



06-18-2020 GBM

L Elento <iliked3@rocketmail.com>

Thu, Jun 18, 2020 at 2:25 PM

To: "testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov" <testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov>

Cc: "catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov" <catherine.payne@boe.hawaii.gov>, "catherine_payne@notes.k12.hi.us" <catherine_payne@notes.k12.hi.us>

Aloha! Apparently my phone's microphone was not compatible with Webex. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

The changes to HAR 8-27 for bus transportation of students with disabilities has been a long time coming. It shouldn't have taken a letter from the US Education Department to make this change that has been brought to the Board's attention for many years.

I'd like to ask for a correction to the definition of related services by deleting "to benefit from special education" as not all students with disabilities receive special education but may need related services (Sec 504).

Linda Elento



Testimony

David Tupper <tupperd001@gmail.com>
To: Testimony.BOE@boe.hawaii.gov

Thu, Jun 18, 2020 at 8:36 PM

Name: David Tupper

Meeting: General Business Meeting

Agenda Item: Single (track) Academic Calendar

<https://www.kitv.com/story/42224135/hawaii-public-schools-set-to-follow-single-academic-calendar-for-202021-school-year>

Position: Oppose

From my perspective as a concerned parent, the DOE had about 3 months (starting in March 2020) to come up with a plan for handling multi-track schools. Most students at multi-track schools start in the first week of July. So the DOE gave those students approximately one month advance notice with its recent announcement. Instead of developing procedures to maximize student time in the classroom, the DOE deferred the problem. They simply kicked the can down the road. Even the logic, "We have heard from numerous families, especially those who have children attending a multi-track and single-track school, about the inconvenience of coordinating childcare due to the multi-track schedule" is completely flawed. The distance learning hybrid alternative for multi-track schools being pushed to a single-track will certainly have a schedule that is inconsistent with other public schools, unless the DOE is planning this distance learning hybrid sham for everyone. Has the DOE given us any indication that they will have a good working plan for maximizing student time in the classroom for the next school year?

Rather than switching the multi-track schools to single-track, a better alternative for a unified schedule would actually be switching single-track schools to multi-track. Of course that would create a lot of work, require good communication, and take additional coordination to set up. But isn't that what the rest of the world is doing as people look for alternatives to navigating the pandemic post stay-at-home restrictions and pre a vaccine? Multi-track reduces the number of children at the school at any given time. Retraining for the multi-track approach also provides the perfect opportunity to put other procedures and guidelines in place to promote social distancing and keep COVID-19 out of schools. What if there aren't enough socially distanced seats in the classroom for every student? Then start prioritizing those that need them most and leave the distance learning option for those that are better equipped to live-stream the ENTIRE school day from home. I assume most responsible adults and work places value education and would make accommodations to support changes required to promote student time in the classroom.

Finally I feel there is a societal concern related to student time in the classroom. COVID-19 has further highlighted the divide in our country between the have's and

have not's. Caring teachers, stable homes, and conscientious students participated in the optional activities for Q4 of the spring semester. Still the BOE is kidding itself if it thinks much (if any) productive instruction and distance learning occurred in Q4 of the spring semester or will occur in the coming school year. Q4 was a complete write off. Furthermore, many of those who need the education time most either could/did not take part. What about the children that need nutritious meals or a refuge from troubles at home? What about the children with truancy issues that proactive administrators sought to correct with home visits prior to the pandemic? The DOE and the rest of the state should be pushing hard to make the in person school environment available to these students as soon as possible.

I cannot stand by idly as the board of education tinkers with the upcoming school year. How can we as concerned parents change the current trajectory? Can we get the board of education to share their plans when there is still time to change them as opposed to having to swallow the hard pill of their next announcement when it is too late to do anything about it? A strong organization like the teacher's union was able to quickly reverse the governor's announcement that schools would be back in session post spring break. Maybe the teacher's union should step in again and press the BOE to restore in class instruction that is necessary for good communication with students. How can parents promote a positive change when right now we feel powerless to do so?

Please respond to my concerns as soon as possible. I feel time is of the essence.