

General Business Meeting

Name

Kari Kimura

Organization

Kealakehe High School SCC

Position/Title

Community Representative

Agenda Item

III. Report of the Superintendent

Position

Comments only

Written Testimony**Upload Written Testimony Here**

- [Kimura-TestimonyBOEmtg051426.pdf](#)

TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAII STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meeting Date: Thursday, May 14, 2026

Agenda Item: Report of the Superintendent: (A) Updates on 2026 legislative session

To: Chairperson and Members of the Board of Education

From: Kari L. Kimura, Community Representative (De Jure), Kealakehe High School SCC

RE: Oversight of Statutory Compliance and Act 51 Implementation

Aloha Chair and Members of the Board,

I am submitting this testimony under the **Report of the Superintendent: (A) Updates on 2026 legislative session**. While the Superintendent provides updates to the Board regarding the passage and tracking of new education bills, it is critical for the Board to be aware that the Department is experiencing critical compliance failures regarding existing, foundational legislation at the complex area level.

Specifically, the statutory mandates of the "Reinventing Education Act of 2004" (Act 51)—designed by the legislature to ensure shared decision-making and authentic community oversight—are experiencing significant procedural departures at Kealakehe High School. A Step 2 Formal Appeal regarding this matter is currently pending before the Superintendent's office.

I am asking the Board to be aware of the following departures from **HRS § 302A-1124** and **BOE Policy 500-19**:

- **Bypassing of Peer Elections:** State law mandates that community and parent SCC representatives be elected by their peers. However, for School Year 2025-2026, the administration departed from this mandate. In a November 3, 2025 email regarding the seating of the council, Principal Kori Takaki stated: *"I have already appointed all seats."* attached. The statute does not grant administrators the authority to substitute peer elections with unilateral appointments.
- **Procedural Failures in Bylaw Amendments:** The recognized SCC bylaws were recently amended to reduce community and staff representation by half (from 12 members to 6 members). However, the Complex Area Superintendent has acknowledged in writing that the October 2025 meetings where these amendments were introduced lacked the mandatory 6-day public calendar notice required by HIDOE policy. This omission renders the resulting bylaw changes procedurally invalid.
- **Lack of Financial Transparency:** Despite multiple requests, the administration has declined to release the detailed Salaried Financial Plan (approved in December 2025) to the public, providing only a summary "overview" to the newly appointed council.
- **Structural Conflict of Interest:** Because the administration declined a request to stay the implementation of these new bylaws pending the grievance appeal, a significant

structural vulnerability in governance has emerged. The Principal's annual Performance Evaluation is currently being reviewed by a 6-member board whose seats were directly appointed by the Principal herself. According to the Kealakehe High School website, this is happening at a SCC meeting Tuesday, May 13th at 4pm in a closed meeting. The public is not allowed to testify at the beginning of this meeting.

I recognize that administrative practices can drift over time. However, a past lack of formal elections does not grant current administrators the authority to declare long-standing seats "vacant" in order to bypass due process and unilaterally appoint replacements.

As the governing body that oversees the Department, I ask that you monitor the Step 2 appeal currently before the Superintendent's office. I am simply asking that the Department ensures strict adherence to HRS § 302A-1124, addresses these compliance failures, and restores a properly peer-elected Kealakehe High School SCC.

Thank you for your time, your service to our schools, and your commitment to transparent governance.

Respectfully,



Kari L. Kimura

Community Representative, Kealakehe High School SCC

PO Box 624

Holualoa, Hawaii 96725

808-987-6146

kimura@alum.mit.edu

Testimony uploaded to BOE meeting site 5-12-26

Subject: SCC - Kealakehe High School
From: Kori Takaki <kori.takaki@k12.hi.us>
Date: 11/3/2025, 8:00 AM
To: "kimura@alum.mit.edu" <kimura@alum.mit.edu>
CC: Cassandra Macatiag <Cassandra.Macatiag@k12.hi.us>

Aloha Kari,
 It was nice to meet you last week. Thank you so much for your interest in Kealakehe and your passion for education.

I wanted to just touch base about SCC since you mentioned you had participated since 2018.

I went back to the list I was sent in June when I came on board, and I'm so sorry, I must have missed your name. Everyone else on the list that I spoke to (except for Denice) said they were not returning. I apologize for missing you.

I spoke to Cassandra and she said that there was no official voting in the past few years, and instead the principal appointed anyone who was interested. Which is what I ultimately did this year, as I believed there were no returnees except for Denice.

I have already appointed all seats, but you are always welcome to attend SCC meetings. The more the merrier! They are open to anyone; though the voting would be reserved for those seated. Because everyone is appointed this year, when the team did training at the first meeting, I reviewed the process for appointment; and elections. Anyone wishing to continue after this year will go through the election process, I believe in March. You could certainly put your name on the ballot when that comes around.

The next meeting is November 14th and it will be virtual. It should be posted on the public calendar with the Agenda. We are going to be planning our first Community Meeting of the year at that meeting. I believe Raina, our chair, will be putting public testimony first so if you have ideas, please share them.

Have a great week!

Always with Aloha,



Kori Takaki, M.E.d

Kealakehe High School Principal

2023 Tokiyaka Excellence in School Leadership Nominee



Office Phone: (808)313-3600

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General Business Meeting

Name

Gene Zarro

Organization

Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network

Position/Title

Chair

Agenda Item

V. Investigative committee (a permitted interaction group pursuant to paragraph 92-2.5(b)(1), Hawaii Revised Statutes) investigation relating to nomination of individuals to serve as members of the State Public Charter School Commission: Findings and recommendations on nominations

Position

Comments only

Written Testimony

Upload Written Testimony Here

- [2026-May-12-Reference-letter-for-Ryan-Mandado.pdf](#)



Re: Letter of reference for Ryan Mandado
for a seat on the State Public Charter School Commission

May 12, 2026

Members of the Hawaii State Board of Education:

It is a privilege to write this letter of recommendation for Ryan Canoneo Mandado regarding his nomination to serve as a commissioner on the State Public Charter School Commission. Having served as an executive and board member within the Hawaii public charter school landscape, we have seen firsthand the necessity of having commissioners who possess a deep, dual-perspective of both the Department of Education (DOE) and the unique operational realities of charter schools. Ryan Mandado is an exceptional candidate who embodies this holistic background.

Ryan's professional trajectory demonstrates a rare balance of high-level leadership within the charter sector and foundational experience within the DOE. As the Founding Chief Education Officer (CEO) of DreamHouse 'Ewa Beach, Ryan successfully navigated the complex process of establishing a new public charter school. His experience managing a \$7 million operating budget and overseeing multi-million dollar construction projects gives him a practical understanding of the fiscal and facilities challenges that charter schools face. His tenure as the Special Education Department Head at James Campbell High School (the largest public high school in the state) required him to manage over 300 Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and lead a team of 30 teachers. This experience ensures he understands the systemic requirements and accountability standards of the broader state education department.

What distinguishes Ryan is his ability to interface effectively between charter schools and state agencies. His background includes managing dual-governance structures, where he led both a state-compliant school board and a non-profit board focused on facilities and philanthropy. This "holistic" perspective is vital for a commissioner who must balance school autonomy with the rigorous oversight required by Hawaii Revised Statutes. Ryan's commitment to continuous improvement is evident in his academic achievements, including an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and his ongoing MBA studies at Johns Hopkins University. Furthermore, his work as an Adjunct Professor at Hawai'i Pacific University and his professional stint as a Senior Diversity Specialist at Google highlight his ability to lead diverse teams and foster collaborative environments.

In summary, Ryan Mandado possesses the "boots-on-the-ground" experience and the strategic governance mindset necessary to strengthen the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission. He understands the friction points between state agencies and charter schools and has the integrity and technical skill to navigate them effectively. I recommend him for this appointment without reservation.

Sincerely,

Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network