

Date of Hearing: April 14, 2008

Committee: Senate Education/Health

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: H.C.R. 126, H.D. 1 (H.S.C.R. 1417-08)

Purpose: Urging the Board of Education to Establish An Integrating Rehabilitation Programs for Students with Anger Problems.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) supports H.C.R. 126, H.D. 1 (H.S.C.R. 1417-08) as an effort to help reduce incidents of anger and violence in our schools. The Department does not support putting anger management programs in schools, without studying the issues and problems more carefully. It must be acknowledged that current rehabilitation programs for substance abuse do not present a viable model to address anger and violence. Further, there is little documented evidence that anger management programs alone have a positive, long-term impact on student behaviors. Consequently, the Department recommends that a study be conducted to identify appropriate, evidence-based program models that have a high success rate in public secondary schools with diverse student populations. Additionally, the Department continues

to recommend that the study be expanded to include the exploration of proactive and evidence-based interventions and supports, as these have a sustained positive effect on student behavior as a whole.

Therefore, the Department requests that the Committee use the language in S.C.R. 110, S.D. 1 that requires a study in cooperation with the Department of Health. The Department will continue to work with the Legislature as H.C.R. 126, H.D. 1 (H.S.C.R. 1417-08) is considered.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**HCR 126, HD1 URGING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH AN
INTEGRATING REHABILITATION PROGRAMS
FOR STUDENTS WITH ANGER PROBLEMS.**

Senate Committee on Education and Committee on Health

Date: April 14, 2008

Time: 2:45 pm

Room: 225

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) supports this resolution.

Adolescent anger management is becoming more prominent in our society and today's youth face even greater pressures than those of the past. By age eighteen, most have witnessed thousands of murders on television and video games. Some are involved in violent or illegal gang activity. Others come from broken homes where domestic violence and substance abuse are the norm. By the time they start going through puberty, their entire existence may seem out of their control, and they may grow increasingly enraged, acting out their anger in antisocial ways that require adolescent anger management.

Ho'oponopono has served our Hawaiian people as a healthy way in diffusing, ameliorating, and bringing resolution to problems created by anger. In addition, by proactive work in developing a sense of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity, we build positive attitudes and skills in our youth negating the use of less mature and ineffective alternatives manifested in anger. OHA partners with many community groups and agencies that deal, proactively, with "anger management" through leadership development. Leadership development and cultural pride and identity are key strategies for the success of Nā Pua No'eau: The Center for Gifted and Talented Native Hawaiian children, Hawaiian based charter schools, and through 'ohana building through Partners in Development to name a few. In addition to looking at substance abuse programs, OHA encourages the Board of Education to examine, through this resolution, those models already in place within its system that emphasizes the Hawaiian notions of 'ohana/belonging,

no'eau/mastery, kanaka makua/independence and aloha/generosity. In addition, the best practices as outlined in "Nā Lau Lama State Collaboration to Improve Outcomes for Native Hawaiian Students" as well as "Nā Honua Mauli Ola: Hawai'i Guidelines for Culturally Healthy and Responsive Learning Communities" provide guidelines and suggestions to deal with this disturbing but fixable problem.

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair; Senator Jill Tokuda, Vice-Chair; and Members of the
Committee on Education
Senator David Ige; Chair, Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair; and Members of the
Committee on Health

Caithlin Moiha, Nathan Trump,
Royce Bumbard, Kiana Kometani
Kohala High School

Monday, April 14, 2008, 2:45

HCR 126: URGING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH AN INTEGRATING
REHABILITATION PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH ANGER PROBLEMS.

Good afternoon Chair Sakamoto, Chair Ige and members of the Education Committee and the Health
Committee. We are testify in support of House Concurrent Resolution 126 and House Resolution 108.

My name is Kiana Kometani, and my classmates are Royce Bumbard, Caithlin Moiha, and Nathan Trump.

We are from a small country school on the Big Island and have been described as one of the most beautiful
areas in the state. However, lately, our high school of 283 students, has been plagued with senseless acts of
violence in the form of beatings, harassment, and property damage. These destructive behaviors have been
dealt with primarily through suspensions. The high rate of repeat offenders shows that the present
consequences for fighting and violent behavior are not effective. Something has to be done to assist these
troubled students to change their behaviors and to make better choices.

According to an article in the Honolulu- Star Bulletin (10/28/07), school violence across the state has risen in
the past three years to levels experienced in the mid-1990s even as fewer students enroll in the public system.
Ten years ago, when enrollment peaked with more than 189,000 students, there were 3,086 reported
incidents of violence involving 1,720 students. In the 2005-06 year, despite a drop of nearly 8,000
schoolchildren, violence rose to 3,350 cases in which 2,762 students took part, according to the state
Department of Education.

That's an 8.5 percent increase in cases and a 60.5 percent hike in the number of students participating in
assault, robbery, sexual offense, terroristic threatening, harassment and possession of weapons and firearms.

The most common types of A and B offenses at Kohala High include disorderly conduct, harassment, and
terroristic threatening. In 2006-2007 Kohala High had 52 incidences of Class A and B offenses. This was up
from 44 incidences in 2005-2006 and 25 incidences in 2004-2005. We had a 108% percent increase in
cases in the 3-year span. Already this year we have had 43 class A and B offenses.

Currently teachers and students are indifferent to bullying behavior and may not even have a common
understanding of how to define harassment behaviors. Teachers and staff have a crucial role to play simply
by being visible allies of anti-harassment policies. Furthermore rules against cruelty and harassment
behavior are not consistently enforced and when consequences of detention or suspension are utilized, the
results prove ineffective. Repeat offenses become the norm.

In another article from the Honolulu- Star Bulletin (2/24/08), it cites that State Superintendent of Schools,
Patricia Hamamoto, established a 20-member Safe Schools Community Advisory Committee in 2005 to

make proposals for prevention strategies and interventions to make schools safer. This committee submitted a report last June urging the DOE to create anti-bullying, anti-harassment and anti-discrimination programs in every school by 2010. The committee cited a 2005 survey of Hawai'i students that found 38 percent of middle school and 22 percent of high school students reported someone had tried to punch, kick or hit them at school at least once in the previous month. As of March 24, 2008 Kohala High School has yet to begin any dialog about planning or implementing such programs. We are not the exception among schools in the state. We need effective consequences for student offenders today.

What are the solutions to combating the rise in school violent acts? How do we support the rights of students at Kohala High to get a good education in a positive learning environment? How do we get violent-angry students to change their behavior? Do we add another security guard to patrol or ask our community police officer to make a more visible presence near the campus before and after school? Should we turn to additional security measures such as metal detectors, surveillance cameras, X-ray machines, high fences, and increased locker searches? These security measures definitely deter some violence, but they are extrinsic deterrents, utterly degrading and certainly not full proof nor fully effective.

Likewise, the KHS School-wide bonding with a motivational / anti-bullying speaker, International Peace Day Celebration, our Peace Video PSA competition, and Positive Behavioral Support Program are all attempts at creating awareness and heighten sensitivity to issues of the importance of pro-social behavior. These measures are proactive on a school-wide level but do not deter the repeat offenders or "wolf-pack" students entrenched with angry antics.

We can agree that conflict is part of everyday life. It does not have to lead to violence. The feasibility of a "first-offender rehabilitation program" for students who have been involved in or suspended for violent assaults at school is promising. Such programs could offer conflict mediation training for the offender and his or her parents. Dealing positively with conflict can help students understand each other better, build confidence in their own ability to control their destinies, and develop the skills they need to lead successful, productive lives. In turn, students should know how to respond clearly to other young people who are abusive, aggressive, or hostile.

Do we want to be another statistic? Worldwide, nationwide and locally, schools have become the focus of many repeated violent acts. We're no different from other schools in our nation and have the same possibility of being splashed on the front page as another statistic for violent crimes. Does it take a real crisis before anybody responds to it? People don't want to believe there are violent acts and hate crimes in our schools just like people don't want to say there are hate crimes in Hawaii. Inevitably this "land of paradise" is not immune to violence. A wide variety of methods and rehabilitation programs can be implemented to deal positively with conflict and resolve hostile attitudes before they become destructive. We urge the department of education to study the feasibility of integrating rehabilitation programs for students with anger issues before we become another unfortunate statistic.

We are honored to have this opportunity to submit testimony to a hearing. This is our first experience and we have learned a lot about the legislative process in the previous weeks. We are so fortunate to be a part of this delicate and very empowering practice. Thank you very much for allowing us to submit testimony in favor of House Concurrent Resolution 126.

To: Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair; Senator Jill Tokuda, Vice-Chair; and
Members of the Committee on Education
Senator David Ige; Chair, Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair; and
Members of the Committee on Health

From: Jeremy Valdez, Lexus Ujano-DeMotta, Angela Pung
Shaina Ramos, Krizha Tumaneng, Joyce Odasco
Kalaniana'ole School

**SUPPORT OF HCR 126, URGING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH
AN INTEGRATING REHABILITATION PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH
ANGER PROBLEMS.**

Good afternoon Chairman Sakamoto, Chairman Ige and members of Senate Education Committee and the Senate Health Committee. We are the Youth Leadership Group of Kalaniana'ole School. My name is Jeremy Valdez and my classmates are Lexus Ujano-DeMotta, Angela Pung, Shaina Ramos, Krizha Tumaneng and Joyce Odasco. We would like testify in favor of House Concurrent Resolution 126, requesting the Board of Education to establish an integrating rehabilitation program for students with anger problems so that they might receive help for their issues. These programs could provide the youth with the tools they need to direct their energy toward positive behaviors.

Unfortunately, violence currently exists in many places and our youth are exposed to it. Violence exists in families. There are cases of child abuse and abuse of household members. Violence exists in the media – on TV, reports in the newspaper and in movies. Violence happens in our communities – we see it as fights and acts of vandalism. Violence is also evident worldwide in our involvement in the War on Iraq. It can and may influence people like ourselves, younger children and adults.

At our school we have collected data about the types of violent related behaviors we have had on our campus. The behaviors have been reported in the following categories: terroristic threatening, disorderly conduct, harassment, insubordination, disrespect and non-compliance, inappropriate language and physical contact.

Our administrators provided us with some data about our school for the last three years. There has been a gradual decrease in the number referrals over the past three year

period. However, the majority of referrals continue to occur in categories related to or leading toward violent behaviors.

Currently, we have programs in place that work toward the prevention of angry or violent behaviors. In our school, we have the Élan Anti-bullying program for all of our intermediate students. Students learn about the spectrum of bullying, the change process and how it requires us to have to reach out of our comfort zone, and how to say “no” to negative peer pressure. The program also provides a model of how to deal with uncomfortable situations by incorporating a think block of time for a response instead of a reaction to a situation. The goal of the program is to put an end to the “world game” where there is always a winner and loser and to create a “win-win” environment. Students are also provided supports through our school counselors and School Based Behavioral Health therapist.

The reason why we should have a program to assist students with a need for anger management is that it could help them to deal with their strong emotions of anger and frustration. Some of these students have very deeply rooted problems and they need more intensive support than our school can offer. As for now, students who need more help than schools currently have are not always getting the help they need. Instead they are often suspended as a consequence of punishment without opportunities for rehabilitation. This is not helping students because their anger problems are not being solved. Therefore, we believe that if students can be offered rehabilitation or counseling programs when it is determined that they have a serious anger management problem; perhaps we can build an even better environment for all of us.

In conclusion, we are hoping to continue to work toward stopping anger problems in our schools. We would like to live in a world free of violent behaviors. We also would like to say that we appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony today. We have learned about the legislative process and feel that we have seen our state government in action. Thank you very much for allowing us to submit testimony today in favor of House Concurrent Resolution 126.

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair; Senator Jill Tokuda, Vice-Chair; and Members of the Committee on Education
Senator David Ige; Chair, Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair; and Members of the Committee on Health

Paauilo Elementary and Intermediate School

Good afternoon Chairman Sakamoto, Chair Ige and the members of the Education Committee and the Health Committee.

My name is Daisha Acorda and I am a 7th grade student at Paauilo Elementary and Intermediate School. Elle Carvalho and Jasmine Mae Quiamas are also in the 7th grade, and Leimana Ebreo and Justin Kwee are 8th grade students.

We support the proposed implementation of a mandatory alternative to violence treatment for public school students who are suspended or expelled due to violent behavior. Students who are suspended or expelled are often alienated from their peers and school setting for extended periods of time.

The implementation of mandatory treatment will allow students to possibly return to school sooner and continue their education with increased positive coping skills when dealing with stressors. This will give students in this situation a feeling of a “second chance” and increase acceptance of the individual as a person who is “wanted” in the school environment.

The implementation of mandatory alternatives to violence services, appear to decrease the probability of reoccurring violent behavior by repeat offenders. Studies have shown (Tolan and Nancy, 94 and Stumphauzer, 85) that participating in behavior intervention programs appear to improve moral reasoning and reduce behavior referrals related to violent offences in adolescents. Studies also indicate that such interventions reduce the probability of violent behavior as adults (Tolan and Nancy, 94).

Finally, students who successfully complete the alternative to violence program can also spread their knowledge to their peers. During adolescent period in life, students tend to learn more from their peers. Students who are able to overcome anger issues by positive coping skills can become great role models that may share the skills that they have learned at an alternative to violence program. Furthermore, as parents, they can also share anger management skills with their own children. This in turn, will help schools and communities become a positive and safe place for the next generation.

By providing this mandate we feel that our schools and communities will become more peaceful and safer environments. As young members and leaders of our communities we believe that investing resources for treatment and prevention of violent behavior will definitely make a difference in the future. On behalf of myself and the other students from Paauilo School, we would like to thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration.

References

1. Pat Tolan and Nancy Guerra, 1994 (What Works in Reducing Adolescent Violence – An Empirical Review of the Field) www.colorado.edu
2. J.S. Stumphauzer, 1985 (Understanding Delinquency, A Behavior Analysis – Child Youth Services) www.childyouthservices.edu

testimony

From: Gina Cardazone [cardazon@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Sunday, April 13, 2008 1:57 PM
To: testimony
Cc: Sen. Jill Tokuda; Sen. Carol Fukunaga
Subject: HCR126: Testimony in Support of Program for Students with Anger Problems

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR126 (HD1)

Urging the Board of Education to establish integrating rehabilitation programs for students with anger problems.

Hearing Date & Time: 04-14-08 at 2:45 pm
Committees: EDU/HTH

Dear Education & Health Committee Members,

I am writing in support of HCR 126 HD1, urging the Board of Education to establish integrating rehabilitation programs for students with anger problems.

As a graduate student in the University of Hawaii, Manoa's Department of Psychology studying the roots and consequences of interpersonal violence, I am heartened to see young people taking an active role in addressing youth violence. The intuition of those who have submitted testimony regarding the ineffectiveness of suspension and expulsion in curbing violence is supported by research in several sectors of Psychology.

Several empirical studies in Social Psychology have provided evidence that social exclusion can lead to self-defeating behaviors (Twenge, Catanese, Baumeister, 2002) and aggression (Twenge, Baumeister, Tice & Stucke, 2001). Therefore, when aggressive behaviors are met with social exclusion (of which suspension is a form), the outcome, particularly for someone who already has a tendency toward aggressive behaviors, may be to become more aggressive.

Long-term studies in Developmental Psychology have corroborated this, demonstrating that aggression and societal rejection feed off of each other, causing people who are anti-social to become increasingly more so, leading them to either shun social interactions altogether (thereby limiting their opportunity for positive social interactions), or to link themselves with other anti-social people (Duvonen & Gross, 2005). The latter is especially true of people who are rejected because of aggressive behaviors, as they are more prone to respond to social exclusion by rejecting mainstream society and forming close alliances with other aggressive peers, facilitating "deviance training" (Dishion, Spracklen, Andrews, & Patterson, 1996), and putting youth at greater risk for later criminal behavior (Dishion, McCord, & Poulin, 1999).

By looking for ways to rehabilitate youth who've displayed aggressive tendencies and integrate them into the community, it may be possible to subvert this vicious cycle of anti-social behavior and social rejection, a cycle which is inherently harmful and which has been proposed to create a synergistic process that can lead to mass violence (Gaertner & Iuzzini, 2005). It would be inspiring to see the state of Hawaii become a leader in the development of programs that could effectively promote pro-social behaviors and prevent violence. The fact that testimony has been submitted by young students is a great testament to their concern and involvement in addressing the issues that concern them, and I believe that the most effective youth intervention programs will build on this foundation of youth involvement and engage young people in the development and implementation of the programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue, Gina Cardazone