

Student Achievement Committee

Name

Troy Abshire

Organization

Makawao Elementary School

Position/Title

General and Adaptive Physical Education Teacher

Agenda Item

IV. Department of Education update on physical education content and performance standards

Position

Support

Written Testimony

Upload Written Testimony Here

- [SRW-Testimonial.pdf](#)

Dear Chair and Members of the Board,

Aloha and mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of the adoption and implementation of the updated 2026 Hawai'i Physical Education Standards. My name is Troy "Leven" Abshire Jr., and I have served as a Physical Education teacher in the Baldwin-Kekaulike-Maui (BKKM) complex on Maui for the past six years. Throughout my tenure, I have adapted physical education instruction to align with the unique cultural heritage of our islands, serving students from diverse backgrounds who share a vital need for a rigorous, adaptive, and culturally relevant education focused on achieving ALOHA—A Lifetime of Healthy Activity.

When I began teaching middle school physical education in Hawai'i, I worked with the existing HCPS III standards. While these standards allowed for instructional autonomy, their lack of specificity made evaluating student progress and communicating clear expectations exceptionally challenging. The absence of detailed benchmarks often required educators to independently design assessment frameworks, creating inconsistencies across schools and making it difficult to provide families with meaningful feedback regarding their children's physical and health literacy development.

To address these challenges, I was honored to participate in the Standards Review Workshop convened by the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Design (OCID). Collaborating alongside physical education specialists, Department of Education personnel, and community health stakeholders across the state provided a valuable platform to share insights, address systemic gaps, and contribute to a modernized educational framework.

The resulting 2026 Hawai'i Physical Education Standards successfully integrate established physical literacy benchmarks with Hawaiian culture and local contexts. Key improvements in the proposed standards include:

- **Cultural Integration:** Incorporation of Hawaiian language and values to honor place-based education and community identity.
- **Structured Assessment Framework:** Clear categorization of learning domains and performance indicators, enabling precise measurement of physical, social, and emotional skills.
- **Instructional Guidance:** A well-defined roadmap that supports both dedicated physical educators and general elementary classroom teachers in delivering high-quality health and physical education instruction.

The 2026 Hawai'i Physical Education Standards establish clear learning trajectories and consistent expectations that will empower educators and improve student outcomes statewide. I respectfully urge the Board to approve these standards to ensure our students develop the skills and knowledge required for lifelong health and well-being.

Mahalo for your time, leadership, and dedication to the keiki of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Troy "Leven" Abshire Jr.

Makawao Elementary

Physical Education Teacher, 2027 BKKM Complex Teacher of the Year

Student Achievement Committee

Name

Rita Abdel-Malek

Organization

CodeAI

Position/Title

Director of State Government Affairs

Agenda Item

V. Department of Education update on computer science content and performance standards

Position

Support

Written Testimony

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- [CodeAI_HI_BOE_Testimony_CSTA_Standards_2026-10-08.pdf](#)



October 5, 2026

The Honorable William Arakaki
Chairperson, Student Achievement Committee
Hawai'i State Board of Education
P.O. Box 2360
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

Re: Support for the Department's proposed adoption of the 2026 CSTA PK–12 Computer Science Standards. Agenda item: Department of Education update on computer science content and performance standards (October 8, 2026)

Dear Chairperson Arakaki and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rita Abdel-Malek, and I am the Director of State Government Affairs at CodeAI (formerly Code.org), a national nonprofit focused on ensuring all students have the digital fluency to succeed in an AI-powered world. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

CodeAI supports the Department's proposed full adoption of the 2026 CSTA PK–12 Computer Science Standards, and we urge the Board to approve them when the Department brings its recommendation forward.

We support adoption for three reasons:

- **It closes a nine-year gap.** The Department reports that computer science is now offered in every public elementary, middle/intermediate, and high school. The standards guiding that instruction should match the scale of that commitment, and Hawai'i's K-12 Computer Science Standards were last updated in 2017.
- **Hawai'i helped shape them.** The Department's Computer Science Educational Specialist served on the national revision committee, and complex area teams gave input at all three draft stages, so the standards reflect Hawai'i's equity priorities and community context.
- **They build real understanding of AI.** The standards weave AI concepts, including machine learning, through the K–12 sequence and add a dedicated AI specialty strand. They focus on how these systems work rather than on any one tool, which changes too quickly to anchor standards to.

Why this matters for students. Computer science and AI are no longer specialty subjects. They shape how students will learn, work, and take part in their communities, whatever career they choose. A student who understands how these systems work can question what an AI tool produces, spot errors and bias, and make informed decisions instead of accepting

answers at face value. A student who has learned to break down a problem, test a solution, and improve it can build with technology instead of only consuming it. Clear standards in every school are how we ensure these opportunities reach all of Hawai'i's students.

This also fits [CodeAI's 10 Policies for AI and CS Education](#), which call on states to establish K–12 digital science standards so every student builds a foundational understanding of AI and computing. States that adopt AI and machine learning standards at least at the level of the 2026 CSTA standards meet the transformative level of that policy, and full adoption would place Hawai'i there.

CodeAI looks forward to supporting the Department, complex area teams, and teachers as they put these standards to work for Hawai'i's students. Thank you for your leadership and your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rita Abdel-Malek

Director of State Government Affairs, CodeAI

Student Achievement Committee

Name

Nathan Murata

Organization

University of Hawaii at Manoa

Position/Title

Dean

Agenda Item

IV. Department of Education update on physical education content and performance standards

Position

Support

Written Testimony

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- [Letter-to-Support-PE-Standards.pdf](#)



UNIVERSITY
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October 6, 2026

The Honorable William Arakaki
Chairperson, Student Achievement Committee
Hawai'i State Board of Education

Re: Support for the Proposed Hawai'i Physical Education Standards

Dear Chair Arakaki and Members of the Student Achievement Committee:

On behalf of the College of Education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, I am pleased to express our strong support for the proposed Hawai'i Physical Education Standards.

Quality physical education is essential to a well-rounded education. It provides students with the knowledge, skills, confidence, and experiences needed to engage in physical activity throughout their lives. All students in Hawai'i, regardless of the school they attend, the island or community in which they live, or their individual abilities and backgrounds, deserve access to high-quality physical education. Establishing clear, relevant, and rigorous statewide standards is an important step toward making that expectation a reality.

The proposed standards provide a strong foundation for this work. They are aligned with the 2024 SHAPE America National Physical Education Standards and reflect current knowledge and best practices in physical education, while also being intentionally designed for the students and communities of Hawai'i. Rather than simply adopting national standards, the development process produced standards that reflect our unique context. The integration of Native Hawaiian and other cultural physical activities, Hawaiian concepts, personal and social responsibility, and aquatics and water safety makes the standards particularly relevant to our keiki and to the places in which they live, learn, and move.

Equally important is the thoughtful and inclusive process through which these standards were developed. This was not a short-term effort or the work of a single group. The multi-year process included a 29-member statewide workgroup representing the Hawai'i State Department of Education, the Office of Hawaiian Education, complex areas, school administrators, physical education teachers across grade levels and islands, the Hawai'i State Department of Health, and my own faculty from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Education. The workgroup met for eight full-day sessions between March 2025 and April 2026, followed by opportunities for educators, students, and members of the public to provide feedback. This extensive engagement strengthens the standards and it is evident that the standards reflect both professional expertise and the voices of those who will teach, learn, and live them.

1776 University Avenue
Everly Hall, Room 128
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822
Tel: (808) 956-7703 • Fax: (808) 956-3106
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The Honorable William Arakaki
October 6, 2026
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As the institution responsible for preparing many of Hawai‘i's future educators, the College of Education recognizes the importance of aligning what we teach our future professionals with what is expected in Hawai‘i's schools. These standards clarify what students should know and be able to do across grade spans and provide an important foundation for curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional learning, and educator preparation. The transition from 36 broad benchmarks in the 2005 standards to 177 grade-span learning indicators also provides considerably greater specificity for educators while maintaining alignment with the national standards.

Most importantly, these standards represent a commitment to all of Hawai‘i's students. Every child deserves opportunities to develop physical literacy, experience the joy and benefits of movement, learn to interact safely and respectfully with others, and develop the skills and confidence needed to be physically active throughout life. The proposed Hawai‘i Physical Education Standards establish a common expectation for what quality physical education should provide for every student across our state.

The College of Education at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa is proud to have contributed to this collaborative process and strongly supports the proposed Hawai‘i Physical Education Standards. We look forward to continuing to work alongside the Hawai‘i State Department of Education and our community partners to support educators and schools as these standards move from adoption to implementation.

Mahalo for your commitment to ensuring that every student in Hawai‘i has access to a high-quality education that supports their learning, health, and well-being.

Sincerely,

Nathan M. Murata

Nathan M. Murata
Dean
College of Education
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Student Achievement Committee

Name

Jacob Koressel

Organization

Computer Science Teachers Association

Position/Title

Senior Manager of Standards

Agenda Item

V. Department of Education update on computer science content and performance standards

Position

Support

Written Testimony

Upload Written Testimony Here

- [Koressel-Computer-Science-Testimony.pdf](#)

TO: Hawai'i State Board of Education

FROM: Jacob Koressel, Senior Manager of Standards, Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA)

DATE: October 8, 2026

RE: Agenda Item V – Department of Education Update on Computer Science Content and Performance Standards

Members of the Hawai'i State Board of Education:

Thank you for considering updates to Hawai'i's computer science content and performance standards. I write in strong support of adopting the 2026 CSTA PK–12 Computer Science Standards as Hawai'i's computer science content standards for elementary and secondary students.

Hawai'i has been a national leader in computer science education since becoming an early adopter of state computer science standards in 2018, and it has since made great strides in expanding computer science learning opportunities for all students. Adopting the 2026 CSTA Standards keeps that commitment current, ensuring students learn the computer science they need to navigate a world increasingly powered by computing.

The 2026 CSTA PK–12 Computer Science Standards were written *for* teachers, *by* teachers. Grounded in both research and classroom practice, they are relevant to students, implementable in real classrooms, and readily interpretable by the teachers who use them.

Computing has changed dramatically since Hawai'i's last standards adoption, and the 2026 CSTA Standards reflect that change. They integrate artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and data science, areas of growing importance in students' lives and futures. They also center the human side of computing: collaboration, ethics, human-centered design, and dispositions such as persistence and curiosity. Throughout, the Standards build a coherent progression from PK through grade 12.

The Standards come with clarifying information to help teachers understand and implement them, including boundary statements, implementation examples, and interdisciplinary connections. Additional resources, such as grade-band guidance and curriculum alignment validation, further support implementation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony. CSTA looks forward to supporting Hawai'i as it continues to provide high-quality computer science learning experiences for all students.