

Senator Michelle Kidani

Twenty-ninth Hawaii State Legislature

(D) Senate District 18 – Serving Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Waikele, Village Park, Royal Kunia



Senate Vice President

Chair: Committee on Education

Vice Chair: Committee on Higher Education

Member: Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health

Hawaii State Capitol
Room 228

Phone 586-7100

senkidani@capitol.hawaii.gov



Aloha friends and neighbors,

Our major focus in this 2017 Legislative session has been on the state budget for the two-year period beginning July 1. A detailed spending plan is now ready for final approval this week as we move toward adjournment on Thursday, May 4. My priority, as Chair of the Education Committee, has been to support our youngsters and their teachers in our public schools. Here are a few notes:

I am pleased that the budget includes funds to support the state's Early College Initiative so that this program that has been so successful at Waipahu High School can be implemented on other campuses. There is also support for a Keiki Healthy and Ready to Learn health assessment and monitoring program in schools beyond the initial, very successful pilot phase. We are also providing funds for a "Hawaii Promise" initiative that will supplement financial aid for University of Hawaii students.

There are still other items pending approval, including funding bills that are separate from the regular budget. The major question of how best to support the city's rail project in Senate Bill 1183 remained unresolved until further deliberations later this week.

School construction projects that affect families in Senate District 18 are detailed on page 2 of the newsletter.

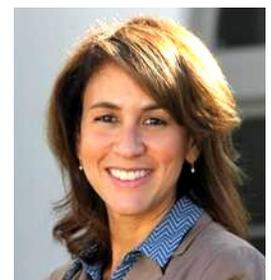
Me ke Aloha Pumehana,

Two Finalists for DOE Superintendent announced

The search committee reviewing applicants for Superintendent of Education has announced the selection of the two finalists who will be invited to meet with education stakeholders in early May and for interviews with the Board of Education on



Dr. Linda Chen (at left) served as the chief academic officer for the Baltimore City Public Schools in Maryland, and as the deputy chief academic officer for Boston Public Schools. She is also a former assistant superintendent of schools for the Philadelphia school district.



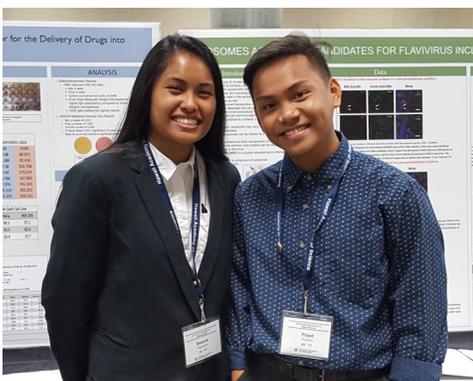
Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto (at right) is the superintendent of Gilbert Public Schools in Arizona, and previously served as superintendent of Hartford Public Schools in Connecticut.

Waipahu students headed for Intel Science Fair in California

Top Waipahu High School students in this year's State Science and Engineering Fair this year were selected to participate in the Intel International Science & Engineering Fair in Los Angeles, May 14-19.

At left, Deserie Pagatpatan, with a research project in Biomedical Engineering, and **Floyd Rubonal**, with research in the cell & molecular biology category, were both mentored by WHS science teacher **Michael Sana**. Altogether, projects of more than two dozen students from WHS and another 14 students from Waipahu Intermediate School were on display this month at the Hawaii Convention Center.

Congratulations to students and the teachers who mentor them. Keep up the good work!



Billion-dollar construction budget impacts Senate District 18 families

Here are some construction projects for which funds are allocated in the state budget for the two years beginning July 1, 2017

- ◆ **Waipahu High School** - \$15 million for a new classroom building
- ◆ **Waipahu Intermediate School** - \$600,000 for multi-purpose playcourts
- ◆ **Waipahu Elementary School** - \$275,000 for cafeteria improvements
- ◆ **Kanoelani Elementary School** - \$800,000 for construction of a portable classroom building
- ◆ **Waikele Elementary School** – \$1.4 million for construction of a six-classroom building; \$850,000 for upgrades to the electrical system and replacement of furnishings
- ◆ **Mililani High School** - \$2 million for planning for a Performing Arts Center; \$350,000 for planning to enclose a courtyard and extend an existing building
- ◆ **Mililani Middle School** - \$11.5 million for a 15-classroom building. This is a major step toward moving MMS off the multi-track school schedule back to the standard school year calendar
- ◆ **UH West Oahu** - \$2.5 million for improvements to the maintenance building; \$50,000 for improvements to the library

Roosevelt Bridge – dedicated 83 years ago and named for President Franklin Delano Roosevelt – has been showing its age. Over the next 18-20 months, major rehabilitation work will make it stronger and safer, even providing shared shoulder lane space for bicyclists and runners. The state is funding 20 % of the \$15 million cost; the remainder will be covered by the Federal Highway Administration.



For the groundbreaking, Representative Lauren Matsumoto and I joined state DOT officials, contractors from Hawaiian Dredging and Kahu Kordell Kekoa for a ceremonial start to the work, dwarfed by the bridge support struts.



An exceptionally busy April at the Capitol ~ at left (1), hundreds of blue pinwheels, courtesy of Girl Scouts and Prevent Child Abuse Hawaii, dot the Capitol lawn to remind us that child abuse remains a critical social crisis.



At right (2), Legislators filled more than a hundred Easter baskets with household goods for IHS homeless shelter. **Rep. Belatti, Senators Shimabukuro, Inouye & Baker, Rep. Matsumoto** and IHS Director **Connie Mitchell** flanked this year's designated Bunny: 1st-year **Senator Karl Rhoads**.

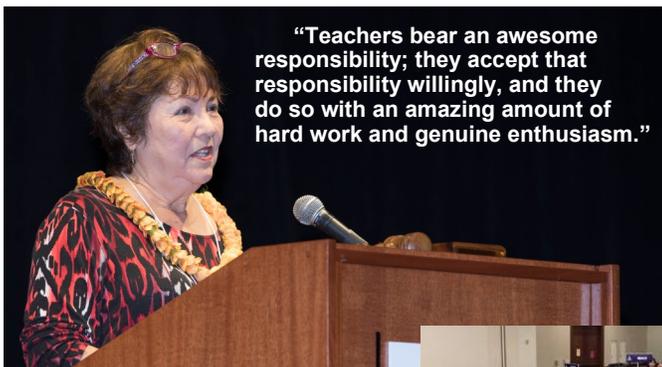


Above (3), standing ovations for UH Women's Volleyball Coach **Dave Shoji** and his wife **Mary** – honored by the Senate on *Dave Shoji Day* at the Capitol for his 42 years and more than 1,200 victories.

“The Lawmaker Our Keiki Deserve”

It was a true honor to be invited to address the annual convention of the **Hawaii State Teachers Association**. And I was deeply touched when they presented me a plaque “in appreciation for advocacy and dedication to our public schools.” Legislation to establish a dedicated funding base to help finance our schools failed this session. This bill asked that a question be put on the 2018 ballot for voters to decide on allowing a tax surcharge to be dedicated to education. A new collective bargaining agreement gives our teachers pay increases and improved benefits that should help to address the chronic teacher retention and recruiting challenges we face year after year.

“Teachers bear an awesome responsibility; they accept that responsibility willingly, and they do so with an amazing amount of hard work and genuine enthusiasm.”



Hawaii’s 13,500 public school teachers remained unified through our legislative session as we worked toward increasing resources for our schools and our *keiki*.



HSTA Annual Convention ~ April 2, 2017

Congratulations to Elynne Chung, Principal of Mililani Middle School (at left) for her nomination for the Masayuki Tokioka Excellence in School Leadership Award. Principal Chung was one of three semifinalists for the 2017 award.



At right, new nominees to the Board of Education appeared before my Education Committee. **Nolan Kawano** and **Christine Namau`u** will join the Board effective July 1. We also confirmed returning Board members **Kenneth Uemura** and **Brian De Lima**.



Kudos to the **Hawaii Carpenters Union** for their initiatives to support the DOE’s career education programs. We were at their apprentice training facility to kick off the “**Connect to Careers**” (C2C) project - joined by private sector business leaders and the Hawaii Chamber of Commerce. This is a great example of public-private partnerships that can support our state’s economy by creating job opportunities for Hawaii high school and college grads. That’s Carpenters Executive Secretary **Ron Taketa** in the aloha shirt to my right, and Mililani resident **Ed Aczon**, in the white shirt and lei. Ed is Executive Director of the Apprentice and Training Fund.



The month of April has been the **Month of the Military Child**. Nearly four dozen schools on Oahu, Kauai and Hawaii Island are designated Military Impact Schools that enroll 14,000 military dependent students.

These photos are from **Kaleiopuu Elementary**, an impact school in Village Park in my district, where I was invited to celebrate the school’s Military Appreciation Night. Seventy-two students, about 8 percent of students of Kaleiopuu’s total enrollment of 896, are military dependents, who encounter the challenges of frequent relocation and often-absent parents. The DOE has a dedicated staff of military liaisons in schools to help youngsters in transition.

Mahalo for inviting me to share a wonderful evening with all of you!



VP Matt Mitsuyuki, Principal Pat Anbe and VP Marty Sepkowski—ready to celebrate! At right, Kaleiopuu’s sixth grade chorus performs.





An all-star cast for Kupuna Day at the Capitol

My colleague, **Senator Brickwood Galuteria**, organized the 8th Annual Kupuna Day at the Capitol this month. Entertainers included “old timers” **Danny Kaleikini**, **Marlene Sai**, **Frank De Lima** and **Nina Kealiiwahamana**. A variety of senior services providers was on hand to offer information and assistance.



Mahalo to the **Mililani High School Girls Varsity Soccer Team** for an invitation to celebrate their 2017 OIA Division One Championship. A win for 3rd place in the State Tournament capped the season. *Great work girls, Coach Ray and all of the family and friends who support this success.*

The **Trojan Boys Varsity Soccer Team** celebrated their season later in the month. They finished 2nd in the OIA with just one loss, and were in line to play for 5th place in the States – but the game was cancelled. *Mahalo for another winning season at 13-2-1 for 2017!*



Pending results of April 26 game



The **Marauder varsity softball girls** finished third in the OIA Tournament and move on to the D-II State Tournament beginning Wednesday, May 3. **Good luck!**

At **UH West Oahu**, the campus will graduate its largest class ever on Saturday, May 6. Altogether, 315 students have completed their work on bachelor’s degrees or professional certificates this semester. Featured speaker will be **Kukui Maunakea-Forth**, Executive Director at **Ma’o Organic Farms** on the Leeward Coast.



*Congratulations to the 520 members of the **Waipahu High School Class of 2017** who will be receiving diplomas on May 18 at Blaisdell Arena. At last count, at least 20 seniors are eligible to graduate as valedictorians. That means earning a GPA of 4.0 or higher and also fulfilling requirements of at least one Honors Recognition Certificate.*



Parasitic rat lungworm

Rat lungworm is a growing concern. Here’s advice from the State Department of Health.

About a dozen cases of rat lungworm disease have been confirmed since the beginning of the year on Hawaii Island and Maui. The disease has been in the islands for five decades as a parasitic worm in rats that can infect snails, slugs, freshwater shrimp, land crabs and frogs that eat rat feces containing the worm larvae.

The main danger of transmission to people is eating uncooked or unwashed food containing an infected animal, which can result in the parasite (pictured at left), infecting a person’s brain and causing damage that can range from headaches to a rare type of meningitis.

No cases of rat lungworm have been traced to commercial veggies – just plants from home gardens. Avoiding infection is simple. **Thoroughly rinse all fruits and vegetables under running water to dislodge any carriers such as tiny slugs. No soap or other solutions are necessary.**