

**STATE OF HAWAII  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING**

Tuesday, January 10, 2017

1:30 p.m.

Queen Liliuokalani Building  
1390 Miller Street, Room 404  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Testimony**

AGENDA ITEM: Board Action on 2016 Legislative Report: annual Board report on the State's public charter schools in accordance with Hawaii Revised Statutes Section 302D-21

Chairman Lance Mizumoto and Board members,

I would like to comment on the BOE Legislative report on the State's charter schools. First, I would like to thank and commend the board for boldly stating that the long term stability of charter schools depends on either or both of the increase in per pupil funding and the long overlooked premise of facilities support. Large charter schools spend a million dollars or more on facilities, all of which comes out of the student educational funds. This can amount to 20 per cent of State funds to keep the doors to the school open. Either the per pupil amount is restored to the "pre fiscal slide" era in 2008 where the per pupil funding was over \$9,000 per student or some real support is given towards facilities, food service, and transportation. All of the aforementioned relate to the basics of education: getting children to and from school, feeding them a breakfast and lunch, and providing them with an adequate learning environment. The consumer price index will reflect that the cost of everything, including operating a school, has risen in the past eight years while the charter school funding has gone the other way.

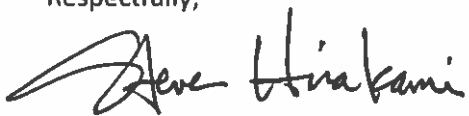
Though I agree with the first version of the Commission's lack of progress on school specific measures, I understand including the Commission's testimony on engaging with experts to support the development of these additional measures which can truly reflect the advances in charter schools to educate the whole child. Not only are these criteria needed to reflect student achievement and growth, they are essential enough to be included in negotiated bi-lateral contracts as required in the 302D statute. To date, this has not happened and charters have been required to sign "boilerplate", one-size-fits-all, unilateral contracts which don't fit into the charter world in Hawaii's diverse socio-economic, geographical, and cultural environments.

Beyond the lack of transparency in distributing federal funds, there is a real problem with the Commission and charter school exemption from 302A-1401 which is how federal funds are distributed by the Department of Education in Hawaii. Originally, this exemption was sought to combat an Attorney General decision that Federal Impact Aid funds could not be used for facilities funding (copy of the decision attached as Exhibit A). This was an attempt to re-direct federal general education support towards filling the gap of the lack of charter school facilities funding from the State. Now this exemption has been used to distribute Federal Impact Aid and Department of Defense funds in a peculiar fashion that conflicts with Board policy 303-4 and statute 302A-1401. I have attached a spreadsheet (Exhibit B) to illustrate how recent FIA and DOD funds were distributed to schools. It shows what the normal per pupil distribution would be (\$188.55) compared to a non-transparent formula that increases some schools per pupil distribution amount from \$188.55 to \$1,564.30 in one case and reduces a school's per pupil distribution from \$188.55 to \$44.48 in another case. A facilities formula which was never explained (even after a direct request) was weighted 50%. A high needs formula which also was not revealed was weighted 30% and high schools were awarded another 20%. In the past, FIA normally was used for general education purposes and was distributed per pupil. Real facilities funding by the State would eliminate the Commission's futile attempt to address our facilities need with federal money. Additionally, with the Commission's exemption from 302A-1401, they deducted administrative (or as they call it "indirect costs) fees of 2.4% (Exhibit C) from the second Department of Defense allocation.

In the list of Federal Funds Allocations to Charter Schools, the huge federal pre-school grant is not listed. This grant is about \$14 million and some of it has been used to staff Commission positions. Those figures along with the distribution to schools that accepted the grant should be listed.

Thank you again for your diligence in reviewing the communication and relationships between the Commission and the charter schools to support equity and transparency. We really appreciate the attention paid to our long standing issues and with collaboration with the new ED, Sione Thompson, we will be committed to providing the best education possible for our children.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Hirakami". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Hirakami".

Steve Hirakami, Director, Hawaii Academy of Arts & Science PCS

Exhibit A

RECEIVED JAN 14 2014

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR



DAVID M. LOUIE  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
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RUSSELL A. SUZUKI  
FIRST DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

January 9, 2014

✓ Mr. John Thatcher  
Connections PCS  
174 Kamehameha Ave.  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Mr. Steve Hirakami  
Hawaii Academy of Arts and Science PCS  
15-1397 Homestead Rd.  
Pahoa, Hawaii 96778

Re: Use of Impact Aid for Facilities Pilot Program

Dear Mr. Thatcher and Mr. Hirakami:

This is in response to your December 24, 2013 letter to the Attorney General requesting answers to the following questions:

1. Does Act 159 of 2013 [Act 159, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013] give the Commission the authority to develop a "Facilities Pilot Program" with federal impact aid funds received from the State of Hawaii DOE?
2. Does the Commission have the authority to distribute federal impact aid funds in a manner that is not consistent with the manner in which federal impact aid funds are distributed to State of Hawaii DOE schools?

Upon review of the applicable law, our short response is that: (1) the Commission is not authorized to create a Facilities Pilot Program under HRS § 302D-E(e); and (2) the Commission may not use or distribute federal impact aid in a manner inconsistent with HRS §302A-1401.

#### DISCUSSION

Federal impact aid is given to states like Hawaii to "provide financial assistance to local educational agencies" burdened by federal government activity. 20 U.S.C. § 7001, *et seq.* The amount requested and awarded to states is based primarily on the amount of federally-connected children being educated in the State; however, awards may also be given

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to cover construction, facilities maintenance (for government owned buildings), and the cost of special education.<sup>1</sup> There is no clear Congressional mandate that these federal funds be used for specific purposes, except for those designated to provide children with disabilities a free and appropriate public education. 20 U.S.C.A. § 7703(d)(2).

At the State level, however, the Board of Education is charged with ensuring that federal impact aid "shall" be used to fund the following enumerated matters:

- (1) To improve the program of the public schools of the State, including any grades up to the fourteenth grade or such lower grade as shall be prescribed as a maximum for such purposes by the Act of Congress concerned, by expanding the educational offerings, particularly in the rural districts;
- (2) For the payment of salaries to teachers;
- (3) To employ additional teachers to relieve overcrowded classes;
- (4) To adjust the salaries of teachers to meet the increased cost of living, within such limits as may be fixed by, and pursuant to, state law;
- (5) To provide for the purchase of supplies, apparatus, and materials for the public schools; and
- (6) For any of such purposes and to such extent as shall be permitted by the Acts of Congress concerned.

HRS § 302A-1401(a).

On or about June 26, 2013, Tom Hutton, Executive Director of the Charter School Commission, proposed use of federal impact aid to fund a facilities funding pilot project.

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<sup>1</sup> Federal impact aid is categorized in four general categories: (1) basic support payments; (2) payments for children with disabilities; (3) facilities maintenance; and (4) construction. Construction grants (both formula and competitive grants) are awarded to local school districts that are heavily impacted by federally connected students. *See* Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title VIII, section 8007. It can be used to support school construction, emergency repairs and modernization.

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See CB and Impact Aid School Budgeting Implications Webinar dated 6/26/13  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkT0GeCjLGE>).

In this case, \$4,209,282 in federal impact aid was given by the Department of Education (Hawaii DOE) to the Charter School Commission (Program ID No. 19998, Allocation Number 135) on or about August 1, 2013. The "guidelines for implementation" given by the Hawaii DOE was that: "These Impact Aid funds are considered by the USDOE to be general aid and thus may be used in whatever manner of the recipient's choosing in accordance with State requirements. The Commission may distribute the funds to the individual charter schools as it determines to be appropriate." (emphasis added).

This year, the amount of federal impact aid disbursed by the Hawaii DOE to the Commission (on behalf of the charter schools) increased from previous years. This has been described as an "anomaly" and believed to be a one-time increase. With these funds, the Commission decided to match last year's disbursement of \$285 per pupil to each charter school and retain \$1.2 million to fund a Facilities Pilot Project. In a December 12, 2013 Recommendation Submittal to Terri Fujii, it appears that the amount recommended to be withheld was reduced to \$683,876, with \$564,541 being distributed to charter schools on a "targeted basis" versus a per-pupil distribution. It must be noted that the Commission has not explained whether the money will be primarily used for operational costs (i.e., to fund positions to run the program) or to be distributed to schools in need of facilities funding.

The authority initially cited by Mr. Hutton in the Recommendation Submittal to allow for the use of impact funds for this pilot project was HRS § 302D-28(d), which provides:

**Charter schools shall be eligible for all federal financial support to the same extent as all other public schools. The department shall provide all authorizers with all state-level federal grant proposals submitted by the department that include charter schools as potential recipients and timely reports on state-level federal grants received for which charter schools may apply or are entitled to receive. Federal funds received by the department for charter schools shall be transferred to authorizers for distribution to the charter schools they authorize in accordance with the federal requirements.**

(Emphasis added).

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Mr. Hutton then cited to Act 159, Session Laws of Hawaii (2013), which states:

§302D-E Facilities funding. (a) Beginning with fiscal year 2014-2015 and each fiscal year thereafter, the commission may request facilities funding for charter schools as part of its annual budget request to the director of finance.

(b) The legislature may make an appropriation based upon the facilities funding request pursuant to subsection (a).

(c) The governor, pursuant to chapter 37, may impose restrictions or reductions on appropriations for charter schools similar to those imposed on other public schools.

(d) This section shall not limit the ability of the director of finance to modify or amend any allotment pursuant to chapter 37.

(e) **The commission shall develop criteria to determine the distribution of funds appropriated pursuant to subsection (b) to the charter schools. The criteria shall include but not be limited to distribution based on the need and performance of the charter schools.**

(Emphasis added).

The question then is whether these statutes permit the creation of the Facilities Pilot Program using federal impact aid funds. Our answer is no.

#### **Statutory Interpretation**

In interpreting the application of any statute, the Hawaii Supreme Court has provided the following guidance:

First, the fundamental starting point for statutory interpretation is the language of the statute itself. Second, where the statutory language is plain and unambiguous, our sole duty is to give effect to its plain and obvious meaning. Third, implicit in the task of statutory construction is our foremost obligation to ascertain and give effect to the intention of the legislature, which is to be obtained primarily from the language contained in the statute itself. Fourth, when there is doubt, doubleness of meaning, or indistinctiveness or uncertainty of an expression used in a statute, an ambiguity exists. And fifth, in construing

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an ambiguous statute, the meaning of the ambiguous words may be sought by examining the context, with which the ambiguous words, phrases, and sentences may be compared, in order to ascertain their true meaning.

Hawaii Gov't Employees Ass'n, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO v. Lingle, 124 Haw. 197, 202, 239 P.3d 1, 6 (2010).

In instances where two statutes cover the same subject matter, the more specific statute will be favored over a more general one:

This court has stated that “[w]here there is a ‘plainly irreconcilable’ conflict between a general and a specific statute concerning the same subject matter, the specific will be favored.... [W]here the statutes simply overlap in their application, effect will be given to both if possible, as repeal by implication is disfavored.”

State v. Hoshijo ex rel. White, 102 Haw. 307, 315, 76 P.3d 550, 558 (2003)

In this case, HRS § 302D-E appears to be a clear and succinct statute that authorizes and clarifies how the Commission may obtain funding for charter school facilities. First, the Commission may make a facilities funding request as part of its annual budget request to the director of finance. Thereafter, the legislature may make an appropriation based on the facilities funding request; this amount, however, can be restricted or reduced by the governor and reduced by the director of finance. The Commission must create criteria to determine how these funds are to be distributed to the charter schools.

While HRS § 302D-E(e) specifically authorizes the Commission to create distribution criteria, it does not mention the ability to create a Facilities Pilot Project. Moreover, HRS § 302D-E9e) specifically states that the funds to be distributed, for which criteria must be developed, are funds appropriated pursuant to HRS § 302D-E(b) (i.e., funds from the legislature). The legislative history is also void of any mention of authorizing the Commission to create or fund a Facilities Pilot Program, as the stated legislative purpose was to “[a]uthorize the Charter School Commission to request facilities funding for charter schools as part of its annual budget request.” See S.B.244 CD1 CCR 153. Thus, it cannot be said that the legislature authorized the creation of a Facilities Pilot Program under HRS § 302D-E.

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It is also clear that facilities funding under HRS § 302D-E will come directly from the legislature. The language of the statute is clear that any funding disbursed by the Commission under the authority and auspices of HRS § 302D-E(e) must originate from the legislative appropriation made for charter school facilities funding.

Even if it is assumed that the Facilities Pilot Program was authorized -- which it was not -- there is no authority for the Commission to fund such a pilot program with charter school impact aid funds. As stated previously, funds disbursed pursuant to HRS § 302D-E(e) must come from a legislative appropriation made pursuant to HRS § 302D-E(b).

Moreover, federal impact aid is to be used in accordance with HRS §302A-1401, which is the statute that specifically governs the use of federal funds "allotted to the State under federal legislation for public education purposes."<sup>2</sup> This section of the statute lists specific purposes for which these funds may be used, such as the payment of salaries to teachers and to "provide for the purchase of supplies, apparatus, and materials for the public schools."<sup>3</sup> Funding for public school facilities is not an enumerated purpose.

The Commission's reliance on HRS §302D-28(d) to support the use of federal impact funds for facilities funding is misplaced. HRS §302D-28(d) is a general statute that states that "federal funds received by the department for charter schools" are to be distributed in accordance with federal regulations. While both statutes appear to pertain to how "federal funds" are to be used, HRS §302A-1401 is the only one that pertains specifically to federal impact aid (i.e., given pursuant to federal legislation (20 USC § 7701) and is for public education purposes). When there is any conflict between a specific and general statute, the specific statute is favored. State v. Hoshijo ex rel. White, 102 Haw. 307, 315, 76 P.3d 550, 558 (2003). Thus, we interpret the statutes to require the Commission to follow HRS §302A-1401 rather than the HRS §302D-28(d) when it distributes federal impact aid.

We also note that even if HRS § 302D-28(d) applied specifically to federal impact aid, the Commission is still not authorized to use impact aid at its discretion. Section 302D-28(d), HRS, clearly states that federal funds are to be distributed in accordance with "federal regulations." We are unaware of any federal regulations allowing federal impact aid to be used for the improvement of facilities other than buildings owned by the U.S. Department of Education. See Section 8008 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

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<sup>2</sup> An argument may be made that pursuant to HRS §302D-25(a), the Commission is exempt from state laws in conflict with HRS §302D-28(d); however, HRS §302D-25(a) applies to the Charter Schools and not to the Commission or an authorizer.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Education has stated in its Impact Aid Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Request that "Basic Support Payments go into the general funds of these LEAs, which use them for such expenses as teacher salaries, computers, curricular materials, regular and special instruction programs and utilities."

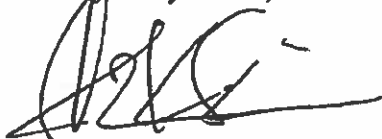


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Because the Commission's proposed use of the impact aid is unclear, it must also be stated that the Commission has no authority to retain federal funds for its own purposes. Pursuant to HRS §302D-5(b)(3), the Commission, as an authorizer,<sup>4</sup> is required to receive "applicable federal funds from the department" and to *distribute* the funds to the public charter schools it authorizes. See also HRS §§ 302D-7 (reporting requirement), 302D-17 (ongoing oversight). The Commission has no statutory authority to retain federal funds intended for charter schools.

Based on the foregoing discussion, we advise that the Commission is not authorized under HRS §302D-E to create a Facilities Funding Pilot Project; nor can it use federal impact aid to fund the project or in any manner inconsistent with HRS § 302A-1401.

Very Truly Yours,



Carter K. Siu  
Deputy Attorney General

APPROVED:



David M. Louie  
Attorney General

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<sup>4</sup> By definition, the Commission has been designated as the "authorizer" for all public charter schools. "Commission" means the "state public charter school commission established pursuant to [section] 302D-3 as a statewide authorizer." HRS § 302D-1.

# Exhibit B

State Public Charter School Commission  
Targeted Allocation Methodology  
Based on Official Enrollment as of Oct. 15, 2015

	FACILITIES 50% as reported by commission	FACILITIES 50% OEC 10/15/15	FACILITIES 50% without enrollment weight			HIGH SCHOOL 20%	Modified Network's Methodology	OEC 10/15/15	Straight Per Pupil funding	Per pupil by Modified Network's Methodology		Gain or loss Modified versus per pupil
			enrollment	High Needs 30%						Straight Per Pupil		
149 Waialae Elementary	\$ 20,219.26	\$ 46,288.88	\$ 11,368.95	\$ 15,987.47	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 27,356.42	491	\$ 92,577.76	\$ 188.55	\$ 55.72	\$ (65,221.34)	
275 Kamaile Academy	\$ 38,786.72	\$ 86,921.28	\$ 11,595.82	\$ 95,470.61	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 126,850.92	922	\$ 173,842.55	\$ 188.55	\$ 137.58	\$ (46,991.63)	
317 Laupahoehoe Community	\$ 11,566.60	\$ 27,056.84	\$ 11,116.86	\$ 21,801.09	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 52,702.44	287	\$ 54,113.68	\$ 188.55	\$ 183.63	\$ (1,411.24)	
320 Lanikai Elementary	\$ 10,453.92	\$ 30,827.83	\$ 8,822.91	\$ 5,722.79	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 14,545.70	327	\$ 61,655.65	\$ 188.55	\$ 44.48	\$ (47,109.95)	
394 Waimea Middle	\$ 11,970.14	\$ 25,265.62	\$ 12,326.86	\$ 22,073.60	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 34,400.46	268	\$ 50,531.24	\$ 188.55	\$ 128.36	\$ (16,130.78)	
396 Connections	\$ 65,411.89	\$ 33,750.34	\$ 50,416.62	\$ 31,702.42	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 101,903.53	358	\$ 67,500.69	\$ 188.55	\$ 284.65	\$ 34,402.84	
397 Kanu o ka 'Aina	\$ 61,026.73	\$ 31,487.75	\$ 50,416.62	\$ 20,620.20	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 90,821.31	334	\$ 62,975.50	\$ 188.55	\$ 271.92	\$ 27,845.81	
398 Na Wai Ola	\$ 13,192.11	\$ 19,703.41	\$ 17,343.32	\$ 13,625.68	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 30,969.00	209	\$ 39,406.82	\$ 188.55	\$ 148.18	\$ (8,437.82)	
399 West Hawaii Explorations Academy	\$ 44,132.85	\$ 26,585.47	\$ 43,181.83	\$ 12,081.44	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 75,047.76	282	\$ 53,170.93	\$ 188.55	\$ 266.13	\$ 21,876.83	
411 Kualapu'u Elementary	\$ 11,170.13	\$ 29,036.61	\$ 10,007.70	\$ 26,433.82	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 36,441.52	308	\$ 58,073.22	\$ 188.55	\$ 118.32	\$ (21,631.70)	
466 Kula Aupuni Ni'ihau A Kaelelani Aloha	\$ 8,953.02	\$ 4,619.46	\$ 50,416.62	\$ 6,449.49	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 76,650.60	49	\$ 9,238.92	\$ 188.55	\$ 1,564.30	\$ 67,411.68	
540 Haliu Ku Mana	\$ 8,749.68	\$ 13,575.56	\$ 16,763.53	\$ 7,357.87	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 43,905.89	144	\$ 27,151.11	\$ 188.55	\$ 304.90	\$ 16,754.78	
541 Voyager	\$ 50,758.33	\$ 28,376.68	\$ 46,534.54	\$ 10,537.19	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 57,071.73	301	\$ 56,753.37	\$ 188.55	\$ 189.61	\$ 318.36	
543 University Laboratory	\$ 2,691.35	\$ 41,386.59	\$ 1,688.96	\$ 8,538.76	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 30,012.21	439	\$ 82,773.19	\$ 188.55	\$ 68.36	\$ (52,760.98)	
544 Myron B. Thompson Academy	\$ 44,465.40	\$ 62,504.13	\$ 18,502.90	\$ 12,626.47	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 50,913.86	663	\$ 125,008.25	\$ 188.55	\$ 76.79	\$ (74,094.39)	
545 Ka Waiohona o ka Na'auao	\$ 31,876.60	\$ 60,052.98	\$ 13,713.32	\$ 43,238.83	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 56,952.15	637	\$ 120,105.97	\$ 188.55	\$ 89.41	\$ (63,153.82)	
546 Hakipu'u Learning Center	\$ 12,059.17	\$ 6,222.13	\$ 50,416.62	\$ 4,996.08	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 75,197.19	66	\$ 12,444.26	\$ 188.55	\$ 1,139.35	\$ 62,752.93	
547 Ke Kula o Samuel M. Kamakau	\$ 26,128.21	\$ 13,481.28	\$ 50,416.62	\$ 6,903.68	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 77,104.79	143	\$ 26,962.56	\$ 188.55	\$ 539.19	\$ 50,142.23	
548 Innovations	\$ 43,851.54	\$ 22,625.93	\$ 50,416.62	\$ 13,625.68	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 64,042.30	240	\$ 45,251.86	\$ 188.55	\$ 266.84	\$ 18,790.44	
549 Ke Ana La'ahana	\$ 2,009.86	\$ 4,148.09	\$ 12,604.15	\$ 4,360.22	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 36,748.86	44	\$ 8,296.17	\$ 188.55	\$ 835.20	\$ 28,452.69	
550 Malama Honua	\$ 7,077.73	\$ 5,939.31	\$ 31,006.22	\$ 2,815.97	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 33,822.19	63	\$ 11,878.61	\$ 188.55	\$ 536.86	\$ 21,943.58	
551 Hawaii Technology Academy	\$ 64,985.58	\$ 92,200.66	\$ 18,326.44	\$ 30,158.18	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 68,269.11	978	\$ 184,401.31	\$ 188.55	\$ 69.80	\$ (116,132.20)	
552 Kau Learning Academy	\$ 9,249.43	\$ 9,333.20	\$ 25,788.10	\$ 9,901.33	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 35,689.43	99	\$ 18,666.39	\$ 188.55	\$ 360.50	\$ 17,023.04	
554 Kihei	\$ 103,051.13	\$ 53,170.93	\$ 50,416.62	\$ 16,714.17	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 86,915.28	564	\$ 106,341.86	\$ 188.55	\$ 154.11	\$ (19,426.58)	
556 Ke Kula Ni'ihau O Kekaha	\$ 3,769.59	\$ 4,996.56	\$ 19,637.27	\$ 4,451.06	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 43,872.82	53	\$ 9,993.12	\$ 188.55	\$ 827.79	\$ 33,479.70	
557 Kua o ka La	\$ 33,254.09	\$ 15,272.50	\$ 50,416.62	\$ 14,443.22	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 84,644.33	162	\$ 30,545.00	\$ 188.55	\$ 522.50	\$ 54,099.33	
560 Volcano School of Arts and Science:	\$ 14,638.53	\$ 15,178.23	\$ 22,183.31	\$ 8,175.41	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 30,358.72	161	\$ 30,356.45	\$ 188.55	\$ 188.56	\$ 2.27	
561 Hawaii Academy of Arts and Science:	\$ 62,736.21	\$ 56,376.27	\$ 28,939.14	\$ 46,599.83	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 95,323.46	598	\$ 112,752.54	\$ 188.55	\$ 159.40	\$ (17,429.08)	
562 Ka 'Umeke Ka'eo	\$ 33,436.46	\$ 22,814.48	\$ 38,114.96	\$ 19,439.31	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 77,338.76	242	\$ 45,628.95	\$ 188.55	\$ 319.58	\$ 31,709.81	
563 Ke Kula 'o Nawahokalani'opu'u Iki	\$ 62,488.45	\$ 32,241.95	\$ 50,416.62	\$ 16,714.17	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 67,130.79	342	\$ 64,483.89	\$ 188.55	\$ 196.29	\$ 2,646.90	
564 Kanikapono	\$ 9,364.13	\$ 19,326.31	\$ 12,604.15	\$ 11,173.06	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 43,561.70	205	\$ 38,652.63	\$ 188.55	\$ 212.50	\$ 4,909.07	
565 Kawaikini	\$ 14,452.24	\$ 13,292.73	\$ 28,283.72	\$ 8,084.57	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 56,152.78	141	\$ 26,585.47	\$ 188.55	\$ 398.25	\$ 29,567.31	
566 Kona Pacific	\$ 31,221.11	\$ 20,174.79	\$ 40,257.67	\$ 15,079.09	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 55,336.76	214	\$ 40,349.57	\$ 188.55	\$ 258.58	\$ 14,987.19	
567 SEEQS	\$ 20,026.30	\$ 14,989.68	\$ 34,762.26	\$ 5,631.95	\$ 19,784.49	\$ 40,394.21	159	\$ 29,979.35	\$ 188.55	\$ 254.05	\$ 10,414.86	
	\$ 989,224.49	\$ 989,224.44	\$ 989,224.47	\$ 593,534.71	\$ 395,689.80	\$ 1,978,448.98	10,493	\$ 1,978,448.85				

# Exhibit C

State Public Charter School Commission  
Students Qualifying for COFA Allocation (Department of Defense)  
Count as of March 18, 2016

SCHOOL	Micronesian (Incl Marshall Islands)	Other Pacific Islanders (Palau)	Total Student Count	Allocation
Connections	18	3	21	14,452.37
HAAS	0	3	3	2,064.62
HTA	1	6	7	4,817.46
Kamaile	105	13	118	81,208.54
Ka Umeke	0	1	1	688.21
KANAKA	5	0	5	3,441.04
Kona Pacific	0	1	1	688.21
Nawahi	2	0	2	1,376.42
Lanikai	0	2	2	1,376.42
Laupahoehoe	6	2	8	5,505.66
Malama Honua	1	0	1	688.21
Na Wai Ola	4	1	5	3,441.04
SEEQS	0	1	1	688.21
Volcano	0	1	1	688.21
Voyager	0	1	1	688.21
Waialae	2	2	4	2,752.83
Waimea Middle	16	1	17	11,699.54
	160	38	198	136,265.20

2.4% retained by Commission to cover indirect costs.

Allocation to Schools:

3,350.78

136,265.22

Per Pupil:

688.208



Terry Low <terry@terryjlow.com>

01/08/2017 09:54 AM

To "testimony\_boe@notes.k12.hi.us"  
<testimony\_boe@notes.k12.hi.us>

cc

Subject Testimony

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Aloha Ka Kou,

I have been teaching at Kauai High School for 23 years now. I was teaching in California when I decided to accept a teaching position in Hawaii. I looked at the pay scale and step increases in Hawaii, and I figured that though the pay was less, I could survive economically given the step increases. What I didn't understand, and what no one mentioned was that the step increases were not automatically given with satisfactory performance like they were at the school I was teaching at in California. I survived the first few years here because I was able to move my salary up with class movements for the education I'd completed prior to coming to Hawaii.

Step increases generally are not really raises, but of cost of living adjustments. Without them, a teacher's pay remains stagnant or even goes backwards. And teachers' salaries did drop with the implementation of furloughs. My paycheck dropped in 2009 and didn't exceed what I earned in 2008 until 2013. I'll never fully recover from the losses I incurred because of this. The current contract helped, but when I calculated what my pay would have been if I'd been given at least a 3% cost of living increase every year since 2008, I found that I would be earning over \$500 a month more. That's a big step backwards. Thousands of dollars.

My understanding now is that the nation will face an increasing teacher shortage. Pay of course isn't the only issue: A loss of autonomy and professional respect, an increase in extra work related to data collection and "professional development," and confusing, cumbersome teacher evaluation systems don't make teaching look like an attractive profession. This is especially true considering the financial history of teachers in Hawaii. I've known many teachers with second jobs, struggling to pay off student loans, struggling to find housing, and even teachers who have declared bankruptcy.

Hawaii needs to step up and pay teachers a professional wage. A teacher's ability to adequately serve their students depends on them having enough time and money to do their job. Maslow's hierarchy of needs holds true. Teachers in Hawaii have been at the bottom of that pyramid for too long.

Mahalo,

Terry Low  
Kauai High School

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Jenny Nomura <saltyjen@gmail.com>

01/08/2017 11:27 AM

To Testimony\_BOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
cc  
Subject DOE FUNDING

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Attached Message

From Marsha D. Wellein <[welleinmd@hotmail.com](mailto:welleinmd@hotmail.com)>  
To [Testimony\\_BOE@noyes.k12.hi.us](mailto:Testimony_BOE@noyes.k12.hi.us)  
Cc 'marsha wellein' <[welleinmd@hotmail.com](mailto:welleinmd@hotmail.com)>  
Subject Testimony: Dr. Marsha D. Akau Wellein to DOE Board of Education

Date Sat, 7 Jan 2017 13: 01: 04 - 1000

Teaching salaries and conditions are extremely important to education professionals. In 1980 looked for a Hawaii DOE teaching slot and was hired for one year as a Title I teacher at Waipahu Intermediate. The salary was very low. Later, I then applied for another year's work (there was none) with DOE but accepted a teaching position at Leeward Community College as a half-time instructor with course overload which meant I taught 5- three credit courses as if I was a full time teacher but was paid \$5,000 less than a full time teacher. Think about that. What shabby treatment of a dedicated professional! The University of Hawaii got a full time teacher equivalent but saved thousands.

At the time, I was trying to obtain a mortgage and at least three bank officers told me that even if I obtained a full time teaching position with DOE or the U of Hawaii, I would NEVER qualify for a mortgage. This was for a simple townhouse (1980-1981) costing BELOW 125K. So I applied for and was hired by the US Army, Dept of Defense, as I had a Master's degree in Education, over a decade of teaching experience at Job Corps and with the DOE on Guam. On the first day, I doubled my salary working for the Army as a guidance counselor!

You want to attract teachers for the DOE now, in Hawaii? Pay teachers as professionals. The average home here is 750K. It is absurd to think that the annual salary you pay teachers would ever allow them to qualify as

homeowners. Stop doing studies. Read the studies that have already been done. Act to increase teachers' salaries or those who wish to transfer into the DOE in Hawaii.

As for teaching conditions, ask the legislators and higher education officials to work outside their air conditioned offices in classrooms for just ONE week (between April to October) and see what happens when the bill to air condition classrooms appear before them. Also, ask them to review the DOE appropriation requests for school and equipment maintenance, painting/repainting, soap in the restrooms and other such items. Are you aware that despite the health problems prevalent in Hawaii, we have many school bathrooms with NO soap for students?

Ask these same politicians and educators to step into a classroom of 7<sup>th</sup> – 12 graders for just one week in various areas on the island and see how they would handle soaring temperatures and unbelievable misbehavior. Ask what kind of support they receive from counselors and administrators who cannot seem to handle rude, obnoxious students who demonstrate no interest in learning and who obstruct learning by the majority of students who really WANT to learn. ( Many of these administrators by the way are excellent if the DOE would stop tying their hands!) How can one, two, or three students in a classroom ruin the learning for the rest of the youngsters in that classroom? Why is this allowed to happen? What happens to the majority of students who are motivated to learn but who are thus prevented from learning? Do you understand what goes on when a teacher and counselor recommend that a student be professionally evaluated due to horrid classroom behavior but cannot due to parental objections? What about consequences to parents and students for horrid student behavior? Who speaks up for the majority of students in that classroom who cannot reach their full potential for that school year because the teacher must spend an enormous amount of time and energy with the one or two youngsters who will not listen, behave, learn, or respect the teacher?

Why is there no classroom limit for kindergarteners, first or second graders? Do you really think that one teacher can assist 23 kindergartners in a class successfully, when many are below grade-level but all the material required of a teacher is ONLY on-grade level? Why hasn't the teachers' union discussed and negotiated classroom limits? Has the union made a good-faith effort to do so?

Is it even a valid question to ask why DOE cannot attract teachers and retain teachers? I think the answers are obvious. As a professional educator since 1969 I can tell you that I love teaching but was forced to leave this professional in order to obtain a mortgage and live as an average wage-earner. Years later, I tried to return to the DOE but found the environment (see above) not conducive to good learning.

Dr. Marsha Diane Akau Wellein  
[welleinmd@hotmail.com](mailto:welleinmd@hotmail.com) (B.S., M.Ed., and Ed.D)  
Doctorate in Education, Argosy University

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<tsuji@hawaii.rr.com>

01/08/2017 01:28 PM

To testimony\_boe@notes.k12.hi.us,  
tsuji@hawaii.rr.com

cc

Subject Re: Testimony 1/10/17 format edit

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January 10, 2017

Dear Chair Mizumoto and Board members,

My name is Jenifer Tsuji, and I teach 2nd Grade at Mountain View Elementary on the Big Island. I have been teaching for 21 years. I am testifying today to ask for increased funding across the state specifically designated toward music and art.

I have been told that one of the main reasons for having a statewide school system is to provide an equitable education to all students, regardless of zip code or socioeconomic status. As a teacher at a rural outer island school with 95% free and reduced school lunch, and less than stellar attendance and test data, I can unequivocally say that is NOT the case.

Art and music are both so important to the well-being of our children, of society, of humanity. Without exposure to these things, society suffers. A well-rounded education should be a basic right of every child, and yet without funding specifically directed at these subjects, our neediest students are being deprived of opportunities in art and music that their peers luckier to live in other areas are getting. We need to have an equitable funding situation for music and the arts in our public schools, no matter where they are located.

In the 80s and 90s, when I was a student in the Hawaii Public School and University of Hawaii system, public schools were able to offer very close to the same opportunities across the state, despite being in remote or poverty stricken areas. For example, the band program in the tiny remote school of Laupahoehoe was able to offer students the same kinds of musical opportunities for playing and college scholarships that larger schools in Hilo were able to offer. My own alma mater, Kaua'i High School, fielded over a 100 piece marching band in the 80s, despite being on a small neighbor island. Even Molokai and Lana'i High Schools were able to offer band programs to their students.

In '95-96, the first year I started my teaching career, district art and music resource support positions that formerly helped to support teachers in these subject areas were already beginning to be cut. Then, in 2001, school assessment and accountability became a huge focus under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. As a result, all schools felt pressure to make assessment of tested areas their main focus, especially those schools with lower test scores.

Shortly thereafter, in 2004, Hawaii passed Act 51, also known as the Reinventing Education Act, which provided schools with funding via weighted school formulas, as is still the case today. Prior to Act 51, all secondary schools had designated positions for music/band, librarians, Career and Technical Education, etc. Elementary schools had resource teachers based on enrollment, but were allocated at least one in addition to a full time librarian. Act 51 changed that by giving schools lump sum budgets instead of line item positions from the state, with the idea that local school control would be more beneficial for schools. Under Act 51 schools could choose how to use funding instead of being obligated to fund specific programs such as band, art, and classes such as shop, culinary arts, etc. However, the added pressure on schools from the No Child Left Behind Act to increase test scores led to many schools narrowing their main focus to the tested subjects of English Language Arts, Science, and Math.

One of the tenets of the No Child Left Behind Act was to reduce the achievement gap. But over the last 10-15 years that these policies have been in place, the achievement gap has actually widened in many areas. Rural schools, especially those with low socioeconomic demographics, have had their extracurricular activities and electives cut heavily, especially in art and music.

When I started teaching on the Big Island in '95-96, there were 8 public high schools, all with band programs, and most with feeder middle school band programs. 20 years later, there are only 3 full band programs left, plus one jazz program at Honoka'a, and there are now 9 public high schools. The schools that were in the most rural areas with the lowest socioeconomic demographics were the ones whose music programs were cut first. I do not know exactly how many full-time Elementary music specialists there were on the Big Island 20 years ago, probably at least 5 or 6, but today there are none. All have been cut.

Although I am an elementary teacher, I am also a musician, and I have had the opportunity to help out with the local secondary school band programs over the years. Some of my fondest memories are the times I spent helping the band program at Ka'u high school, a school in a very small, rural, and geographically isolated community that was beginning to be hit hard economically by the closing of the sugar mill. In the few years I helped out during the mid to late 90s, quite a few students that might not have otherwise been able to go on to higher education were able to actually go to college on band scholarships. However, as a result of NCLB and Act 51, their band program is long gone, the band room is used for faculty meetings, and the instruments sit collecting dust on the shelves. This scenario has played out at Kohala, Laupahoehoe (which has since become a charter), Pahoa, and even larger high schools such as Konawaena and Kealahou. How many students in the past 15-20 years from those communities could have gone to college on band scholarships, but were never even given the chance to pick up an instrument? Even the 3 high schools here that are lucky enough to still have full band programs are constantly struggling to keep them afloat.

I do not blame the administrators—they are put into Catch-22 situations. Struggling schools are pressured by the superintendent to focus their funding on improving test scores, and yet by narrowing the curriculum, they are further contributing to the achievement gap. We are denying our rural and impoverished communities the same opportunities for a well-rounded education that their peers in more affluent areas have. On Oahu elementary music positions are beginning to make a comeback, and band programs at the middle and high school levels are mostly fully funded between school and booster resources. The Turnaround Arts program has brought a focus on music and the arts back to elementary schools in Waianae, which was determined to be one of

the neediest Zones of School Innovation during Race to the Top, along with my own district of Keaau-Ka'u-Pahoa. But the elementary schools in my complex on the Big Island currently have no access to this program. Our rural schools feel the pressure to focus almost solely on tested subjects. I have been told by past administrators that we do not have time in our schedule for such "unimportant" things as art and music. Many of our outer island bands that still exist have no well-off band booster programs to fill in the funding gaps from the school and DOE, and are literally playing instruments held together by zip ties.

Music education from preK-12 in the rest of the country (and world!) is seen as a core academic subject, along with reading writing, and math, and is usually mandated and/or funded at the state level. Under NCLB and ESSA, music is actually considered a core subject, but without direct funding from the state, it is not being taught equitably to all students in our Hawaii public school system. There are many, many studies on the importance of music education to all academic areas, but more important is the value of music for its own sake. Music permeates almost everything we do in our lives. Please, ask our legislators to not only continue to fund our public schools, but to increase funding for art and music so we can provide these opportunities to ALL of our students, not just those lucky enough to be in the right zip code.

Thank you.

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BOE AGENDA ITEM: V.C. – General Board Meeting  
TESTIMONY: Comment

Honorable chair Mizumoto and esteemed board members.

I am David Negaard, an English teacher at H.P. Baldwin High School on Maui. I urge the BOE to join HSTA in advocating both at the Capitol and in public spaces that legislators increase education funding and improve teacher recruitment and retention. We must be partners in pursuing innovative ideas that improve the working conditions of our teachers and the learning conditions of our children.

I'm not going to sugarcoat it—Hawai'i public schools are woefully underfunded, and that reality hits students where they learn. It is a chronic problem and until consistent, equitable, sufficient funding is secured, public education will continue to struggle.

## Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Funding is fundamental to teacher recruitment and retention, which profoundly impact student education

The effects of inadequate funding—ranging from inadequate facilities and supplies through excessive class size to inadequate teacher compensation—inevitably affect teacher retention, and, as reported in a Los Angeles Times op-ed this week, “Education researchers have repeatedly shown, in particular, that teacher turnover impairs student achievement” (Abrams).

- Like many schools, Baldwin started the school year with many classrooms staffed by emergency hires and long-term substitutes. Students served by multiple substitutes over the span of a single course have a different and usually much less meaningful experience than those with a single, appropriately prepared, licensed teacher over the same span.
- In the English department, we began with just one vacancy filled by a long-term sub, but also with four teachers new to Baldwin, three of them new to Hawai'i. One of those new-to-Hawai'i teachers struggled for *months* to find affordable lodging; another lasted just three weeks; that position has been filled by a long-term sub ever since. To put this in perspective, the ELA department at Baldwin has eleven teachers. 45% of the department is new to the school this year, and two of those, or 18% of the department, are long-term subs. The lack of continuity in those two classrooms puts those students at a disadvantage. Teacher turnover and emergency staffing hurt student education!

## Serving Student Needs

Funding impacts the capacity of teachers to serve student needs

The struggles of inadequately compensated teachers who stay also negatively affect student education.

- While I myself am not leaving, the meager compensation I receive has an affect on the quality of service I provide. Like *many* other teachers, I must work a second job in order

to stay afloat. My colleagues wait tables, push wheelchairs at the airport, and drive for Uber, among other jobs. I am fortunate to have a side job in education that pays well and that I enjoy, but even so, I cannot give my undivided attention to my students; when my contract day ends, I am obliged to set aside my work on behalf of my students and go do what my side job pays me to do. Even with my side job, I struggle to pay my student loans and my living expenses. Choosing to remain in the teaching profession is a costly decision, more so in Hawai'i, where teacher pay, when adjusted for the cost of living, is lowest in the nation.

- Like most teachers, I care deeply about my students. Throughout my career, my employers have banked on that caring, offering teachers less than we are worth *knowing* that teachers often just *take* it for the sake of our students. I didn't get into teaching to become rich, but neither did I become a teacher to go broke. And lately, I've remembered that students are watching—that what they see teachers endure shapes what they will accept from their employers—and I wonder if what they see is good enough for them. I want my students to expect and demand better treatment than I myself receive, but will they think to advocate for themselves if they see me and their other teachers accepting all that we do?

Poor teacher compensation is a false economy. As noted in the Abrams op-ed:

Since the days of Henry Ford, business has understood “efficiency wage theory.” In 1914, Ford doubled the pay of assembly-line workers from \$2.50 a day to \$5. Economists later validated the results: It costs less to pay more, as employers attract and retain better workers and thus improve production and even reduce costs of both supervision and turnover. Studies show a similar tight relationship between teacher pay and educational outcomes.

## Learning Environments and Resource

Funding directly affects the quality of learning environments and quantity and quality of resources

- When I transferred to Baldwin at the beginning of this academic year, my assigned classroom was initially unoccupiable due to ongoing roof repairs necessitated by years of perhaps unavoidable neglect. For the first week of school (it could easily have been *much* longer), my classes met in other teachers' classrooms during those teachers' prep periods; I carried whatever materials I might need from room to room, with no “home” of my own. When I moved into the classroom assigned to me, I found ample evidence of water damage. For example, the cabinetry used to store books were removed at my request—they were crumbling, and the doors were off or falling off—and will, I trust, *eventually* be replaced. In the meantime, I'm not holding my breath.
- I'm asked to teach 21st century skills and I *want* to. When teaching at Lahaina Intermediate School, I was fortunate to have a class set of iPads, and my students used them on almost a daily basis for exploration, research, collaboration, and creation, managed by the Google Apps for Education suite of tools, but at Baldwin, I compete with many other teachers (not to mention testing, testing, *testing*) for access to a sharply limited number of computer labs.

- With respect to testing, I wonder how much the Department pays for testing services—including but not limited to SBA, iReady, STAR 360, ACT and ACT Explore—not to mention the cost of testing labs and resources and staff test coordinator positions. I also wonder at the cost of providing mandated curriculum year after year, and how that expenditure impacts funding other worthy needs.
- Our principal struggles to balance myriad needs with an inadequate budget and inevitably *must* shortchange one important priority to fund another. For example, a proposed “STEM” (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) course addition for next year requires funding support, but so do basic needs, technology upgrades, staffing, and so on. What do we cut in order to provide our kids with educational opportunities that may light the fire for learning?
- We have four non-classroom teachers on staff: a testing coordinator, a curriculum coordinator, a mentor coordinator, and an RTI coordinator. Those positions cost something, and that cost must be balanced in other areas; again, our principal must meet perceived needs with limited resources, and when one position is funded, chances are another—perhaps a classroom position—goes unfunded.

Our students deserve better, and their teachers do, too. Please, join HSTA to advocate publicly for better funding for schools (and teachers) our keiki deserve.

Sincerely,

David Negaard  
Teacher, H.P. Baldwin High School  
Maui

## Works Cited

Abrams, Samuel E. "Forget Charter Schools and Vouchers — Here Are Five Business Ideas School Reformers Should Adopt." Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles Times, 8 Jan. 2017, [www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-abrams-good-business-models-for-education-20170108-story.html](http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-abrams-good-business-models-for-education-20170108-story.html).



cchaudron08@gmail.com  
Sent by: cchaudron08@gmail.com  
01/08/2017 09:01 PM

To Testimony\_BOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
cc  
Subject Testimony: Camila Chaudron to Board of Education

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Testimony Re: BOE Meeting on January 10

Dear Members of Hawai'i's Board of Education,

My name is Camila Chaudron and I am a high school teacher at a private school in Honolulu. I support increased funding for the Department of Education so that Hawai'i can attract and retain better teachers, and so that our State may provide better resources for Hawai'i's students.

I support increased funding for the DOE for several reasons:

**1. More funding for the DOE = paying our teachers a living wage**

My sister is a middle school teacher at a charter school in Kaimuki. She is an amazing person and a truly talented, charismatic teacher, loved by her students and colleagues. Also, she is highly qualified: She graduated at the top of her undergraduate class and then got her Master's in teaching from a prestigious university on the mainland – and she is certified to teach in several states. She came home to be closer to family, but she is having trouble making ends meet as a teacher here.

Despite regularly working 12-15 hour days and weekends, my sister, like many of her colleagues, has almost no money left each month after paying rent, food, and loans. **It is unacceptable that full-time, highly-trained, sought-after professionals who bear the heavy responsibility of educating and caring for our State's future should be living paycheck to paycheck.**

And yet, my sister is lucky. She is young, she does not yet have a family.

**Every public school teacher I know –and I know many– regularly considers leaving the profession because of the long hours and low pay.** No matter how much they believe in the importance of their work, teachers also need to feed their families. If this issue goes unaddressed, the quality of our teaching workforce will diminish because all the bright, intelligent, motivated teachers will leave and find other ways to care for their families.

**2. More funding for the DOE = attracting better teachers**

In addition to supporting the many good teachers we already have on the Islands, higher wages will help our teaching force become stronger. Research and common sense indicate that higher salaries attract better performing teachers. We need our educators to be well educated, to be able to continue learning, and those high-quality teachers will be drawn in by competitive wages.

**3. More funding for the DOE = more resources for students**



Teachers are often martyrs and will do anything for their "kids." Martyrdom is unhealthy but effective, and the State benefits tremendously from the generosity of its teachers. And yet, there's only so much teachers can do without the resources to care for their students' needs.

Our public school classrooms are lacking in basic resources for students. Many of Hawai'i's students are homeless and/or hungry and coming from abusive backgrounds. **Our schools need to address these issues by providing healthy, affordable lunch options and counseling, at the very least.**

We should also be providing arts programs to give students an avenue to express themselves creatively. We need better technology in our classrooms to equip our children for a digital age. We need air conditioning for those hot summer days when students are unable to think because of the heat.

There are many more reasons I believe that funding for the DOE should increase, namely on principle, but these are the three most practical and pressing.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimonial.

Sincerely,  
Camila Chaudron  
2081 Makiki Place  
Honolulu, Hawaii  
96822

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Andrew Jones <jonesbaron23@yahoo.com>

01/08/2017 09:24 PM

To "testimony\_boe@notes.k12.hi.us"  
<testimony\_boe@notes.k12.hi.us>

cc

Subject Testimony for 1-10-17 General  
Business Meeting, Item VA

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Name: Andy Jones, Radford High School Language Arts teacher  
Meeting: General Business meeting, 1-10-2017  
Agenda Item: V.A. (School funding and teacher recruitment/retention)  
Position: Comment

Aloha, members of the Board.

Today I would like to comment on the impact of school funding and teacher recruitment/retention from a personal perspective.

I began my Hawaii teaching career in 2007, after teaching English as a Foreign Language in Taiwan 1994-2006. In the year prior to being hired at Radford, I certified as a Language Arts teacher at UH/Manoa.

In relocating to my home country, my wife and I chose Hawaii for three major reasons. First, having been out of the American workforce for twelve years, I wanted to move to an area of the country in which I would not have to struggle to find teaching work. Having learned of the chronic teacher shortage in Hawaii, I guessed correctly that it would be relatively easy for me to find a teaching position after acquiring teacher certification. Second, I also hoped that my wife would be able to find work as a Chinese teacher, seeing that Hawaii is a state with a vibrant history of Chinese immigration and Chinese ethnic contribution. (This hope, while at the time no more than a hunch, panned out; my wife is now the lead Chinese teacher at 'Iolani School.) Third, I suspected that, for the reasons just mentioned, Hawaii might prove a suitable choice for an environment in which to raise our two bilingual/bicultural children.

My family and I love Hawaii and everything about it; after eleven years of residency, we have come to regard it as our home. However, life in this state for two teachers with two children has been a considerable challenge. We are homeowners, but we became homeowners at a certain sacrifice. We know, for instance, that if we had relocated to almost any school district on the mainland, we could afford to take periodic trips to Taiwan and Pennsylvania for our children to visit their grandparents. We could also live comfortably without frequently having to put off necessary car and home repairs, and

without racking up chronic debt on two credit cards.

Even so, we still believe that the sacrifice has been worth it and are not at this point looking to relocate to more affordable environs. I should add, however, that the state almost lost in us two highly experienced, highly committed teachers, who together operated a thriving private English school in Taiwan for a dozen years. When the furlough cuts began in 2009, I did not think that we could afford any longer to remain in the least affordable state for teachers. Sadly and very reluctantly, I began looking at mainland districts and filling out job applications.

Today I consider it highly fortunate that a combination of factors led me to discontinue my mainland job search and to recommit to staying in Hawaii. First, several principals of mainland schools encouraged me to stay put and ride out the recession, as at that time strict hiring freezes had been placed on school districts across the country. Second, and more importantly, my wife landed the job at 'Iolani, which represented an income boost into a salary range at which we could qualify for a home loan (though barely); I also took into consideration the tremendous benefits that one of our children would receive from attending one of the nation's finest private K-12s under a faculty tuition waiver.

Had it not been for these two factors, we would have left by 2010, similar to the dozens of teachers and teacher-couples I have known over the years who have left Hawaii in search of locations where they can thrive as teachers and raise children without being financially penalized.

This leads me to another negative impact of low teacher salaries on Hawaii schools. It is well known that we have the nation's highest teacher turnover. I have been a Language Arts teacher at Radford now for a decade. Our department has about ten teachers, give or take one or two depending on the school year. Only two of us have been at Radford since I was first hired in 2007; indeed, the two of us were the only members of our current staff at Radford as recently as 2012.

It is a truism in teaching, and one supported by significant research, that a strong, highly experienced teacher's effectiveness increases dramatically when working with a group of other strong, highly experienced teachers and is correspondingly limited in effectiveness when this is not the case. As hard as my colleague and I have tried to maintain high department standards, doing so has proven at times an extreme challenge in a situation in which a typical school-year sees a third to a half of the teachers in our department exit out the proverbial revolving door.

Before I conclude, I would like to mention a final aspect that has rarely been mentioned in local discussions pertaining to low teacher salaries, and that has to do with the toll that salary-climbing often takes on teachers at the outset of their career. It is not a secret that roughly half of Hawaii teachers are forced to work second jobs in order to continue teaching. Very fortunately, I have never had to take on a second job. High school teaching in itself is very demanding, and I know that I would be far less effective a teacher if I had to work even just a few hours per week. However, while I have been

lucky enough not to have to work two jobs, I was forced to rush through academic and professional development coursework, during the initial four-year period after we had decided to remain in Hawaii, so that, through salary increases, my wife and I could meet our high monthly mortgage payments. From 2010-2014, I was often enrolled in as many as four classes at a time so that I could rise as quickly as possible on the salary chart and improve my family's financial situation. This was almost as much of a challenge as working a full-time second job. My professional effectiveness decreased substantially during this time. I bore a sense of guilt towards my students constantly as I was forced to cut many corners in grading and planning, and I very often asked myself whether it was all worth it and whether I shouldn't just resume my search for an affordable mainland district.

In the end, I remained in Hawaii, just as I have remained in a profession that has been increasingly beset with challenges – challenges that are leading inexorably to what will likely soon prove to be the most pressing personnel crisis we have ever seen in American public education. But I also know that I am a fortunate exception and that the state has lost hundreds, perhaps thousands of excellent teachers like me due to low salaries.

I conclude by asking you to please support Hawaii teachers in our efforts this year to obtain more reasonable compensation and, with it, a more secure footing in our profession. We deserve no less, and our students deserve no less than teachers who stay put because they are living comfortably.

Mahalo,  
Andy Jones

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John Bickel <[jbickel15@yahoo.com](mailto:jbickel15@yahoo.com)>

01/09/2017 07:40 AM

To "Testimony\_BOE@notes.k12.hi.us"  
<[Testimony\\_BOE@notes.k12.hi.us](mailto:Testimony_BOE@notes.k12.hi.us)>

cc

Subject Agenda Item HSTA Proposal

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Aloha Board Members:

I have been a secondary school teacher on 'Oahu since 1989. Since 2001 I have taught at private school. For the twelve years before that I taught public school. I don't think it is fair that resources for private schools are so much more plentiful and class sizes smaller compared to public schools. I recently interviewed a public school student for admission to private school. The student complained about the high teacher turn-over in her current middle school. I find it particularly ironic that many legislators who are unwilling to increase funding for public school are either from private school or send their own children to private school. Stop the apartheid! Fund public schools properly.

John Bickel

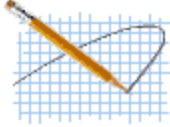
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**Debbie Anderson/WAIAKEAI/HIDOE**

01/09/2017 01:40 PM

To testimony\_BOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
cc  
Subject Re: 1/10/17 BOE General Meeting  
Testimony 📎

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Thank you

testimony\_BOE

When a identifying name is not included in testi...

01/09/2017 01:34:13 PM

From: testimony\_BOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
To: Debbie Anderson/WAIAKEAI/HIDOE@HIDOE  
Date: 01/09/2017 01:34 PM  
Subject: Re: 1/10/17 BOE General Meeting Testimony

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Recruited out of college with a desirable Master's degree in Special Education, I took a severe pay loss over other positions offered around the country in order to move to Hawaii. A year earlier, my mother had been recruited to nurse at *Queen's Hospital*. Together our starting salaries in the 1980s were sufficient for a mortgage on a Windward condo. My colleagues assisted me in acclimatizing my first year and planning my summer wedding to my best friend from college.

My husband chose to forego an offer as a Costco executive in Washington to support my teaching career in Hawaii, and became instead a substitute teacher. As newlyweds we continued to share the condo mortgage, made feasible by my mother's preference for night shifts. We rode *Frank Fasi's* city buses for 7 years to save money.

During the early 1990s, I volunteered on the HSTA Negotiations Committee working on the salary schedule. As teachers do not get annual step increases, our primary means of increasing compensation is adding educational qualifications or classes. A doctoral degree was off the right of the salary scale paid an extra 6%. I set my sights to work toward this highest professional ranking. When my mother shifted toward day work, my husband and I rented a separate part of another home, and penny-pinchd toward a mortgage downpayment of our own. I helped write the grant to start Hawaii's e-school. I completed a second Master's degree and practicum, as well as the Technology and Telecommunication for Teachers (T3 course).

Though I dream of living upcountry Maui near the High Performance Computing Center (HPCC), this is completely out of reach financially. In order to afford to own a home on a teacher's salary in Hawaii I had to move away from my O'ahu family. Waimea school offered a teacher's cottage, and I worked 1 year using e-rate to wire our campus for the internet and teaching credit technology coursework for the teachers and school community. I was awarded the Miliken Teachers of Hawaii Technology Educator of the Year scholarship to the National Education Computing Conference held in San Diego.

When working in Honoka'a, we rented to avoid having to commute through the gulches daily so we could coach (18 years). Initially we tried a yurt, which was not just cold but moldy. Next we lived in a cottage which had wired phone access but not television. As a professional courtesy, I continued offering free credit courses to colleagues including Action Research, English Language Learner (ELL), etc. I became a chapter President and developed an Articulation Day. I earned my National Board Certification and developed statewide the free 2009 and 2012 *Take One* National Board Entry credit courses. I became co-coordinator of the Hawaii State Senior Project and offered credit coursework for other Senior Project Coordinators. I initiated the AASL National Task Force on Capstone Projects. Working for over a quarter century in Hawaii, our salary schedule still does not pay Master teachers at least \$100,000.

The current salary schedule doesn't support "innovation" adequately, and its ceiling actually discourages career teachers from staying in the classroom. Part of de-professionalizing education was removing separate doctoral funding. Recently the doctorate 6% was subsumed back into the highest formal Class VII which I had obtained already, removing financial remuneration for continuing pursuit of this highest degree. The average cost of a doctoral degree is no longer feasible to pursue. All teachers who had worked like me for almost two decades toward our doctorates should have been grandfathered. Rather than being forced into education Administration as the only professional salary increase available, I am preparing sadly to leave Hawaii.

## DRAFT 2minute Oral Testimony

TESTIMONY:Comment(s)

BOE AGENDA ITEM : V.C. - General Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 10, 2017

I am Teressa Shimizu, a Career & Technical Education teacher at Governor WR Farrington High School, in Honolulu. This is my 14th year teaching in public education. Like my colleagues here today, I am urging the Board of Education to join with HSTA to advocate with urgency that the State Legislature increase funding for public education in Hawaii. We, and by we I mean students, parents, education professionals, education support personnel, and other stakeholders, are sorely aware of the enormous funding deficits our public schools face year in and year out.

Funding, or lack thereof, affects public education in a number of ways. The situation is much bigger than just a shortage of funds for classroom supplies and materials. If you think of each school campus as a non-profit business entity or “branch” let’s say, allocating adequate funding for personnel & staffing, facilities maintenance & repair, day-to-day operations, promotion & public relations, 21st century technology, research & development, product (student) formation/casting, and customer/stakeholder (society, workforce, businesses, etc.) service is critical to producing a viable, sustainable outcome - the student; a future contributing, tax-paying member of society. In our public school “branches” many of these areas are so pathetically underfunded that it is surprising that “business” continues to be conducted or operate at all.

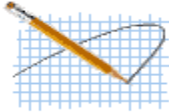
In my personal experience, the facilities and grounds of my campus are in such gross disrepair that many areas are unsafe; there is erosion, rust, mold, dust & dirt, termites, cracked and peeling paint, water leakage damage; it goes on and on. And of course, most of the classrooms are not air conditioned. Even if there are donations from business and community



of individual air conditioners for classrooms, the electrical infrastructure is so lacking that the system cannot support those devices. More funding needs to be obtained to correct these horrifically neglected conditions. My students feel this neglect personally. They often ask me, “why?” “Why can’t more be done to make the facilities safer, up to date, and look like a place where people are respected and want to come to learn? Doesn’t anyone care?” Please show them that we care!

My students also question me about personnel and staffing conditions; “is my *teacher* qualified?” “In my other class, why do we have a different teacher every week?” Or they confide in me that the “new” teacher “doesn’t know what to do.” And each year more and more of my colleagues have to take on second jobs to supplement their income. These conditions are a direct result of a substantial lack of funding for teachers’ salaries, recruitment and retention, and up-to-date training and professional development. For my content area, Career & Technical Education, many individuals can work in their respective industry, make a much better salary and not have to deal with the administrative and evaluative aspect(s) of the job of teacher. But, we need these individuals with industry experience and knowledge to train and educate the next generation. It is critical to our goals (strategic State, District, Complex, School, Teacher, parent, right down to the goals of students) that a substantial funding increase is urgently sought after. I appeal to you to work with HSTA on a rightful and well-suited salary for education professionals, and advocate for additional funding from the State Legislature. It’s not additional expense or tax-payer burden; it’s a wise investment in our future. Thank you very much.





hughey2000@aol.com

01/09/2017 12:48 PM

To testimony\_boe@notes.k12.hi.us  
cc  
Subject Testimony, BOE Agenda 1-10-17

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BOEtest 1-10-17.pages

**Honorable Chair Ron Mizumoto and members of the Board of Education,**

**Agenda item, C. Community Stakeholder Presentation: Hawaii State Teachers Association: working with the Board of Education and Department of Education to improve school funding and the recruitment and retention of teachers.**

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony. Improving school funding is essential in order to finally providing a quality public education for every keiki in the state!

In 2006 I was starting my first full year as a third grade Special Education teacher at King Kamehameha III Elementary in Lahaina. Around November I noticed a problem with the third grade roof. The metal roof had holes in it. When it rained, the rain would go through the metal roof and soak the cane board, then the cane board would get soft and fall. Some kids in multiple classrooms were being rained on, inside the classroom. One third grade student had a massive piece of soaked cane board fall from the ceiling outside the classroom and almost struck her. I was appalled by this problem. How on earth can an elementary school in the United States be a dangerous place for kids? I had asked the administration how this problem came to be. The roof was scheduled for replacement, the legislature had funded a new roof but the Republican Governor Linda Lingle had not released the funding. The resolution to this problem was easy, call the Maui News. If the public was informed they would not stand for it and Linda Lingle would be forced to release the funding. The Maui News released a story on the issue and my principal was swamped with phone calls and not happy about it. The roof was fixed within the next coming months but as a new teacher this came at a price. I felt targeted by the principal and this event gave myself unnecessary stress over the situation.

I am currently still teaching at King Kamehameha III Elementary. I have a great relationship with the current principal and we both have shared our frustrations with school funding and recruitment and retention of teachers. The city of Lahaina on Maui is very expensive and thus provides more challenges. I was informed that the Canoe District has the least amount of highly qualified teachers and I believe it has to do with it having one of the highest costs of living. Filing every position with teachers who have a degree and teaching certificate is always a challenge. Teachers moving here from the mainland always starts with what I perceive as an exceptional experience of teaching in paradise but often is followed with overwhelming stress on not being able to make it due to being paid the worst salary in the country when factored in the cost of living. There is actually a resolution that was passed at the 2014 Democratic Party of Hawaii convention called, "Teacher pay should not be the worst in the country." Since 2005 I have noticed that the teachers who stay and teach in Hawaii have a spouse, the second income allows them the ability to teach or they are willing to work a second job in order to teach in Hawaii. 40% of teachers in Hawaii have a second job. I came here with zero credit card debt. I didn't believe in it. After six months I racked up \$5,000 dollars in debt due to moving and paying for just groceries. My meager salary put me in a hole right away. June of 2006 I obtained a second job working at a fine dining restaurant in Lahaina. The general manager said he would put me on three days a week and just let him know if I needed more or less days, he respected teachers. He moved away and the next general manager had me working up to five days a week and told me he could care less that I was a teacher, it's all about the corporation, you need to be available seven days a week. I have depended on that job in order to go pay check to pay check until last August. do to a bulging disc. I would leave school at three to get ready for the second job, leaving around ten or eleven and going to sleep around midnight, waking up the next day with only six

hours of sleep. I would go to school tired, soar, and do it all over again. I can't express how depressing it is to wake up without being fully rested and just getting use to the physical and mental demands of trying to survive working two jobs. Teaching is a profession not a part time job. No teacher went into debt of 50,000 or more to work two jobs. This is why teacher vacancies have always been a problem and are getting worse. This year Hawaii started with 1,600 job vacancies. Teachers need to be paid a livable wage in order for this state to provide a quality public education.

One esteemed individual told me that when his father started teaching a long time ago, he was told, "teach the kids but don't teach them too much." Education in Hawaii is unequal by design and that needs to change. Every student in Hawaii deserves a separate and vastly increased funding stream solely for public education. Thanks to Representative Lopresti's resolution in order for Hawaii to go from paying teachers the 50th worst paid salary in the country to 49, we have to pay teachers ten thousand dollars more annually.

Hawaii is in an educational crisis. We desperately need improved funding for recruitment and retention of teachers. Teachers shouldn't have to be activist to make sure school structures are safe. Teachers shouldn't have to work second jobs to survive because it takes away from their ability to fulfill their job duties and responsibilities. **This is of the upmost importance because the real cost of not properly funding school structures and reasonable teacher salaries is a poor education for our keiki.** Teachers teach all other professions. When our children have a poor education our economy suffers. It is time that we remedy this problem once and for all, together. Please join HSTA to advocate publicly for improved funding.

Mahalo,  
Justin Hughey  
King Kamehameha III Elementary  
Second Grade Special Education Teacher

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Lisa Morrison <lamorrison17@gmail.com>

01/09/2017 12:56 PM

To testimony\_boe@notes.k12.hi.us

cc

Subject Testimony for GBM Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2017

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Honorable Chair Mizumoto and Board Members,

I'm Lisa Morrison, I teach at Maui Waena Intermediate and I support properly funding our public schools with the intention of recruiting and retaining quality teachers in our state. I write this testimony to urge you to join with teachers in asking our lawmakers to make a dedicated, sustainable fund for public education in Hawai'i.

The undeniable truth is that we do not have a stable workforce in education right now. Teacher turnover is high, and in Hawai'i, it is even higher than the national average. The Department knows this, as it has set a goal in the updated Strategic Plan to increase retention over the first five years of a teacher's career to 60%. The problem is the inadequacy of this goal in solving the problem. This 3-year goal in the Plan, even if it is successful, will only move us to the national average for poor teacher retention. Also, focusing entirely on the first five years ignores the fact that Hawai'i continues to lose its teachers after that. There is little growth potential in the current salary schedule, even for teachers who commit to many years of hard work. Our salary schedule "compresses" salaries so that teachers' earnings stagnate over years of experience, even as teachers pursue continued education in their field. That commitment to improving our craft makes less and less financial sense as time goes on. I have 5 years experience in the DOE, and my colleague with 25 years experience is located in the same "class" as I am, since there is a cap to credit for education. This same colleague is just 5 "steps" above me on the pay scale, because Hawai'i doesn't acknowledge each year of teaching experience, meaning she earns only slightly more than I do despite her long-standing commitment to teaching Hawai'i students.

Unfilled vacancies are an increasing problem in our schools. Where vacancies are filled, between 30 and 70% are considered "emergency hires," teachers who haven't completed education programs approved by the state. Recently, the percentage of those emergency hires has been decreasing, which at face value seems good. But actually, that drop happened because fewer positions overall are being filled. They can't even find enough emergency hires, which forces schools to bring in unqualified, substitute teachers who may be in those positions all school year. Not only are many entering teachers inexperienced and untrained, but they may not stay long enough to become fully effective teachers.

Why can't we attract and keep qualified teachers? The main culprit is low pay, which for the

high cost of living in Hawai'i puts teacher salaries at the very bottom nationally. For those who are willing to teach despite the financial risks, many find few reasons to stay.

On a brief break in the professional development held for our school a few days ago, I had a familiar conversation with a new teacher. She said, "They can't afford to keep me. I would have to make at least \$6,000 more a year in order to stay. When they hire you, they totally twist what they tell you you're going to make. You take home so little, and what is really killing me is how high my debt is from college." The sad coda to her statement is that she spent our lunchtime break researching jobs on the mainland.

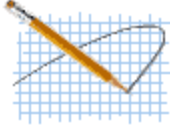
We must remember who suffers most from all of these policies – our students. That's why this is an integral part in our larger discussion about the schools our keiki deserve. The solution is improving the financial commitment to education in Hawai'i: pay teachers better salaries, allow upward movement through the salary schedule for those who stay, and implement debt forgiveness programs for teachers who pursue professional training.

Lisa Morrison  
Wailuku

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**Mireille Ellsworth** <[ellsworthhsta@gmail.com](mailto:ellsworthhsta@gmail.com)>

01/09/2017 06:53 PM

To: [testimony\\_boe@notes.k12.hi.us](mailto:testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us)  
cc  
Subject: 2nd submission! TESTIMONY for  
General Business Meeting Jan. 10  
1:30 pm

Aloha!

As you can see below, I sent this originally on Sunday at 2:00 pm and notice that it is not appearing on your webpage. Can you please rectify the problem and make sure Board members get copies? I'd greatly appreciate it as I am coming to testify in person and will be referring to my written testimony in my speech.

Mahalo,  
Mireille Ellsworth

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Mireille Ellsworth** <[ellsworthhsta@gmail.com](mailto:ellsworthhsta@gmail.com)>

Date: Sunday, January 8, 2017

Subject: TESTIMONY for General Business Meeting Jan. 10 1:30 pm

To: [testimony\\_boe@notes.k12.hi.us](mailto:testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us)

TESTIMONY for General Business Meeting of the Hawai'i State Board of Education

Tues. Jan. 10, 2017 1:30 pm

Comment: Agenda item V. C.

Chair Mizumoto and Board Members,

My name is Mireille Ellsworth, an English and Drama Teacher at Waiakea High School in Hilo. I would like to ask that you join HSTA in advocating for increased funding for public education by testifying this legislative session and publicly speaking out whenever there is an opportunity.

Allow me to give you the reality as to how funding affects my students, especially in the elective classes that I teach. Waiakea High School prides itself on its Smaller Learning Communities framed around career academies, and I teach two sections of drama. However, this program is crippled in the scope of how far I can take my students in the performing arts. Our school of

nearly 1200 students does not have a theater. We don't even have a "multi-purpose room" with a stage like many other schools have. The major fundraiser for our student activities program is our annual Variety Show, but annually, we must hire professional lighting and sound companies to help us set up a make-shift performance space in the gym. This eats into the money students could use for their extra-curricular activities. Our local Waiakea Lions Club donated a platform which serves as a make-shift stage in our cafeteria, but there is no "backstage" nor theatrical lighting available nor is there even a curtain.

In order to teach the acting classes and put on productions, the school's head custodian and I jerry-rigged the only "curtain" I could afford given my budget of less than \$300 the year we put it up in the classroom I use. We installed a cable that crosses the room about 12 feet high, and I literally used rolls of black plastic from Home Depot which is used to cover floors when painting, taped the panels of plastic together with black Gorilla duct tape, and punched holes and used black zip ties as curtain hooks. I must train the student actors to stop saying lines when other actors are entering and exiting the stage because of the loud plastic rustling of the "curtain." We have a few theatrical stage lights, but no lighting board, so students sit below each light and turn it on and off using a switch on a power bar. If we turn on more than four stage lights simultaneously, the whole building's circuit breakers trip, powering down two other classrooms. In fact, our class has inadvertently set off the school's fire alarm when we tried to use a smoke machine for special effects because the room is not meant to be a theater.

I have students taking acting more than one year in their high school experience, some even for all four years of high school. There have been amazing productions, many student-written and student-directed. Autistic students have miraculously come out of their shell and found theater their niche in high school. Students who have disabilities have blossomed in this program. One example is a student with a writing disability who realized the importance and significance of punctuation when he heard his peers doing a "cold reading" of his script that he had written. He was so motivated to learn the details of writing mechanics after that revelation! The head of the Performing Arts Department at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, Jackie Pualani Johnson, has even nominated our humble drama program to travel to Edinburgh, Scotland to participate in the Fringe Festival, but I had to turn down this incredible opportunity because of a lack of funding. I'm almost embarrassed to bring students to such a prestigious event because my students do not know anything about stagecraft or building sets under our present restrictions. It is shameful and much less than the students deserve.

Personally, the lack of funding for teacher salaries has affected me and made me question whether or not I can stay teaching in Hawai'i. I am a very thrifty person, and as a single person, I cannot afford to buy a house. I have excellent credit, and the only way I have been able to stay teaching here is to take out personal loans and juggle credit card debt. Any travel to see my two kids and my granddaughter has been subsidized by other members of my family. In fact, I



haven't been able to afford to see them for two years now. It's shameful that as a working professional who holds a master's degree (that DOE does not pay me for) at over 50 years old, I depend on family to donate mileage to be able to see them. At present, I own a 2003 vehicle which I can barely afford to keep on the road with repair and maintenance bills, and I'm \$40,000 in debt just affording the basic necessities like food and rent. I still have student loan debt as well. I have no savings and struggle to help my adult kids cover their power bill once or twice a year since they are part of the working poor living in Los Angeles. My two sons live together and share a car working different shifts. I want to cry thinking about how well they did in high school, yet as a single parent, the cost of finishing college was prohibitive for us as a family, even if they only went to school one at a time.

Furthermore, I have not recovered from the reduction in salary I experienced under Furlough Fridays. What made my situation worse was that shortly after that, I was diagnosed with breast cancer which forced me to go further into debt. Since my treatment was only available on Oahu and I live on the Big Island, I had to pay for over a month's worth of hotel accommodations which were not covered by my medical insurance. Without family in Hawai'i, I got help from a friend willing to drop everything and nurse me on Oahu, but of course, I felt obligated to cover her expenses. It is sad to think that teachers like me are only one major illness or serious accident away from financial ruin, even with health insurance.

Subsequently, I have a hard time promoting college to students whose socio-economic status is the same or worse than mine because sadly, as much as I love teaching and feel it is the most rewarding profession there is, I know affording college is such a struggle. It would be compromising my personal integrity to encourage young people to choose teaching as a career choice as I myself feel I am in a dead-end job. Teaching salaries in Hawai'i not only do not keep up with inflation. This salary is putting me further into debt and making my prospects for any possibility of retiring comfortably actually impossible. There will be a breaking point, and if teachers salaries remain stagnant, I will be forced to leave.

Funding for education in Hawai'i is critical. This community has been polled and is willing to provide the types of schools our keiki deserve. It is now in the hands of our decision makers to follow the will of the people to keep qualified, passionate teachers in our classrooms and provide the support for programs that excite kids about learning and keep them motivated in their more challenging subjects.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Mireille Ellsworth,

English and Acting Teacher,

Waiakea High School

Hilo, Hawai'i

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Dr. Amy Perruso  
3348 Kaunaoa St.  
Honolulu, HI 96815

January 10, 2016

Office of the Hawaii Board of Education  
1390 Miller Street  
Room 404  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Hawaii State Teachers Association: Working with the Board of Education and Department of Education to Improve School Funding and the Recruitment and Retention of Teachers

Aloha Chair Mizumoto and Board Members:

Despite aggressive recruitment efforts on the continent, the teacher shortfall in the Hawaii public school system emerges in more vicious manifestations each year. Our tragically shortsighted response is to fill otherwise teacher-less classrooms with emergency hires, or “pretend teachers,” as Corey Rosenlee has called them. These hires have bachelor’s degrees, and have not completed or even necessarily started a teacher certification program. Increasing difficulties with recruitment and retention stem fundamentally from relatively low salaries received by Hawai‘i public school teachers.

In 2016, Hawai‘i was fifty-first or last in the nation as the “worst state” for teachers based on a number of factors, including average starting salary for teachers adjusted for cost of living, in which Hawai‘i ranked last (Wallethub). Hawai‘i also had the lowest median annual salary for teachers, again adjusted for cost of living. This is the worst state in the country for teachers – and this translates into desperate learning conditions for our students, as the schools are characterized by a highly destabilized teaching workforce, the majority of which must work a second and often a third job simply to survive.

This consequences of our collective failure to address this problem are borne by our children, especially who already struggle to find ‘equal opportunity.’ A recent study by Professor Jonathan Okamura, entitled “Unequal Opportunity,” lays out how chronic inadequate funding of the public schools especially disadvantages our “majority clientele of minority students,” by which he means our Native Hawaiian, Filipino and Pacific Islander students.

Underfunding of public education, particularly in terms of low teacher salaries, not only reflects some troubling implications of this state’s racial history but also bodes ill for any realization of increased ‘equal opportunity’ through public education. Public education is supposed to play a key role in the opportunity for social mobility for ethnic minorities. But the tens of thousands of students who are not being provided with an education because they lack a qualified teacher in their classroom, or who suffer from highly unstable learning environments with high faculty turnover every year, consist

primarily of Native Hawaiian, Filipino and Pacific Islander students who are living in or close to poverty in Hawaii.

Legal cases concerning the financing of public education have emerged recently in Kansas, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Washington. In September 2016, for example, a Connecticut Superior Court judge ruled that the state was “defaulting on its constitutional duty” to give all children a fair opportunity for an elementary and secondary school education. Across the country, the starvation of our public education system is rejected as the normal state of affairs. Parents and their children in Hawai‘i, led by the state Board of Education and the teachers’ union, should likewise insist that legislators provide our young people in Hawaii with equal educational opportunity, which begins with adequate funding and decent salaries for teachers.

If we are really interested in ‘equal opportunity,’ we should not be focusing on outcomes, or test scores, which studies have shown primarily capture differences in students’ socio-economic status. We should be keenly focused on measuring our supports for those students with the highest needs. One critical support is a qualified, committed and experienced teacher. If that was a clear objective in the state’s accountability system, principals would not be forced to hire short-term, uncommitted people who simply contribute to the instability of the public schools, and there would be more concerted attention to the dire teacher recruitment and retention crisis. Please consider how we can devise an accountability system that actually enables us to address some of the systemic problems facing our education system.

Very truly yours,

Amy Perruso  
Mililani High School  
Social Studies

Aloha Members of the Board of Education and thank you for allowing me time to speak to you today on the topic of teacher recruitment and retention in Hawaii.

I am Rebecca Hadley-Schlosser and I'm a dual certified special education teacher at Ma'ili Elementary School on the Waianae Coast. This is my 25<sup>th</sup> year of teaching, all as a special education teacher. I have spent 19 of the last 20 years at Ma'ili Elementary teaching every grade level from preschool through sixth. When I was first hired at Ma'ili, I was one of six new special education teachers hired that year. Three of the teachers were first year teachers from New York. Our Grade Level Chairperson at the time took all of us on a tour of the Waianae Coast to help us become familiar with the area. We stopped at the school at one point to visit campus and say hello to staff at the school. The three teachers from New York had interviewed via phone so had not been out to the school. I had interviewed at the school so I was familiar with the setting. We got out of the car and one of the girls asked what the portable classroom were. When I told her those were classrooms, it took her several minutes to realize I was being serious. After a year, we lost one teacher because of the cost of living here and the cost to visit family. Now, 20 years later, I am the only one who has remained at the school. The three from New York all moved back and every year we've had teachers from the Mainland hired, they may teach for a couple of years and then leave Hawaii to be near family because it is so expensive to visit them.

According to Ma'ili's SSIR for the 2015-2016 school year, we had 65 teachers. Of those 65 teacher, only 38 have been at the school for more than five years. Three of our teachers are classified as being emergency hires. This means that our students have teachers who are early career educators who may leave the school and Hawaii due to a lack of resources being readily available because of the lack of funding, the costs to visit family, and low salaries.

I had a conversation with a new teacher just yesterday and I mentioned to him that I would be here today testifying to you. In the course of our discussion, he informed me that he took a tremendous pay cut to become a teacher. Prior to working as a teacher, he was a computer specialist with Oceanic where he made \$57,000 per year and that was seven years ago. Today, he makes \$48,000 and is considering getting a Master's degree just to get more pay so that someday down the road he can purchase his own home. This gentleman is from Hawaii and wants to stay, but is now considering other options that are available to him so that he can purchase his first home and not have to work another job to pay the mortgage.

As a special education teacher who has remained in the profession for 25 years, I get disheartened to hear of all the incentives that are offered to former special education teachers to come back to special education while those of us who have stayed in the profession are given more work with no incentive to stay. I have two Masters degrees and am all but dissertation on my Doctorate, all of which I have done while teaching here in Hawaii. I have reached class 7 on the salary schedule so I have no financial incentives to remain in teaching or take further professional development courses, but I continue because I am a professional and see the value in it. However, it would be much easier to do if I were offered some financial incentives to remain in teaching.

I love teaching, especially teaching my preschoolers with special needs. However, I would love to see some stability in the teaching force if we had better means of recruitment and retention.

Teaching in a school where close to half the teachers are early career educators makes me want to see the state do a better job of recruiting teachers and ensuring that teachers remain in Hawaii. This can only be done by offering teachers incentives to stay in the field, especially those of us in

special education. We are expected to do two jobs with federally mandated paperwork to complete on top of teaching and taking data throughout the day, week, and school year.

I am currently working more than one job as well. In addition to my full school day, I get home and jump online to facilitate my classes with the University of Phoenix. When I'm not doing that, I'm online transcribing documents. I am also a newly hired facilitator for the National Education Association's EDCommunities working online sharing information with special education and related services personnel across the country who are NEA members. I also strive to help further the profession through signing up to work with the Smarter Balanced Assessment system. I have completed bias and data reviews for both the regular assessment and the Hawaii State Alternative Assessment for our students with significant cognitive impairments. I am also a member of the Smarter Balanced State Network of Educators and am serving on the NEA's College and Career Ready Working Group. In addition to all this work, I am a grandmother to a rambunctious two-year-old with special needs. I would love for him to be provided a quality education by teachers who are invested in the education system here in Hawaii rather than someone who may not be as invested because they know they will be leaving at the end of the school year.

Please consider ways that we can ensure we recruit more teachers who will be invested in the education of our keiki. They deserve the best. Additionally, please look at ways to increase the retention of these teachers so that they stay teaching in Hawaii for the entirety of their career.



## Native Hawaiian Education Council

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January 10, 2017

Mr. Lance A. Mizumoto, Chairperson  
Mr. Brian De Lima, Vice Chairperson  
State of Hawai'i, Board of Education  
1390 Miller Street, Room 309  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Via: [testimony\\_boe@notes.k12.hi.us](mailto:testimony_boe@notes.k12.hi.us)

Re: **January 10, 2017 General Board Meeting**  
**IV. Reports of Board Committees, Board Members, and Superintendent**  
**D. Investigative Committee** (a permitted interaction group pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes, Section 92-2.5(b)(1)) investigating the Superintendent search: status report

Dear Chair Mizumoto and Vice Chair De Lima,

The Native Hawaiian Education Council (NHEC or the Council) would like to provide comments regarding the above agenda item re: **the Superintendent search process**, specifically to the report posted.

The Council is mindful that Hawai'i operates in a unique context of having a single State Educational Agency (SEA) and Local Educational Agency (LEA); two official languages—English and Hawaiian—that are mediums of instruction in the State's public education system; and a public charter school system that is a blend of Hawaiian language immersion and Hawaiian culture based schools and in the midst of implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)—the most pervasive federal policy change since No Child Left Behind in 2001, returning control to State's by Congressional intent.

While we have provided earlier testimony regarding process concerns of the use of the permitted interaction group (Investigative Committee) vs the Board's Human Resources Committee, we are committed to supporting the Board in moving the Superintendent search process forward for the benefit of Hawai'i's families, communities and the K-12 public education system.





The role of the Advisory Group as described in the *Report on Investigative Committee* provided at the Board's General Business Meeting on December 6, 2016 was defined as follows:

***Advisory Group:*** *The advisory group can be made up of individuals representing the following groups: students, parents, teachers, school administrators, classified/non certificated staff members, community, Hawaiian education, charter education, early education, higher education, military, non-profit (education) (collectively "Advisory Group").<sup>1</sup> The Advisory Group will advise the Search Committee regarding its recommendation of the Final Candidates to the Board. Advisory Group members will not vote on the Final Candidates, but will provide the Search Committee with advice regarding the selection of the Final Candidates to present to the Board.*

The Council specifically supports the selection of the following Advisory Group members:

- **Susan Rocco**, Special Education Advisory Council of Hawai'i (SEAC)<sup>2</sup>;
- **Dr. Patricia Halagao**, Associate Professor, University of Hawai'i – Mānoa, College of Education; and former Board of Education member;
- **Cheryl Kauhane Lupenui**, Founder and Principal of The Leadership Project and former Board of Education member;
- **Dr. Meahilahila Kelling**, Director, Ke Kula 'o Samuel Kamakau LPCS;
- **Cheri Nakamura**, Director, Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E)<sup>3</sup>, community and parent engagement focused; and
- **Dr. Robert "Bob" Peters**, Chair, Early Learning Advisory Board.

In addition, the Council applauds the thoughtful inclusion of student voices<sup>4</sup> and the sequencing and balancing of their participation, being cognizant of time away from learning and the expectations of the Advisory Group work. Being involved in this important leadership search process provides an opportunity that should include student voices from public charter schools.

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<sup>1</sup> From the report: "Note that this is a listing of perspectives that may be represented in the Advisory Group because of a significant interest in public education in Hawaii. It is not meant to be exhaustive or limiting."

<sup>2</sup> The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) requires that each state establish and maintain an advisory panel for the purpose of advising the State special education staff regarding the education of all eligible children with disabilities. In Hawaii that advisory panel is the Special Education Advisory Council or SEAC.

<sup>3</sup> HE'E is a statewide coalition of diverse stakeholders committed to working collaboratively to identify opportunities to improve public education in Hawai'i.<sup>3</sup> HE'E seeks to be the focal point for community and parent engagement while serving as a public resource for educational policy.

<sup>4</sup> Involving both the Hawai'i State Student Council and the Center for Tomorrow's Leaders



Lance A. Mizumoto  
Brian De Lima  
January 10, 2017  
Page 3

The Native Hawaiian Education Council was established in 1994 under the federal Native Hawaiian Education Act. The Council is charged with coordinating, assessing and reporting and making recommendations on the effectiveness of existing education programs for Native Hawaiians, the state of present Native Hawaiian education efforts, and improvements that may be made to existing programs, policies, and procedures to improve the educational attainment of Native Hawaiians.

Please feel free to contact the Council's Executive Director, Dr. Sylvia Hussey, directly via e-mail ([sylvia@nhec.org](mailto:sylvia@nhec.org)), office (808.523.6432) or mobile (808.221.5477) telephone with any opportunities for the Council to support the Board in this important leadership search.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa M. Watkins-Victorino". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Lisa M. Watkins-Victorino, Chair

cc: Native Hawaiian Education Council and staff





*46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Executive Director*

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**TESTIMONY FOR AGENGA ITEM V, C, COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER  
PRESENTATION: HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

**General Business Meeting  
Hon. Lance Mizumoto, Chair  
Hon. Brian De Lima, Vice Chair**

**Tuesday, January 10, 2017, 1:30 PM  
Queen Liliuokalani Building, Room 404**

Honorable Chair Mizumoto and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing the IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 350 local members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony asking the board to partner with teachers and education advocates in pursuing a dedicated funding stream for public schools during the 2017 legislative session.

For Jessica, education funding matters.

Jessica isn't the teacher you read about in the morning newspaper. You won't see her on television shouting about standards. She doesn't seek, much less win, professional awards. She's a member of the Hawai'i State Teachers Association, but not an education activist. She devotes most of her time to refining her practice as a high school English teacher, spending spare seconds crafting a curriculum on the lesser-known works of Dickens that, thanks to mandated curriculum like Springboard, she may never get to teach.

Her students love her constant care. Her colleagues value her mentorship. Her community believes she's an outstanding educator, even if she doesn't own a certificate bearing those words. And this will be the last year any of those people will benefit from her 21 years of classroom experience because Jessica is battling cancer.

Even with state medical benefits, the financial costs of winning a fight against cancer can be insurmountable. Hawai'i's highest-in-the-nation cost of living applies

to healthcare, too. Even when prescription drugs don't cost as much as some of her mainland friends' and family members', the cost of gas to get to the doctor plunders Jessica's purse strings, the cost of food to sustain her energy burns through her wallet, the cost of clothing to build her confidence spikes her credit score, and the cost of renting the apartment in which she's recovering breaks her bank account.

Like her colleagues, Jessica's salary is the lowest in the nation adjusted for cost of living. Or in her case, cost of dying, since being an effective teacher is *literally* killing her. Like her colleagues, though, she's determined, in this case to beat her illness, no matter what struggles she must endure, because that's what teachers do—they persevere. Despite the endless obstacles obstructing their paths to success—dilapidated facilities, bloated class sizes, cancelled course offerings, overfunded mandated curricula, underfunded professional development, unfunded step raises, and most importantly, immorally impoverished compensation—they stride into school, every day, whether their spirits are high or hanging by a thread, and teach our children how to build a better world.

For Jessica, I demand that you take action. I demand that you stand with teachers, HSTA, and education advocates in organizing a movement to fully fund our school system. I demand that you tell our state's hardworking educators, "We see your suffering. We hear your call. And we've got your backs."

We know the numbers. In comparison to school districts of similar size and demographic composition, Hawai'i ranks 227th in per-pupil funding *before* adjusting for cost of living, according to a Ballotpedia analysis of public school spending, at \$11,823 per child. Washington D.C., New York City, Boston, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati school districts, for example, spend nearly twice as much as Hawai'i per pupil, at well over \$22,000 to over \$26,000 per student. Similarly, local private schools, discounting Catholic institutions, spend nearly \$19,173 dollars per student, with Punahou President Jim Scott revealing, in 2014, "The real cost of our education per student is \$26,000," owing to the school's then-total endowment of \$235 million and fundraising operations of \$12-\$15 million annually. We acknowledge that Gov. David Ige has proposed spending \$800 million on new schools and classrooms in his biennium budget request, including \$264.7 million for new schools (two of which would be constructed in the Leeward O'ahu town of Kapolei). At the same time, however, he has consistently proclaimed that the state has no money for collective bargaining increases, publicly offering zero percent—nothing—in pay raises, ensuring the rate of teacher churn remains the same. Why engineer new schools, if we won't have quality educators to staff them?

Statistics are violent. They fail to capture the totality of the human toll extracted upon those who craft our children's future with the highest level of professional skill, but are paid like corporate slaves. As the sun rises on the 2017 legislative session, you have an opportunity to redirect our educational voyage by supporting the teachers who steer our scholastic vessels. You can surrender that opportunity or you can seize it and finally create the schools our keiki deserve.

Sincerely,  
Kris Coffield  
*Executive Director*  
IMUAlliance

## Late Testimony

RE: Agenda item V. c. Community Stakeholder Presentation: Hawaii State Teachers Association: working with the Board of Education and Department of Education to improve school funding and the recruitment and retention of teachers.

Aloha-

My name is Tim Vandever and I am the Chairperson of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i. I speak today not only on behalf of the members of the DPH, but as a proud product of the public schools and a current student at the William S. Richardson School of Law. I speak in strong support of the proposal given by our brothers and sisters in the Hawai'i State Teachers Association – an association of the members of our society tasked with the most important job there is – educating our keiki.

As this Board is well-aware, public education is the cornerstone of our democracy. In order for our form of representative government to survive, we must have an informed and educated electorate. That starts with treating our teachers with the respect they deserve, and providing them the tools they need to do their job.

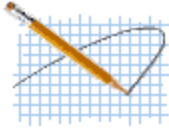
As the party of public education, of school lunch and Head Start, we urge you to make a commitment here and now to publicly join HSTA in asking to improve school funding and the recruitment and retention of teachers.

Mahalo for your time-

Tim Vandever

Chair, Democratic Party of Hawai'i

## Late Testimony

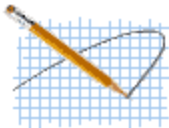


boe\_hawaii@notes.k12.hi.us

01/10/2017 04:44 PM

To Testimony BOE/HIDOE@HIDOE  
cc  
Subject Fw: Agenda Item C of January 10,  
2017 Agenda, testimony of Ed Caucus  
Chair, Dem Party of Hawaii

----- Forwarded by BOE Hawaii on 01/10/2017 04:44 PM -----



Michele Matsuo <michelematsuo@yahoo.com>

01/10/2017 02:18 PM

To boe\_hawaii@notes.k12.hi.us  
cc  
Subject Agenda Item C of January 10, 2017  
Agenda, testimony of Ed Caucus  
Chair, Dem Party of Hawaii

**Honorable Chair Lance Mizumoto, Vice Chair Brian DeLima, and members of the Board of Education,**

**Agenda item, C. Community Stakeholder Presentation: Hawaii State Teachers Association: working with the Board of Education and Department of Education to improve school funding and the recruitment and retention of teachers.**

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony.

I am the new Chair of the Education Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, and am a graduate of Hawaii's public school system. I was a child who benefitted from the 1954 Hawaii Democratic Revolution, which saw elected people committed to raising the standard and accessibility of education in the State of Hawaii. My father and his friends understood that a good education was critical to the future of our people and our State. They paid in blood for the right to open wide the doors to the future through the portal of a free public education. Even today, the Democratic Party's Platform states:

"Education shall be respected as a valuable resource and those pursuing a profession in education shall be compensated with a competitive wage based on national standards while taking into consideration the state's cost of living. We support hiring the most qualified individuals to be teachers and administrators for our educational system."

As to this last part, I can personally testify that while my school facilities were substandard, while we paid for our own books, because the school could not provide them, we had superb teachers with degrees in their fields of teaching, who inspired learning and nurtured it creatively, and with love and caring. They lived simply but were not suffering like many of our teachers are today. We need top quality teachers and administrators, and we need to pay them a decent wage. Our whole society depends on it. Every child we fail is a life squandered and also a drag on the ability of our Hawaii to move forward. I ask you to step up to seek the funding our teachers, administrators and school systems need to carry our people forward.

Mahalo nui loa,  
Michele Matsuo  
Chair  
Education Caucus

Democratic Party of Hawaii  
[michelematsuohawaii@gmail.com](mailto:michelematsuohawaii@gmail.com)

Sent from my iPad

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