



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

August 30, 2017

Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto  
Superintendent  
Department of Education  
P.O. Box 2360  
Honolulu, HI 96804

Dear Dr. Kishimoto:

I extend my heartfelt thanks to you and your staff at the Hawai'i Department of Education for your hard work and commitment in drafting Hawai'i's plan for implementation of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). I appreciate the timely and meaningful consultation and collaborative process used to develop this plan and that revisions were made to address my comments.

The Hawai'i Consolidated State Plan for ESSA is the culmination of an unprecedented focus on public education in Hawai'i. During the past 20 months, thousands of community members from across the state and a team of dedicated volunteers created the Hawai'i Blueprint for Public Education. In addition, the Department of Education and Board of Education conducted a community-outreach effort as they developed a joint Strategic Plan. Both documents contributed key elements to the consolidated plan.

We could not have reached this point without the dedicated leadership of Chairperson Lance Mizumoto, and I thank him for the time and energy he has devoted to empowering our schools and their communities. I also wish to extend my sincere appreciation to the members of the Board of Education and everyone involved in the creation and alignment of these important plans that will guide the transformation of public education in Hawai'i.

Ultimately, we must transform our school system and provide students with the global learner outcomes they need to be successful in an innovation-driven economy and society. I look forward to working in partnership with all stakeholders to implement the plan. Together, our schools and communities can create a culture of innovation and excellence in education that will make our vision a reality.

With warmest regards,

David Y. Ige  
Governor, State of Hawai'i



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***HawaiiKidsCAN Testimony  
on Committee Action on amendments to Hawaii's consolidated state plan  
for the Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA")***

***Hawaii State Board of Education Student Achievement Committee  
David Miyashiro, Founding Executive Director, HawaiiKidsCAN***

September 5, 2017

Aloha Chair Cox, Vice Chair Bergin, and Members of the Committee,

My name is David Miyashiro and I am the founding executive director of HawaiiKidsCAN, a new locally-led, education advocacy non-profit organization committed to ensuring every student's access to a high-quality education. HawaiiKidsCAN empowers communities with accessible information about our schools, and helps elevate their voices and concerns to build the conditions for all students in Hawaii to thrive. We use research and communications, grassroots organizing, and direct advocacy to ensure a more equitable future for our keiki.

On behalf of HawaiiKidsCAN, I respectfully submit commentary on the Committee Action on amendments to Section A.4.iii, A.4.v.b, A.4.vi.e, and Appendix A of Hawaii's consolidated state plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA").

As an organization committed to the empowerment and success of all students, regardless of background, HawaiiKidsCAN supports the amended ESSA plan. We applaud the continued reporting of student subgroups. The revised achievement targets are in line with historical performance and will still enable us to make progress toward closing the achievement gap. This focus on equitable outcomes for all kids is critical for both Hawaii's broader economy and ensuring that we reach our statewide goal of 55% of working age adults holding a 2- or 4-year college degree by the year 2025.

We know that it will take a collective effort to close these persistent achievement gaps, so we urge the Department of Education to lean on community partners and advocates for support. We also strongly encourage the inclusion of community, parent, and student voice in the stakeholder discussions regarding the threshold of underperformance of subgroups for Targeted Support and Improvement.



We recognize that much work remains to ensure we have true educational equity in Hawaii. The ESSA plan approved by the Board of Education this June demonstrated our state was serious about equitable outcomes for all students. We deeply appreciate the work of the Department of Education, Board of Education, and Governor Ige to keep our collective focus on closing the achievement gap, and we urge you to keep the ambition bar high for our students. They deserve to know we are serious about doing the hard work to close this persistent gap.

By keeping our focus on the students who need the most support, Hawaii will demonstrate that we believe all kids CAN succeed. We urge the approval of the revised ESSA plan.

Mahalo,

David Miyashiro  
Founding Executive Director  
HawaiiKidsCAN

September 5, 2017

Hawai'i Board of Education  
Student Achievement Committee Meeting  
Margaret Cox, Chair  
Patricia Bergin, Vice-Chair

Aloha Chair Cox, Vice Chair Bergin and Members of the Committee,

We would like to **comment on the** Committee Action on amendments to Section A.4.iii, A.4.v.b, A.4.vi.e, and Appendix A of Hawaii's consolidated state plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA")

We are a group of advocates from Native Hawaiian, parent, disability, higher education, multilingual, social justice, and education reform communities who have come together to look at opportunities and risks for advancing equity and improving achievement under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

We are committed to equity in education through either of the state's official languages, English and Hawaiian. We are concerned for specified groups that need particular attention - students with disabilities, students who do not speak the language of instruction, students with socio-economic challenges, and racial and ethnic groups that have historically not succeeded in our schools relative to others.

We supported the submission of the earlier version of the state's ESSA plan in June 2017 and were pleased that it set goals of equity for all subgroups. However, we understand that achieving equity is a process that requires interim goals. We therefore see the modification of the state's ESSA Plan as a means to assuage concerns at the school campus levels that school sites be judged as failing as they seek out best practices and innovations that can bring equity to underserved populations. We urge the Board to direct the Department to use the opportunity that the change in expected targets provides to take risks in trying a variety of approaches, including highly innovative ones, to bring equity of outcomes for students at risk.

In addition, regarding targeted supports and improvement, we support the plan of including stakeholder feedback, and ask that the community voice be included in the discussion along with DOE leadership and administrators. We also suggest that Public Charter School representation be included and for representation for the Hawaiian language pathway system, the Office of Hawaiian Education to be considered as a stakeholder as well.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Cheri Nakamura  
Sylvia Hussey  
Patricia Halagao  
Brook Chapman DeSousa  
Ka'ano'i Walk  
Kanakolu Noa  
David Miyashiro  
William Pila Wilson  
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Gavin Thorington



**S E A C**  
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September 5, 2017

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Ms. Dale Matsuura, *Vice Chair*  
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Ms. Jasmine Williams  
Ms. Susan Wood

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff  
Susan Rocco, Staff

Margaret Cox, Chair  
Student Achievement Committee  
Hawaii State Board of Education  
P. O. Box 2360  
Honolulu, HI 96804

RE: Agenda Item IV. A. Committee Action on amendments to  
Section A.4.iii, A.4.v.b, A.4.vi.e, and Appendix A of Hawaii's  
ESSA consolidated state plan

Dear Chair Cox and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) supports the  
Department's amendments to its ESSA State Plan due for submission  
later this month with the following comments and recommendations:

**Minimum "n" size**

SEAC has stated in numerous testimonies that we prefer a minimum  
"n" size of 10 for accountability purposes. However, we acknowledge  
that the Department has chosen to utilize an "n" size of 20. As noted  
in Table A.2 of the plan, this "n" size will exclude 44 schools from  
reporting the achievement of their special education students and  
103 schools from reporting the achievement of English learners. In  
future revisions of the plan, we ask that the Department reconsider  
using a smaller grouping of students to ensure that more academically  
vulnerable students are identified and provided supports.

**Revision of long-term goals and measurements of interim progress**

Long-term and interim goals for students with disabilities for ELA  
and Math proficiency, as well as graduation rates, have been revised  
downward from the June 2017 draft. SEAC believes these new goals  
are achievable yet ambitious enough to close the achievement gap.  
They do, however, conflict somewhat with the targets or goals set in  
the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Plan—the document  
required annually by the U.S. DOE's Office of Special Education  
Programs (OSEP) as part of its IDEA continuous improvement  
monitoring.



**Revision of long-term goals and measurements of interim progress (cont.)**

In the current State Performance Plan (SPP), these targets are only set through SY 2018-19, yet they exceed the ESSA plan goals for students with disabilities by a significant margin. For example, the SPP reading goal for SY 2018-19 is 61%, the math goal is 56% and the graduation rate goal is 90%. Since both the ESSA Plan and the SPP/APR are submitted to the U.S. DOE, SEAC recommends that the Department make the goals or targets for the two plans consistent to avoid confusion.

The SPP/APR also uses ELA and math scores on the National Assessment on Educational Performance (NAEP) in determining whether Hawaii is achieving good academic results for students with disabilities compared to the other 49 states. Currently, Hawaii falls in the lowest performing one-third of states in this standardized test, which has resulted in a rating of “needs assistance” for the past three years. Hopefully, the Department’s renewed commitment to close the achievement gap will allow the state to meet its OSEP monitoring goals as well.

**Stakeholder feedback re: Targeted Support and Improvement**

Section A.4.vi.(e) of the amended plan adds a mechanism to collect stakeholder feedback in developing a proposal for the threshold of underperformance required to trigger Targeted Support and Improvement for consistently underperforming subgroups. Currently, the only stakeholders to be included in the discussion are Complex Area Superintendents, principals, and the Superintendent’s Cabinet. In the interest of transparency and inclusion, SEAC recommends that the Department also elicit feedback from other stakeholder groups, including parent and community groups.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input on the ESSA Consolidated State Plan. SEAC stands ready to support the Department and the Board in the implementation and evaluation of the plan. Should you have any questions regarding this testimony, please contact me or Ivalee Sinclair, our Legislative Committee Chair.

Sincerely

Martha Guinan  
Chair

Ivalee Sinclair  
Legislative Committee Chair