



HAWAI'I EDUCATIONAL POLICY CENTER

Testimony to the State Board of Education

Thursday, June 21, 2018

1:30 pm

Prepared by Jim Shon, Director, HEPC

RE: Future Agendas

1. **AGENDA ON THE AGENDAS.** HEPC respectfully requests that each agenda include an item to discuss the next and future agendas. This will allow not only board members to make suggestions, but also open up this important issue to members of the public. The final decision can still be made by the chair, but it should be an open process.
2. **BEGIN TO FAST TRACK THE ADOPTION NEW DIRECTIVES OR POLICIES.** HEPC respectfully suggests that during the July meetings the Board add the following items to its agendas, as ACTION items. Each of these has broad community and stakeholder support, yet very little beyond hand wringing and commiseration has been done. Written policies and directives have not emerged.
 - a. **EMERGENCY PLANNING. The development of a new BOE policy/ or directive** requiring each District to convene meetings of all the HIDEOE and Public Charter schools as well as University of Hawaii stakeholders to draft short and long range emergency response plans. These plans should focus on what is to be done in the next six months to share and maximize resources, including facilities, in the wake of recent, ongoing and potentially upcoming natural disasters. These draft plans should have a deadline set in the next couple of months. We are already way behind in such planning.
 - b. **COMMUNITY / SCHOOL COMPACTS. The development of a BOE Policy to Mobilize the SCCs, and assign them tasks: The Community Compact.** There is overwhelming support in the community for decentralizing important decisions to the school level. The mechanism that goes beyond the power of a principal or a contract is the HIDEOE's School Community Councils. Each council should be required to develop what might be called a Community Compact, a two way agreement between the community and its school SCC on what the school could be in the future to meet the needs, aspirations and practical strategies desired by the community, the parents, and the students. Eventually you will need to modify existing policies that explicitly tell the school communities that they are powerless.

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- c. **CUTTING TOP DOWN RED TAPE. The development of a new BOE Policy to Identify and eliminate red tape and bureaucratic, top-down decisions and forms.** By a date certain ask **each SCC** to identify the kinds of approval forms, red tape, and decisions it would like to see modified or eliminated. You probably cannot expect higher level DOE staff to willingly give up their powers and papers. This needs to be a grassroots school driven effort.

- d. **REQUIRE ARTS EDUCATION. A BOE Policy requiring each public school to plan for the inclusion of some arts education and participation at all levels** – to start the 2019-2020 school year.

Respectfully, it takes too long to change course, to move a complex and large system, or even to adopt a new policy. We have literally thousands of smart and dedicated HIDEOE employees who can help, but are seldom asked.

One reason that the State Legislature feels the need to override the BOE's constitutional authority to run our public schools is inertia and the long time it takes for any appreciable change. This is particularly true of new policies, which often take months and years, and result in watered down, almost meaningless statements. Is there a sense of urgency? The ability to respond to new trends, conditions, and issues? Why was computer education mandated by the Legislature and not the Board? Why were charters left on their own to scramble for relocations during the recent disasters.

Thank you for your attention to these proposals.