

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Jennifer Guzik

**Organization**

Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'O Ānuenue

**Position/Title**

AHCT

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Write Testimony**

Aloha,

The Superintendent has been a huge supporter in Athletics. With this support it has made my school and job as an athletic trainer easy. Please extend his employment contract. I believe the welfare of our DOE and students is better under his Supervision.

Warmest Regards,  
Jenny

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Aina Akamu

**Organization**

Ka'ū High & Pāhala Elementary School

**Position/Title**

Vice Principal

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Write Testimony**

Aloha mai kākou! Mahalo for this opportunity to share my highest recommendation for Superintendent Hayashi's contract renewal. Superintendent has been supportive in many ways of our public school students, teachers, staff and leaders. He has made time to visit our school and get to know our community, has helped to provide many new opportunities for our rural students. He is always positive, encouraging, and has set a bold vision for public education in Hawai'i. Superintendent Hayashi leads with aloha, and I strongly support his reappointment. Mahalo nui loa!

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Kyle Shimabukuro

**Organization**

Mililani Mauka Elementary

**Position/Title**

Principal

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Write Testimony**

Aloha Chair Takumi and Members of the Board of Education,

I am writing to offer my unequivocal support for extending the contract of Superintendent Keith Hayashi. As a principal leading Mililani Mauka Elementary and an observer of the Hawai'i public school system, I have witnessed firsthand the stable, strategic, and student-centered leadership that Superintendent Hayashi has provided over the past five years (one year as Interim, three years as appointed).

Superintendent Hayashi has earned the confidence of school leaders. His current leadership is strategic, stable, and focused on the well-being and academic achievement of every student.

Extending his contract for a four-year term and compensating him fairly, commensurate with the immense responsibility and comparable peer salaries, is an investment in the stability and future success of Hawai'i's public education system.

Mahalo for your consideration of my testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle Shimabukuro

Principal

Mililani Mauka Elementary

## Special Meeting

### Name

Mufi Hannemann

### Organization

Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association

### Position/Title

President & CEO

### Agenda Item

III. Superintendent's employment contract

### Position

Support

## Written Testimony

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Testimony of Mufi Hannemann  
President & CEO  
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association

Board of Education  
Special Meeting  
November 5, 2025

Chair Takumi and members of the Board, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association (HLTA), the state's oldest and largest private sector visitor industry organization.

HLTA, representing nearly 700 members across the islands, more than 50,000 hotel rooms, and nearly 40,000 lodging workers, strongly supports the extension of Superintendent Keith Hayashi's contract to continue leading the Department of Education.

We have long appreciated Keith's steadfast partnership with the hospitality industry and his deep commitment to workforce development initiatives that help prepare our public school students for future careers in tourism and related fields. Under his leadership, the Department of Education has been a key supporter of HLTA's Citizen-Scholar Program, our signature scholarship initiative for public high school students. He has led by example, attending our leadership luncheons, delivering thoughtful remarks, and actively engaging with our co-sponsor, the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, to make this event an annual success.

Keith has also played an integral role in advancing workforce development for Hawai'i's youth. Following the passage of landmark legislation that will, for the first time, provide public funding to support hospitality internships, HLTA was proud to partner with CNHA and the DOE on a successful pilot program that demonstrated the strong need and value of these types of high school internship opportunities. His support and collaboration were vital to this effort, and we look forward to building on that momentum together.

I have known Keith personally for decades and have always admired his passion for education and student achievement. During his tenure as principal of Waipahu High School, he transformed the campus into one of the state's leading Career Academy pathway schools. He fostered an innovative environment where students could graduate not only with a high school diploma but also with an associate's degree from Leeward Community College, a model that continues to inspire educational excellence across the state.

His dedication extends beyond the classroom as well. Keith's support for high school athletics has been outstanding, and as someone who strongly advocates for gender equity in sports, I especially commend his leadership in expanding opportunities for young women through the addition of girls' flag football.

For all these reasons, HLTA wholeheartedly supports extending Superintendent Hayashi's contract and providing a well-deserved salary adjustment that reflects his leadership and aligns with national standards for comparable positions.

The Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association is proud to stand with Superintendent Keith Hayashi and looks forward to continuing our collaboration to prepare Hawai'i's students for bright futures.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

## Special Meeting

### Name

Ty Ogasawara

### Organization

Hawaii Department of Education

### Position/Title

Maui High Schoo Principal

### Agenda Item

III. Superintendent's employment contract

### Position

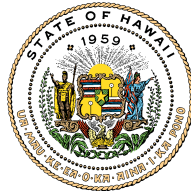
Support

## Written Testimony

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JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI  
SUPERINTENDENT

**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO**

Dear Chairperson and Members of the Board,

We, the undersigned principals from the island of Maui, are honored to express our collective support for Superintendent Keith Hayashi and his continued leadership of the Hawaii State Department of Education. Superintendent Hayashi has consistently demonstrated a calm, thoughtful, and student-focused approach to leadership that has inspired educators across the state. His commitment to the success of every student, from early learning through high school graduation, is evident in every initiative he leads and every conversation he has with school leaders.

Superintendent Hayashi leads with heart and vision. He brings people together, listens to different perspectives, and builds unity through respect and collaboration. His student-first mindset is not simply a slogan, but the foundation of how he leads. Every policy he supports and every program he develops is guided by what is best for students and families. His steady leadership has helped schools remain focused on learning, wellness, and growth even through challenging times.

He has also made the growth and development of principals a central part of his leadership. Superintendent Hayashi has created opportunities for principals to reflect, collaborate, and strengthen their practice through professional learning networks, leadership academies, and direct mentorship. He recognizes that strong schools depend on strong leaders, and he invests time and energy to ensure principals are equipped with the knowledge, confidence, and support they need to succeed. Many of us have personally experienced his encouragement and guidance, and it has made a lasting impact on how we lead our schools.

Superintendent Hayashi's vision for Hawaii's graduates is both inspiring and practical. His focus on preparing students to be globally competitive and locally committed captures the balance we strive for in our schools every day. He reminds us that our students can pursue excellence anywhere in the world while remaining grounded in the values, culture, and community that make Hawaii unique. This vision continues to shape curriculum, career pathways, and the partnerships we build with local industries and universities.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Another important aspect of his leadership has been his focus on middle school education. Superintendent Hayashi has made it clear that middle-level learning is not just a bridge between elementary and high school, but a critical stage where identity, purpose, and belonging take shape. His commitment to strengthening middle schools has elevated the importance of this stage and encouraged schools to focus on engagement, relevance, and relationships. This renewed focus is already making a difference for students and teachers on Maui and across the state.

Throughout his career, Superintendent Hayashi has led with integrity, humility, and deep respect for the people he serves. He values collaboration and takes the time to celebrate the efforts of teachers, support staff, and administrators alike. His leadership reflects not only skill but also heart, and he has earned the trust of those who work with him.

As principals on the island of Maui, we see firsthand the positive impact of his leadership on our schools, students, and communities. We believe that Superintendent Hayashi embodies the vision, balance, and compassion needed to continue moving our public education system forward.

We respectfully and enthusiastically support Superintendent Keith Hayashi and his continued service as the Superintendent of the Hawaii State Department of Education. We stand united in our belief that his leadership has strengthened our schools and will continue to move Hawaii's education system toward excellence for all.

With respect and appreciation,

[Ty Ogasawara](#) - Maui High School

*Traci Ostermiller* - Kūlanihāko'i High School

Merilee Valentino - Pā'ia Elementary School

*Jacqueline*

- Maui Waena Intermediate

Ginifer Nania - Makawao Elementary School

Matt Dillon - ʻĪao School

Chad Okamoto - Pu'u Kukui Elementary School

*Keoni Wilhelm* - Baldwin High School

*Nikan Arapoff* - Wailuku Elementary School

*Barbara Oura Tavares* - Lihikai Elementary School

*Tami Marie Hale* - Kalama Intermediate School

Sarah Romano Saget- Ha'ikū Elementary School

*Amy Strand* - King Kekaulike High School

## Special Meeting

### Name

Aarika Riddle

### Organization

Kristi Yamaguchi's Always Dream

### Position/Title

Executive Director

### Agenda Item

III. Superintendent's employment contract

### Position

Support

## Written Testimony

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**Subject:** Testimony

**Name:** Aarika Riddle, Executive Director of Kristi Yamaguchi's Always Dream

**Meeting:** Board of Education, Special Meeting on November 5, 2025

**Agenda Item:** III. Superintendent's Employment Contract

**Position:** Support

November 3, 2025

Board of Education, Special Meeting

[testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov](mailto:testimony.boe@boe.hawaii.gov)

Dear Board of Education Members,

On behalf of Kristi Yamaguchi's Always Dream, I am pleased to provide testimony in support of Superintendent Keith Hayashi's employment contract. Always Dream is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has partnered with the Hawaii Department of Education since 2014. Our mission is to ensure children have access to high-quality books in the home environment and extensive family engagement support.

Always Dream is in the midst of a five-year strategic plan to expand our *Always Reading* program across the state of Hawaii. By 2027, our goal is to reach 4,000 individuals served annually, 5x growth from the beginning of our plan. Our family engagement program rooted in early literacy provides a digital tablet, digital children's library, a data connection (if no wifi at home), physical books, and the support of a family literacy book coach to all of the pre-k and kindergarten students enrolled in the program. Our book coach is a true differentiator, adding capacity for classroom teachers around family engagement.

Superintendent Hayashi has taken the time to become knowledgeable about our work and been instrumental in our efforts to reach new communities across the state. He has provided guidance and made recommendations on the Complex Areas we should prioritize to reach Hawai'i's most vulnerable populations. Our growth over the past four years would not have been possible without the support of Superintendent Hayashi. When he first entered office as interim superintendent, we served 6 schools, 18 classrooms, and 580 individuals on one island. Today, we serve 21 schools, 84 pre-K and K classrooms, and 2,740 individuals across four islands.

We are committed to students enrolled in Title 1 public schools across the state and grateful for the support of Superintendent Hayashi to get more families reading together at home. Under Keith Hayashi's leadership as Superintendent, we are encouraged that the intersection of family engagement and early literacy will continue to be prioritized for Hawaii's students. We strongly support a contract renewal of four years for Superintendent Keith Hayashi, as well as the executive compensation recommendation for a new salary range.

Sincerely,



Aarika Riddle

Executive Director

Kristi Yamaguchi's Always Dream

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Kekoa Kaluhiokalani

**Organization**

Waianae High School

**Position/Title**

Athletic Director

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Write Testimony**

To: Members of the Hawai'i State Board of Education

From: Kekoa Kaluhiokalani / Athletic Director/ Waianae High School

Date: November 4, 2025

Subject: Testimony in Strong Support of Superintendent Keith Hayashi - Commitment to Student-Athletes and Education-Based Athletics

Aloha Members of the Board of Education,

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of Superintendent Keith Hayashi, whose leadership and steadfast commitment to Hawai'i's students have been exemplary, particularly in his advocacy for education-based athletics across our public schools.

Superintendent Hayashi has consistently demonstrated a deep understanding of the integral role that athletics play in the overall educational experience. Under his leadership, the Hawai'i Department of Education has strengthened its emphasis on developing the whole student—academically, socially, and physically—through participation in interscholastic sports and co-curricular programs.

Superintendent Hayashi recognizes that athletics are more than extracurricular activities; they are an extension of the classroom, where students learn vital life skills such as leadership, teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. Through sports, our students gain firsthand experience in setting goals, managing challenges, and showing respect for others—all of which contribute to their growth as responsible, contributing members of their communities.

Furthermore, Superintendent Hayashi's commitment to equitable access and support for student-athletes has helped ensure that students from all backgrounds have the opportunity to participate and excel. His focus on collaboration among educators, coaches, administrators, and community partners has strengthened the foundation of education-based athletics statewide.

Superintendent Hayashi's vision exemplifies the belief that athletics and academics are not separate, but complementary, in developing well-rounded, resilient learners. His leadership continues to elevate the standard of excellence in both education and athletic programs across Hawai'i.

For these reasons, I respectfully offer my strong support for Superintendent Keith Hayashi and his continued efforts to foster excellence, equity, and opportunity for Hawai'i's student-athletes.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kekoa Kaluhiokalani  
Athletic Director / Waianae High School / Oahu Interscholastic Association

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Joseph Balangitao

**Organization**

Maui Interscholastic League

**Position/Title**

Executive Director

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Write Testimony**

I am in support of Keith Hayashi. He has supported the student athletes in the whole state especially girls sports. He was instrumental in securing funding for Flag Football and State Surfing. FF a title IV sport and Surfing a co-ed sport having its inaugural state tournament this coming May. He has done a good job as superintendent and has my support. Mahalo!

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Tiffany Pratt

**Organization**

HIDOE

**Position/Title**

Principal In Residence

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Write Testimony**

Aloha Hawai'i Board of Education Members,

I submit this correspondence to offer my strongest endorsement for the continued service of Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) Superintendent Keith Hayashi.

With my 29 years of experience in the HIDOE, I write with firsthand knowledge to confirm that his four years of service clearly reflect a steadfast dedication to elevating and supporting student welfare as the Department's primary focus.

Superintendent Hayashi is a highly effective and strategic leader who has expertly and inclusively shepherded the implementation of the BOE's strategic plan. His understanding of the system's complexities is deep, and he consistently demonstrates an open-minded willingness to engage with all HIDOE departments. It is evident that his single professional objective is to achieve systemic improvement in student success and positive educational outcomes.

My professional trust in his leadership is so complete that I recently transitioned from my deeply fulfilling role as a school principal—a post I cherished—to a state-level position serving as the Principal In Residence supporting our New Principal Academy. This move was a direct endorsement of his strategic planning and my desire to actively contribute to the positive, systemic change he is driving across the Department.

I fully support the HR Chair's recommendation for a four-year contract renewal, covering the period from January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2029. Maintaining Superintendent Hayashi at the helm is essential for preserving the stability and momentum necessary to secure the long-term success of our students.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Pratt

Principal In Residence, PDERI

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Kirk Smiley

**Organization**

DonorsChoose

**Position/Title**

Managing Director, Government Partnerships

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Write Testimony**

Hawai'i Board of Education,

The following is official testimony in support of a new contract for Superintendent Keith Hayashi. This testimony is to be shared at both the Human Resources Committee Meeting and the Special Meeting on November 5, 2025.

For the last five school years, DonorsChoose has partnered with Superintendent Hayashi and the Hawai'i Department of Education to support thousands of Hawai'i public school students by providing classroom resources requested by the state's teachers. The program has allowed teachers two opportunities to participate, once in the fall semester and once in the spring semester, by creating projects on the DonorsChoose website for specific educational materials that would most help their students continue their academic or social-emotional learning, first in light of COVID-19, and since the end of the pandemic, for all other educational needs.

Under Superintendent Hayashi's leadership, a new component of the program was also added to support first and second-year teachers, providing them with a personal opportunity to receive self-selected learning resources. Superintendent Hayashi added this component after learning from a University of Michigan research study that teachers who receive resources through DonorsChoose are 22% less likely to leave the teaching profession. By making special funding available to the state's newest teachers, the program can help these new educators achieve success in their classrooms, have a greater impact on student achievement, and increase their likelihood of continuing to teach in the state's public schools.

Throughout the program's five incredibly successful years, 29,186 classroom resource projects were funded, benefiting 9,292 teachers across every public school in Hawai'i. These projects, funded by the Department, empowered teachers to obtain the classroom materials that would have the most impact for their students, truly giving voice to the front lines of public education in the state by listening to and understanding their needs. Teachers' projects ranged from STEM supplies (such as studying paleontology) to SEL and cultural learning experiences (like projects affirming Hawaiian, Ilokano, and Filipino culture and identity) to literacy supplies (like this project teaching students to read) and many more. Through this partnership, the DonorsChoose team vetted each teacher's request and ensured that the materials were shipped to the teacher's school as quickly as possible, while also keeping the school principal informed.

In addition to this remarkable impact, one of the most innovative aspects of our partnership with Superintendent Hayashi was the program's ability to leverage a partnership with an anonymous donor who matched all the funding provided by HIDOE to support teachers' projects. While DonorsChoose has run a similar program in nine other states,

our partnership in Hawai'i is the only one that includes this matching component, supporting twice as many teachers and students as would be possible otherwise. Superintendent Hayashi's commitment to the state's teachers and students has allowed us to continue growing this anonymous donor's matching donation over the last five years.

In addition, the partnership helps Hawai'i teachers learn how to use the DonorsChoose charitable website throughout the school year to meet even more of their classroom resource needs or desires, and in those cases, receive funding from the national community of 6 million DonorsChoose donors, corporate partners, and foundation supporters. Through Superintendent Hayashi's leadership, Hawai'i teachers have leveraged the support of both individual education advocates in Hawai'i and across the country, securing more than \$32.5 million in funded projects over the last five school years.

We are grateful to Superintendent Hayashi for being a leader among state education leaders, showing an ever-increasing commitment to the state's students and teachers, and working across multiple stakeholders and the community to empower Hawai'i teachers while advancing student achievement. I have had the honor of presenting on these achievements at a national conference alongside Superintendent Hayashi (Council of the Great City Schools), and I regularly share the great work he is doing in Hawai'i with other state and local leaders. I'm so pleased that the state's teachers and students are thriving under his leadership and look forward to their continued progress if his contract is extended.

With great appreciation,  
Kirk Smiley  
Managing Director, Government Partnerships  
DonorsChoose

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Wesley Shinkawa

**Organization**

Kapolei High School

**Position/Title**

Principal

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Write Testimony**

To the Honorable Members of the Board of Education,

I strongly support the contract extension of Superintendent Keith Hayashi based on his effective leadership, dedication to strategic goals, and tangible success in academic recovery. Superintendent Hayashi was rated as effective overall by the Board of Education for the 2022-23 school year, receiving highly effective ratings in two of four priority areas. His tenure has been marked by a collective commitment to academic excellence and equity, affirming his goal to move from pandemic response to accelerating purposeful learning.

Under his direction, the Hawai'i State Department of Education (HIDOE) achieved national recognition for post-pandemic gains: Hawai'i schools ranked fourth highest in math recovery and second highest in reading recovery nationally between 2019 and 2024. The HIDOE's 2024-25 Strive HI report confirms steady progress, showing students gaining ground in all core subjects, with language arts proficiency surpassing 2019 rates and math approaching 2019 levels. Furthermore, postsecondary enrollment for the Class of 2024 increased 3 points, breaking a four-year plateau.

Superintendent Hayashi is also responsible for the approved six-year implementation plan, which lays out 127 action items to achieve the Board's strategic goals. His career reflects a sustained track record of driving innovation, including pioneering the state's first Early College program while principal of Waipahu High School. His commitment to strengthening the state's education pipeline has earned him recent accolades, including the inaugural "Workforce Development Hero" Lifetime Achievement Award in 2023 and the Inspirational Leader of the Year in 2024. Retaining Superintendent Hayashi ensures continuity and further acceleration toward preparing all graduates to be globally competitive and locally committed.

## Special Meeting

### Name

Richard Carosso

### Organization

Lahainaluna High School

### Position/Title

Principal

### Agenda Item

III. Superintendent's employment contract

### Position

Support

## Written Testimony

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JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI  
SUPERINTENDENT

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**LAHAINALUNA HIGH SCHOOL**  
**980 LAHAINALUNA ROAD**  
**LAHAINA, HAWAII 96761**

November 1, 2025

Members of the Hawaii Board of Education:

I am writing to express my strongest possible support for Superintendent Keith Hayashi and to commend his exemplary school-focused leadership across the Hawaii Department of Education. As a high school principal, I have witnessed firsthand his commitment to empowering school leaders and ensuring that state-level policy translates into tangible, positive outcomes at the individual campus level. Superintendent Hayashi consistently prioritizes clear communication, operational efficiency, and the allocation of resources where they can make the greatest impact on students. His leadership model fosters a culture of shared responsibility and collaboration that is essential for driving systemic improvement across our state system.

Superintendent Hayashi's dedication to our community became vividly apparent in the aftermath of the devastating Maui wildfires. His extreme support for Lahaina schools was immediate, personal, and unwavering. He was regularly on the ground, not just for symbolic visits, but to engage directly with staff, families, and students, ensuring the rapid deployment of resources and the establishment of stable learning environments under immense pressure. His administration cut through bureaucracy to provide flexible solutions for staffing, facilities, and social-emotional support, demonstrating a deep understanding that recovery is driven by the consistent presence and commitment of stable leadership.

For these reasons, I urge the Board of Education to recognize the profound and positive impact of Superintendent Hayashi's tenure. His leadership provides the stability, empathy, and strategic focus necessary to navigate both daily educational challenges and unforeseen crises like the Lahaina fires. We are confident that under his continued guidance, the HDOE will advance its mission of student success, and we look forward to continuing our partnership with him as we rebuild and strengthen our community and schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Carosso".

Richard Carosso  
Lahainaluna High School  
Principal

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Randall George

**Organization**

Hawaii Department of Education

**Position/Title**

Vice Principal

**Agenda Item**

II. Adjustments to salary structure and salary establishment process for Department of Education subordinate superintendents

**Position**

Comments only

### Written Testimony

**Upload Written Testimony Here**

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**Subject: Superintendent Hayashi Salary Increase Discussion and Equity for Temporarily Assigned Vice Principals**

Aloha Chairperson and Members of the Board,

I am writing today to express my concern and disappointment regarding the current discussion of raising Superintendent Hayashi's salary while there are unresolved inequities affecting Temporary Assigned (TA) Vice Principals who served our schools with dedication and courage during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When the Superintendent Hayashi stated that TA Vice Principals would not be eligible for hazard pay, it sent a disheartening message to those of us who were on the frontlines—every single day—serving meals to our community, preparing campuses for the safe return of students, and ensuring that schools continued to function during one of the most difficult periods in public education. Many of us served not only our students, but also families and community members who came to our schools for support and nourishment.

Now, as discussions take place to increase Superintendent Hayashi's compensation, I ask this Board:

**How can we justify rewarding top-level leadership when those who stepped up in a crisis remain unrecognized and uncompensated?**

Here in Hawai'i, roughly 20% of administrators are not yet certified. Many of these individuals are Temporary Assigned Vice Principals—educators who stepped into leadership out of a sense of duty and commitment, often while managing personal hardships such as family health issues, loss, or their own medical challenges. These TA administrators ensured schools remained operational and safe, even when it meant taking on tremendous responsibility without the protections or benefits afforded to others.

If these TA Vice Principals had not been willing to take on these critical roles, many schools would have been left short-staffed, without adequate supervision or leadership. To disregard their service by denying hazard pay—while considering a salary increase for the Superintendent who made that decision—feels inequitable and inconsistent with the very values our Department and Board claim to uphold.

We speak often of **Ne'epapa, growing together**, moving forward as one. But this decision to exclude TA Vice Principals from hazard pay, and now to discuss increasing Superintendent Hayashi's pay, runs counter to that principle. It communicates that some contributions matter more than others, and that those who took personal and professional risks to keep our schools running are not valued in the same way.

This issue is not just a union matter; it is a matter of fairness, leadership, and integrity.

Before considering an increase to the Superintendent's salary, I respectfully urge the Board to reflect on the message this sends to those of us in the field—especially those who have served as TA Vice Principals through crisis, hardship, and uncertainty.

We deserve acknowledgment, not exclusion.

We deserve equity, not disregard.

That is what true **Ne'epapa** looks like.

Mahalo for your time and thoughtful consideration.

## Special Meeting

### Name

Jennifer Sabas

### Organization

Chamber of Commerce Hawaii's Military Affairs Council

### Position/Title

Senior Consultant

### Agenda Item

III. Superintendent's employment contract

### Position

Support

## Written Testimony

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*Military Affairs Council  
Chamber of Commerce Hawaii  
733 Bishop Street, Makai Tower Suite 1200  
Honolulu, HI 96813*

**November 5, 2025**

**Testimony in Strong Support of the Reappointment of  
Keith Hayashi as Superintendent of Education**

Before the Board of Education

Chairperson Takumi, and Members of the Board:

On behalf of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii's Military Affairs Council's Ku'i Hao initiative, an organization committed to investing in trades career pathways to strengthen Hawaii's defense/maritime industrial base and to providing good jobs in welding, machining and advanced manufacturing, we write in strong support of the reappointment of Mr. Keith Hayashi as Superintendent of Education.

Superintendent Hayashi has demonstrated outstanding leadership in advancing education pathways that prepare Hawaii's students for the future. His deep understanding of the evolving workforce needs, coupled with his steadfast commitment to collaboration, has resulted in tangible progress across the Department of Education's K–12 system.

One of the meaningful examples of his leadership is his support for Kui Hao's Advanced Manufacturing K–12 programs. Under his guidance, the DOE has embraced innovative partnerships that bridge education, industry and government — providing career pathways for students in traditional trades careers together with on-ramps to additive, subtractive and advanced manufacturing programs in middle and high schools. The Superintendent has leaned forward to work with Ku'i Hao to ensure that defense monies are well-invested to maximize opportunities and matriculation to community college programs.

Superintendent Hayashi's vision for college, career, and community readiness aligns directly with the mission of Kui Hao and other STEM-focused initiatives statewide. His advocacy for early exposure in elementary schools to career pathway development in high schools — has expanded opportunities for students who might not otherwise not know about or see themselves in these technical, good-paying fields.

Superintendent Hayashi's leadership style stands out. He listens, he collaborates, and he acts decisively in the best interest of Hawaii's keiki. His long career as an educator and administrator has been defined by innovation rooted in compassion, and by a genuine belief in the potential of every student.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Board to reappoint Superintendent Keith Hayashi. His continued leadership ensures stability, momentum, and a clear vision for the next phase of educational transformation in Hawaii.

Aloha,

Jennifer Sabas  
Jason Chung  
Pono Chong  
Jamie Cook  
Kaipo Crowell  
Len Higashi  
Stephen Sasaki  
Tedi Kam-Yahata  
Wayne Inouye  
Aimoku McClellan

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Jason Yoshida

**Organization**

DOE

**Position/Title**

School Renewal Specialist

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Upload Written Testimony Here**

- [3\\_16145\\_Upload\\_04\\_11\\_2025\\_Yoshida.pdf](#)

November 4, 2025

Jason Yoshida  
3060 Eiwa Street  
Lihue, HI 96766  
[jason.yoshida@k12.hi.us](mailto:jason.yoshida@k12.hi.us)  
808-652-8484

Hawaii State Board of Education  
1390 Miller St., Rm 305  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Support for Superintendent Keith Hayashi

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

I am writing to express my strong support for Superintendent Keith Hayashi and to commend the work he has accomplished since stepping into this critical leadership role.

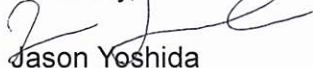
Superintendent Hayashi has consistently demonstrated dedication, thoughtful leadership, and a deep commitment to the students, educators, and communities across our state. I am particularly appreciative of his focus on improving academic outcomes, prioritizing teacher support, transparent communication, and fiscal responsibility. His efforts to navigate post covid and improve the Hawaii Department of Education through "working together" have been impressive and reflect a steady, student-centered approach.

Under his leadership, I believe the Hawaii Department of Education is moving in a positive direction, laying the groundwork for significant and sustainable improvements in our public school system.

I urge the Board to continue its full support of Superintendent Hayashi as he works to implement his vision and advance the education of all Hawaii's keiki.

Thank you for your time and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,



Jason Yoshida

Kauai Complex School Renewal Specialist

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Gary Kanamori

**Organization**

Pukalani Elementary School

**Position/Title**

Principal

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Write Testimony**

Esteemed Members of the Board,

I am writing today to offer support to Superintendent Keith Hayashi. I do so not just as a principal, but as someone who witnessed his leadership and character firsthand while serving the students and community of Princess Nāhi'ena'ena Elementary School during some of the most challenging periods in our state's history.

Superintendent Hayashi's tenure has been defined by his ability to lead through crisis. He guided our schools through the complex and uncertain waters of post-pandemic reopening, ensuring that the needs of our students, both academic and social-emotional, were met. This foundation of reliable crisis management proved crucial when Maui was devastated by the Lahaina and Upcountry fires. In the immediate aftermath, his office provided effective and community-centric support to our most impacted schools and families, demonstrating true grace under pressure.

My personal experience with Superintendent Hayashi confirms his unwavering dedication extends beyond policy and into genuine human connection. During my time as Principal of Princess Nāhi'ena'ena Elementary, I was consistently impressed by the personal time he carved out of his incredibly busy schedule to check in on me. This was not a superficial call; it was a sincere act of leadership. Crucially, he ensured that he and his entire state leadership team were always available to us. When we ran into organizational or bureaucratic roadblocks while attempting to serve our students and our Lahaina community, Superintendent Hayashi and his team were prompt and effective in removing them, allowing us to focus on the immediate needs of healing and returning to normalcy.

Superintendent Hayashi is an exceptional leader whose commitment is proven not only by his extensive experience but by tireless grace under pressure and a deep respect for those on the front lines. He understands that genuine support means being present, accessible, and ready to clear the path for the people doing the work. I urge the Board to recognize the indispensable value of his leadership and the profound positive impact he has had on our schools, especially here on Maui.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Gary Kanamori

Principal, Pukalani Elementary School

Former Principal of Princess Nāhi'ena'ena Elementary School

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Lisa DeLong

**Organization**

'Aikahi Elementary

**Position/Title**

Principal

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Write Testimony**

Letter of Support for Superintendent Keith Hayashi

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

I am writing in strong support of Superintendent Keith Hayashi and his continued leadership of the Hawai'i Department of Education. Superintendent Hayashi has demonstrated a deep commitment to every school in our state by personally visiting each campus, listening intently to students, parents, teachers, and classified staff. His presence and engagement are not symbolic, they have led to real, tangible improvements for schools and communities.

At our school, his attention and responsiveness resulted in the repair of a preschool playground that had been unusable for years, as well as prompt action to address water leaks that had gone unresolved. These may seem like small fixes, but to our children and families, they made an immediate and lasting difference.

Beyond solving immediate concerns, Superintendent Hayashi has been equally focused on addressing systemwide patterns and ensuring long-term improvement. He has gathered critical feedback about areas such as student nutrition, ensuring lunches are both healthy and appealing, and the need for rigorous, relevant curriculum that prepares students to be college, career, and world citizen ready, all while remaining rooted in Hawai'i.

One of his most powerful initiatives has been the consistent requirement for formative assessments and guaranteed and viable curricula across all schools. This has provided equity, coherence, and a clear focus on student growth statewide. Under his leadership, schools are united by a shared direction, with annual themes that build upon past practice and strengthen our collective sense of purpose.

Superintendent Hayashi has proven himself to be a leader who listens, learns, and acts. His thoughtful approach, grounded in both compassion and accountability, has moved our public school system forward in meaningful ways. I am proud to support his continued leadership and the positive impact it brings to students and educators across Hawai'i.

With aloha,

Lisa DeLong

Principal

'Aikahi Elementary School



## Special Meeting

### Name

Bennette Misalucha

### Organization

State of Hawaii Workforce Dev Council

### Position/Title

Executive Director

### Agenda Item

III. Superintendent's employment contract

### Position

Support

## Written Testimony

### Upload Written Testimony Here

- [3\\_16139\\_Upload\\_03\\_11\\_2025\\_Misalucha.pdf](#)

Hawaii Board of Education

November 3 , 2025

Dear Board Members,

I am writing in my personal capacity to express my strong and unequivocal support for the renewal of Superintendent Keith Hayashi's contract.

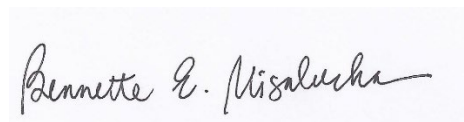
Since assuming my role as Executive Director of the Workforce Development Council more than three years ago, I have had numerous opportunities to work closely with Superintendent Hayashi and the Department of Education. During this time, I have found Superintendent Hayashi to be a visionary leader; one who not only articulates a clear vision but also transforms it into meaningful action. His leadership has been pivotal in advancing Hawai'i's efforts to prepare our students for both higher education and the workforce.

Because of his deep commitment to workforce development, Superintendent Hayashi established the Department of Workforce Development within the DOE to strengthen the link between public schools and private industry. This initiative has fostered successful partnerships with employers, encouraged greater involvement from the business community, and created real-world learning opportunities for students across the state.

Under his leadership, the Department has also undertaken significant alignment and reorganization to ensure a seamless transition and pathway from kindergarten through 12th grade: helping every student move from learning to livelihood with purpose and direction.

Superintendent Hayashi's forward-thinking approach is yielding visible results. Hawai'i's educational system is on an upward trajectory, and it is vital that he be given the opportunity to continue and complete the important work he has begun. I strongly urge the renewal of Superintendent Hayashi's contract so that he can continue building on this momentum and shaping a brighter future for our keiki and our state.

Respectfully Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bennette E. Misalucha", is displayed on a light purple rectangular background.

**Bennette Misalucha**

Executive Director, Workforce Development Council

## Special Meeting

**Name**

Bob Morikuni

**Organization**

Department of Education McKinley High School

**Position/Title**

Athletic Director

**Agenda Item**

III. Superintendent's employment contract

**Position**

Support

## Written Testimony

**Write Testimony**

To:Board of Education

I would like to write in support for Superintendent Keith Hayashi. I feel that he has done an outstanding job. He is a tremendous supporter of the student, teachers, administrators and has been so awesome for Public School Athletics. He has supported and was a part of the efforts to make Girls Flag Football and Surfing to the students of Hawaii. He has helped to increase funding so our students can travel together using school buses and also made it easier for all of use to upgrade and purchase new equipment for our teams. In all of these ways and so much more Superintendent Hayashi is looking out for the students of Hawaii. That is his main goal and he has done a great job doing that while leading and inspiring our administrators and teachers to excellence as we try to lead our students into the future. We are truly lucky to have him as our Superintendent.

--Bob Morkini

McKinley High School