, the Transition Committee finds that Keith Hayashi is the candidate best suited for the interim superintendent position. Mr. Hayashi is currently the principal of Waipahu High School and has experience at all levels of the Department's tri-level system, school, complex area, and state levels. His cover letter and resume are attached as **Exhibit A**.

Should the Board agree with the Transition Committee's recommendation on which the Board will vote during its June 17, 2021 general business meeting, Mr. Hayashi would begin serving as interim superintendent on August 1, 2021 in accordance with the Board-approved transition timeline.<sup>4</sup> Mr. Hayashi would serve as interim superintendent until a new Board-appointed superintendent is available to start. Pursuant to the Board-approved search process, Mr. Hayashi would be able to apply for the long-term superintendent position.

### **III. RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the foregoing, the Transition Committee unanimously agreed and recommends that the Board appoint Keith Hayashi as interim superintendent with an annual salary rate of \$210,000, effective upon the end of Christina Kishimoto's tenure as superintendent, but no later than August 1, 2021 and until the start date of a new superintendent to be appointed by the Board.

#### **Proposed Motion**

**“Move to appoint Keith Hayashi as interim superintendent with an annual salary rate of \$210,000, effective upon the end of Christina Kishimoto's**

---

<sup>3</sup> The public application form is available here: [https://boe.hawaii.gov/About/Documents/Interim%20Superintendent%20Application%20Form%20\(2021\).pdf](https://boe.hawaii.gov/About/Documents/Interim%20Superintendent%20Application%20Form%20(2021).pdf).

<sup>4</sup> If Superintendent Christina Kishimoto decides to leave her position prior to the expiration of her term, Mr. Hayashi could start immediately thereafter, if available, pursuant to the Board-approved transition process.

**tenure as superintendent and until the start date of a new superintendent to be appointed by the Board.”**

This final report completes the work of the Transition Committee.

**Exhibit A**

**Keith Hayashi's cover letter and resume**

April 30, 2021

Catherine Payne  
Chairperson, Transition Committee  
State of Hawai'i Board of Education  
P.O. Box 2360  
Honolulu HI 96804

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Transition Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to be considered for Interim Superintendent of the State of Hawai'i Department of Education. Based on the Board of Education's announcement, and my experience leading Waipahu High School, and as Interim Superintendent, I would prioritize: 1) reconnecting Hawai'i's students with learning during the 2021-22 school year, and 2) laying the foundation for the "next normal" for the 2022-23 school year. The next normal will be addressed through the school academic and financial planning and teacher transfer period, all of which will occur prior to the conclusion of the Board of Education's timeline to appoint the next Superintendent. My 32 years as an instructional leader at the school, district and state levels, as well as an alumnus of Hawai'i public schools, parent of a Waipahu High School graduate, lifelong Hawai'i resident, and a proud public school employee, motivates me to seek this critical leadership role at this critical time.

Reconnecting Hawai'i's students to learning is the highest priority. For more than one full school year, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted 180,000 students' learning and schools' support for their social and emotional development. Returning to school campuses in August 2021 (and as early as July for multi-track schools) is a primary focus, and requires 1) providing a safe learning environment for students, teachers, faculty and staff, 2) personalizing learning as students' academic, social and emotional development varies, and 3) committing to a collective collaboration by all stakeholders to provide our students with the educational opportunities necessary for success.

As is evident at Waipahu High School, and validated through discussions with principal colleagues and other educators in the schools, in-person learning is the desired primary methodology. In-person learning, supported with new technological skills and tools acquired as a result of the pandemic, provide new and exciting possibilities. I will prioritize federal coronavirus relief funds toward learning efforts, including 1) extending student learning time during intercessions focused on acceleration versus remediation, 2) furnishing professional development in personalizing learning, 3) providing important student support that enables learning and development including mental health, food security and peer socialization, and 4) providing tools to support personalized learning including quality technology-based devices.

In this transition from pandemic-affected learning and leadership changes, HIDOE's teachers, school administrators, school support staff, complex and state office leaders, and student leaders need a steady and

experienced leader to heal and unify. Having led elementary, middle and high schools, served as a complex area superintendent, resource teacher, and served as Interim Deputy Superintendent and Interim Superintendent during the last transition, I am familiar with the diverse strengths, demands and needs across HIDOE's tri-level structure and how they can be coordinated to reconnect students and educators to learning. Coordinating with other government officials to establish parameters for a safe return to in-person learning and communicating those plans to HIDOE's leaders, teachers and employees are critical. Also, internal planning during Fall 2021 is necessary to establish planning guidelines and priorities for the 2022-23 school year since schools finalize academic and financial plans, including staffing plans, by December 2021.

I commit to working with educational leaders to assess needs based on return in Fall 2021, provide support for robust teaching and learning, and adjust processes to support 2022-23 planning using a design thinking mindset that considers learning during the two pandemic-disrupted schools years and our students and employees' needs.

In addition to unifying the Department together, we must also rebuild the community's confidence in our public schools. The pandemic has reinforced that public education, workforce needs, health, community well-being and economic growth are interdependent. During the last year, community partners—business, government and philanthropy--have continued to step up and support initiatives at Waipahu High. I know that my partnership experience in early college, career academies and work-based learning can be leveraged for the benefit of all schools. We will need to innovate and reimagine these relationships for the recovery of our state economy and the future for our students.

As Interim Superintendent, I will focus on reconnecting students, employees and the community to learning. The 6-8 months of the Interim Superintendent's anticipated appointment period are critical to set the tone, relationships, and momentum for post-pandemic public education and our state's future. I look forward to the opportunity to share my experiences and perspectives on the Interim Superintendent's priorities and my vision for our public school students and employees reconnecting to learning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith T. Hayashi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Keith T. Hayashi

## KEITH T. HAYASHI

---

### Education

- Master of Education. Educational Administration, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, 1999.
- Master of Education. Curriculum and Instruction, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, 1990.
- Bachelor of Education. Elementary Education, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, 1988.

### Professional Experience in the State of Hawai'i Department of Education

- Interim State Superintendent (July 2017)
- Interim Deputy State Superintendent (March – June 2017)
- Waipahu High School Principal (June 2009 – March 2017; August 2017 – present)
- Pearl City/Waipahu Complex Area Superintendent (July 2006 – June 2009)
- Waipahu Elementary School Principal (March 2003 – July 2006)
- Waipahu High School Vice-Principal (August 1998 – March 2003)
- Waipahu Intermediate School Vice-Principal trainee (August 1997 – August 1998)
- Leeward District Literacy Resource Teacher (August 1995 – August 1997)
- Lehua Elementary School Teacher (August 1989 – August 1995)

### Professional Accomplishments & Recognitions

- Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, 2021
- Long Story Short with Leslie Wilcox, PBS Hawai'i, 2020
- Administrator of the Year, Hawai'i Association of Career and Technical Education, 2019
- Black Book: Education, Hawai'i Business Magazine, 2017
- Governor's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Task Force, 2016
- Distinguished Alumnus, University of Hawai'i College of Education, 2016
- 20 for the Next 20 – Hawai'i's People to Watch, Hawaii Business Magazine, 2016
- Hawai'i High School Principal of the Year, National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2014
- Grand Marshal, Waipahu Community Association Christmas Parade, 2014
- Masayuki Tokioka Excellence in School Leadership Award, Public Schools of Hawai'i Foundation, 2013
- Economics Teacher of the Year, Hawai'i Council on Economic Education, 1994

### Position Competencies

#### 1) **Leadership experiences that demonstrate understanding of the education system, strategic thinking, problem-solving and humility**

As Interim State Superintendent, served as the chief executive officer of the only statewide public school system in the nation, with responsibility for both the State Education Agency and the Local Education Agency roles for 256 schools (15 complex areas) on six economically and geographically diverse islands, over 175,000 multi-ethnic students in grades K-12, approximately 22,300 permanent employees, thousands of casual/substitute employees, and an annual operating budget in excess of \$1.9 billion.

- Executive responsibility and accountability for achieving the DOE's vision and strategic plan.
- Reallocated federal Title I funds to drive support for new school-level 'innovation grants.'

As Interim Deputy Superintendent, served as chief academic officer and was responsible for leading, directing, and supervising the academic and educator development functions of the DOE, as well as serving as the line officer for school operations. Responsible and accountable for the: 15 complex areas; the Office



of Curriculum, Instruction and Student Support; the School Transformation Branch, and; the Coordinated Support Office.

- Led development of Hawai'i's federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan, incorporating significant teacher and principal input, and resulting in rapid federal approval and an improved school accountability system.

As Waipahu High School Principal, accountable to the school community for the implementation and assessment of the Waipahu High School Academic and Financial Plan, and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accreditation Report, in meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of approximately 2,800 students. Developed cutting-edge instructional strategies to build a college and career culture and expand learning relevance.

- Every student at Waipahu High is a member of a nationally recognized model career academy including the Arts and Communication, Health and Sciences, Industrial and Engineering Technology, Natural Resources, the 'Ohana of Excellence, and the Professional and Public Services. All six wall-to-wall academies have received National Model certification (4 with distinction), by the National Career Academy Coalition. The 'Ohana of Excellence is the first national model academy in the country to support students with varying degrees of significant disabilities.
- Every student can earn college credit. With support from the McInerney Foundation, we implemented the state's first Early College High School program in Hawaii resulting in over 3000 students having earned college credits at Waipahu High School. 49 "Olympians" earned Associate Degrees in Arts, Science in Teaching, Natural Sciences, and Natural Sciences - Pre-Engineering prior to high school graduation.
- Students also have novel ways of earning academic distinction. Chartered the first Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) National Honor Society Chapter on a high school campus in the nation, Waipahu High School's Beta Chi Omega (BXΩ). Current membership is nearly 200 high school students including the first high school students serving as a PTK International Division IV Vice-President and a Pacific Region Vice-President.
- Tagnawa Learning Center staff--comprised yearly of 25 Early College alumni, and supported by Americorp VISTA grants--provided "home grown", culturally aligned and embedded in-class support, academic counseling and advisement, after-class tutoring, peer mentoring, and college application assistance to support Early College students. Tagnawa staff professional development delivered by Tagnawa alumni coordinators that focused on academic support, service, and mentorship.
- Since its inception in 2017 by the Hawai'i Board of Education, 220 students have earned 319 Seal of Biliteracy (SB) designations. The Class of 2021 has 82 students earning SB, with 33 of them trilingual, and 1 student quadrilingual. Additionally, 8 "unofficial" Seals have been earned in Kosraean, Pompeian, Tongan, Pangasinan, and Visayan.
- Accompanied legislative, higher education, business, and agricultural leaders on a study tour to New Zealand to learn about innovative and systemic best practices. Applied new learning to integrate artificial intelligence within the natural resources production pathway and entrepreneurial efforts.
- Responsible for the curriculum, instruction, assessment, and success of all students; the support, professional development, and evaluation of all certificated, classified, and casual staff; and the fiscal management of state, federal, and philanthropic funds to improve student achievement.

As Waipahu/Pearl City Complex Area Superintendent, provided support and supervision of 18 elementary, intermediate, high and adult community schools in the region.

- Accountable for creating, implementing, and assessing systemic implementation plans in eighteen schools to effectively address student learning; professional development; safety; fiscal and facility planning, and parent and community relations. Responsibilities included coordination of district-wide contracts for Achieve3000 to improve reading comprehension and the New Teacher Center to support beginning

teachers through induction and mentoring. Also responsible for district-wide programs supporting English Language Learners, autistic students, and A-Plus after school students.

- Responsible for the management, implementation, and oversight of significant federal funding programs: Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, and Title IX.
- Initiated the complex area-wide articulation and implementation of Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships to support 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning.

As Waipahu Elementary School Principal, accountable to the school community for the implementation and assessment of the Waipahu Elementary Academic and Financial Plan to meet the needs of all 1,070 students.

Notable accomplishments included:

- Each of the three years, students demonstrated growth on the Hawai'i State Assessment in reading and mathematics including every sub-group.
- Implemented a system for professional development to support student learning based on quantitative and qualitative student data.
- Instituted the small learning communities concepts with teams and houses.
- Initiated school-wide instructional strategies to support over 500 English Language Learners.

## **2) Ability to develop strong partnerships with internal and external stakeholders that benefit students and teachers**

Creating extended academic and career-themed learning opportunities for students requires trusted partnerships with institutions of higher education, community agencies and area legislators. As high school principal:

- Offered opportunities for students can earn 27 national and local industry certifications in areas such as: Medical Assisting; Pharmacy Technicians; Community Health Worker; CISCO; IT Essentials; OSHA 10 Construction; Cyber Awareness, ServSafe Food Handler, Wilderness CPR, and First Aid/CPR/AED. The Class of 2020 earned 270 industry and business certifications.
- Partnered with Hawai'i Pacific Health to pilot the medical assistant national certification course at Waipahu High School for students from five different high schools during the school day.
- Through effective partnerships with state legislators, state and city departments, and philanthropy, secured funding to support progressive student learning opportunities.
- Constructing the first Integrated Academy Learning Facility in Hawai'i aligned to industry needs. Combines natural resources production with artificial intelligence; an innovation, design, STEM, and computer lab; and a culinary specialized hospitality dining area, the Marauder Café.
- Constructing the first Academic Health Center on a high school campus in the country. Working in collaboration with Hawai'i Pacific Health to service the Waipahu Community and to provide authentic learning internship opportunities for students.
- Constructing the first research observatory in Hawai'i on a high school campus to support astrophysics and students in Early College astronomy courses. Teacher trained at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in astrophysics.
- In partnership with Rutgers University, offered a Biotechnology and DNA sequencing program facilitated by teachers trained at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and resulting in research publication.
- Relocated and redesigned our HawaiiUSA Student Operated Credit Union on campus utilizing an integrated academy collaboration process.
- In partnership with the University of Hawaii at Manoa's College of Education, effectively implemented the Professional Development School concept leading to the first Professional Development Complex in the country. Preservice teachers were partnered with exemplary mentor teachers. Current teachers were provided the opportunity to pursue graduate degrees for continual learning.
- Developed sister-school student exchange agreement with Fukuyama Iyo High School in Hiroshima,

Japan for intercultural exchange and homestay opportunities and experiences.

- As the hub of the Waipahu community, also built effective partnerships to support student learning with the University of Hawai'i at Manoa; the University of Hawai'i West Oahu; Leeward, Honolulu, and Kapi'olani Community Colleges; Public School of Hawai'i Foundation; McInerney Foundation; Waipahu Community Foundation; Hawai'i Pacific Health; Queens Medical Center; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Honolulu Police Department, 'Olelo Public Television; and many other committed industry and business partners.

As complex area superintendent:

- Partnered with Hawaiian Telcom and Cisco Systems to transition to a Unified Communication System for the Complex Area to support learning and collaboration.
- Partnered with Apple to provide intensive professional development and leadership development in integrating 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology.

As vice principal:

- Worked collaboratively with Honolulu Police Department, the Family Court, the Prosecutor's Office, the Attorney General's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the other community agencies to address school related issues. Served on the Office of Youth Services gang sub-committee.

*Service on several national and local professional organizations*

- National Career Academy Coalition Operating Board
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- Hawai'i Association of Secondary School Administrators
- American Association of School Administrators
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- Association of Career and Technical Education
- Hawai'i Association of Career and Technical Education
- Hawai'i Academies Leadership Collaborative

*Service on several community organizations*

- Waipahu Community Foundation Vice-President
- Drill Team Hawai'i Board Member
- OCEANIT Foundation Board Member

### **3) Ability to create, build, and embody an empathetic organizational culture that respects students, families and staff**

As state and district administrator,

- Created an inclusive and organized process for large numbers of educators and school leaders to provide targeted input into the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan.
- Coordinated the yearly Complex Area Technology Showcase, featuring student work from every school integrating 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and technology.
- Responsible for organizing and facilitating inter-district and intra-district workshops, visitations, and articulation sessions for schools to share, reflect upon, and implement effective instructional strategies.
- Facilitated community-wide planning to develop comprehensive systems that improve student literacy.

As high school principal,

- Developed core motto "my voice • my choice • my future" that drives positive student-centered culture at the high school.

- Ensured that every academy was supported by robust advisory boards comprising of industry, higher education, and community partners; parents and students; and school educators to support and guide each robust academy in supporting student success.
- Facilitated faculty focus groups to further align the organization's collective beliefs and values.
- Collaborated with GEAR-UP Waipahu to offer multi levels of Ilocano and Samoan world heritage language courses to support cultural sensitivities as well as raise cultural pride.
- Created learning opportunities that let students experience rigorous academics, college expectations and workplace culture.
- Worked collaboratively with Waipahu Complex principals to establish official National Honor Society Chapters at the elementary, intermediate, high school, and collegiate levels. Together with the West Pearl Harbor Rotary, supported Phi Theta Kappa mentoring opportunities between students at all levels.
- Implemented College Readiness Academic Success Hawai'i (CRASH) to support students and families in college and career readiness.

As a teacher,

- Served as Grade Level Chairperson and Association Policy Council Member, responsible for communicating with administration and other members of the school community. Chairperson of the school's curriculum committee facilitating the development of thematic units.
- Initiated and organized yearly student study tours to the Island of Hawai'i as well as other school-wide activities.