

# Senator Michelle Kidani

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



Aloha friends and neighbors,

In less than three short months, the Legislature will convene its regular 60-day working session at the State Capitol. Lawmakers have been preparing for this official business part of our responsibilities during the last few months, including public briefings on several matters.

As Chair of the Senate's Committee on Education, I have met with principals of our Central District schools to talk story and hear their concerns. Principals are closest to the action on their campuses and play an important role in the planning process.

I also convened an informational briefing with my counterpart, House Education Chair Representative Roy Takumi, to learn about pilot programs in five areas across the state designed to assure that students are reading at appropriate levels by third grade. Later, our two committees also received an update on the State Public Charter School Commission standards for evaluating charter school performance as school contracts come up for renewal.

This coming session I will also serve as Vice Chair of the Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health. In that capacity, our committee held an informational briefing on October 22 related to best practices for medical marijuana dispensaries.

A primary focus of our work beginning in January will be supplemental budget requests from the various state government agencies to accommodate requested adjustments to the two year budget we approved last session. The departments are currently finalizing their budget submissions, and legislative briefings will begin sometime in the next several weeks prior to our session.

At its meeting last month, the state Council on Revenues raised its forecast for growth in the State's general fund tax revenues in the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016 from 2.7% to 6.0%. By law, we must use those forecasts in formulating our spending plan. The Council meets again next week to review current economic data, and they are certain to take note of the announcement by the State Labor Department that Hawaii's unemployment rate has dropped to 3.4 percent - the lowest rate since 2008. That's welcome news for workers and their families as we all try to stabilize Hawaii's economy and build for a secure future.

Me ke Aloha Pumehana,

P.S. - We are all thrilled that **Auli`i Cravalho**, a sophomore at Kamehameha Schools, has been chosen for a lead role in the upcoming Disney animated feature film **Moana**. We are all proud to know Auli`i and her mother, Puanani, as our Mililani neighbors! Congratulations!

## Top Teacher!

**Mililani Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Lynn Yoshioka is the 2016 Teacher of the Year from Oahu's Central District.** She was one of seven teachers from school districts statewide nominated by their colleagues and selected for this honor. School **Principal Elynne Chung** tells us Lynn has been a public school teacher for 25 years – 9 years at Mililani Uka Elementary and the past 16 years at Mililani Middle.

**Lynn Yoshioka**

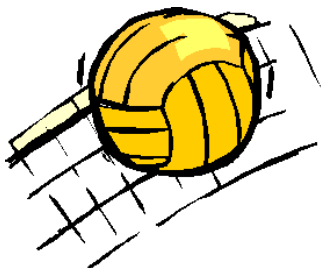
**Central District Teacher of the Year**



Lynn is very engaged in her subject matter and works closely with parents to assure that her students are making appropriate progress through their classes.

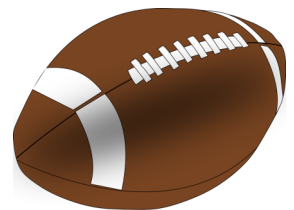
Outside the classroom, Lynn is a robotics coach and advisor. She also works with students in the Media Club to help them write scripts and brainstorm topics for the **MMS Blazer News** viewed weekly by the entire school.

*Hats off to Lynn Yoshioka ~ an inspiring example to her fellow teachers and all of us for her total commitment to our youngsters!*



Congratulations to the **Mililani High School Girls Varsity Volleyball Team** for winning the OIA West Division title and heading into the State Championship Tournament that begins tonight.

We're also on the edge of our seats as the **Trojan Varsity Football Team** trains hard to repeat as OIA Champions in this Friday's game at Aloha Stadium.



# News from our Schools and Communities



## Senate Special Session Next Week

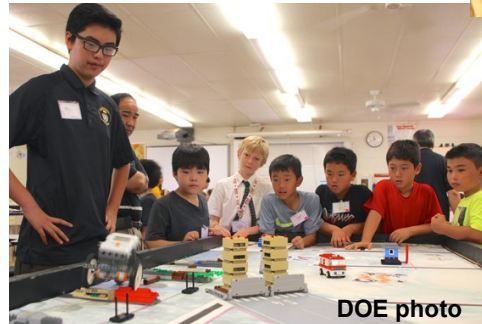
Governor Ige has appointed District Court Judge **Shirley M. Kawamura** to a vacant circuit court post on Oahu and District Family Court Judge **Melvin H. Fujino** to the Hawaii Island circuit court bench. The governor selected them from a list of nominees provided by the Judicial Selection Commission. These appointments are subject to Senate confirmation, and we will convene a brief special session November 5-6 to fulfill this responsibility.



The state has awarded a contract to Certified Construction, Inc., for \$268,000 for repair and maintenance work at **Kipapa Elementary School**. Principal **Corine Yogi** tells me that these funds will help take care of some long-planned re-roofing projects on both permanent and portable classroom buildings on campus.

These are the kinds of projects that I requested in the education budget after contacting principals about their priorities as we work to keep our public school campuses safe and secure for Mililani students.

Always-enthusiastic fourth graders from **Kanoelani Elementary School** in Waipio visited the State Capitol this month. We always look forward to welcoming youngsters to the Capitol District so they have the opportunity to learn about State government. *Thank you Heidi Fukunaga and fellow teachers for organizing the field trip!* →



Mililani High School physics teacher **Tyson Kikugawa** coordinates a Fall Break program in which his students instruct elementary school students on robotics and other science and tech subjects. *At left*, MHS student **Michael Abagon**, who coached youngsters from **Mililani Mauka**, **Mililani Ike** and **Mililani Uka** elementary schools. A total of 75 students participated in this third year of the program. ← *Mahalo Tyson for your initiative!*



*The Department of Education's Annual Stop Flu in School program* is now underway at more than 300 public, private and charter schools statewide. This is the ninth year for the voluntary program that administers free flu vaccinations to Hawaii students enrolled in kindergarten through eighth grade at participating schools.

*Flu shots will be available at schools in our area on the following schedule:* **Kipapa Elementary - November 4; Mililani Waena - November 5; Mililani Middle - November 5 and 6; Kanoelani Elementary - November 13.**

I hope you will take advantage of this free program to help reduce influenza illnesses over the next few months.

**The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii** invited legislators and community leaders to visit Oahu manufacturing companies.

I was so pleased that our itinerary included a stop at the **Coastal Windows plant in the Waipio Industrial Park**. Coastal is the only window manufacturing company in the state and has won national recognition for its record of support for employees who are in the National Guard.

That's Coastal President **Bob Barrett** at the center of our group proudly showing off his cavernous, state-of-the-art factory and warehouse. Bob is also a member of the Board of Directors for **Mililani Town Association**.

