



LATE

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION**

RE: SB 2165 – RELATING TO EDUCATION

February 11, 2008

**ROGER TAKABAYASHI, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

Chair Sakamoto and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association agrees with the intent of SB 2165 and appreciates the Legislature's acknowledgement of the performing and fine arts having been diverted to support essential courses in order to comply with the mandates of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

The Association believes that we need to teach to the whole child through all subjects, not just the core subjects such as Reading, Math, and Science. SB 2165 will provide funds for performing and fine arts education programs in public middle and high school. This will enable teachers to reach children who are expressive and creative, characteristics that may not be expressed in the core subjects stated above.

We do have a concern about how this appropriation could affect the Weighted Student Formula (WSF). Would the fund be a separate fund specifically for the purpose it is intended? Or, will it be an addition to the WSF pool; in which case, the money will be dispersed for use as the principal sees fit. If it is the latter, we would suggest that within this bill a request be made of the DOE to create categories of funds corresponding to the areas of need within the WSF.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Revised

February 11, 2008

The Honorable Norman Sakamoto, Chair
The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Senate Education Committee

Re: Support for Senate Bill 2165

Chairman Sakamoto, Vice Chairperson Tokuda, Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 2165. My name is Chadwick Kamei and I am the Director of Bands at Pearl City High School. While many other fine arts teachers may be able to relate to my testimony today, I can only speak for my program and our specific circumstances and experiences.

Senate Bill 2165 appropriates funds specifically for the fine arts classes. Under our current weighted student formula, most of the school's budget goes into a general fund. The money is then allocated to different areas by the principal, a steering committee, and the School Community Council. Goals and needs are weighed and many times the fine arts are left with little or no money. Much of the budget goes towards the core classes (math, science, English, social studies) and improving rigor within our classrooms. I do agree that these are important steps, but we must also realize the importance of the fine arts in a well-balanced education system.

Our band program at Pearl City High School achieved great acclaim under the direction of Mr. Michael Nakasone. Our students are highly skilled musicians but many are also high academic achievers. Many say that music program attracts "better" students, however I believe that music cultivates students into better people. There are numerous

studies on the effects of music performance on the brain and brain development. We have talked at length about the Mozart Effect and it's ability to raise test scores. It seems that society has realized the benefits of music for our students, but without adequate funding we may lose our school programs and the beneficial effects of music and other fine arts classes.

Please allow me to walk you through my program's financial situation. For fiscal year 2007 – 2008, our program (band) budget was approximately \$1,500.00. We also received \$6,000.00 in instrument replacement funds for our aging inventory. This gave us a grand total of \$7,500.00 for the entire year. While this may seem like a large sum, keep in mind that one intermediate Tuba costs \$6,000.00 without shipping. An intermediate saxophone costs us \$2,000.00; one intermediate clarinet can cost us up to \$1,000.00; and one bass clarinet can run up as much as \$6,000.00. Currently there are many instruments that come out of developing countries that are inexpensive, however these instruments are often of poor quality and need replacing or repair quite often. While our 2007 – 2008 budget is adequate, our projection for 2008 – 2009 is the elimination of the replacement funds because of our school deficit of over \$400,000.00. A band program simply cannot operate with a small budget of \$1000.00 or less.

Besides purchasing new instruments, there are also the costs that are incurred when instruments need to be repaired or "tuned-up". These costs can also be quite high. I recently had a tuba professionally cleaned by a local repairperson. The bill for the cleaning and adjustments totaled over \$300.00. These costs are not exorbitant. The time

and energy spent on repairing these instruments by these repairmen are nowhere near what the price should be. These businesspeople understand that schools do not have money to spend, but the lack of repair money in our budget often forces our students to perform on broken instruments.

The budget crunch in our department has forced us to make impossible decisions in our classrooms. Too often we are faced with either fixing “Aaron’s” instrument or “Donna’s” instrument, or buying another flute so “Lucy”, who loves playing, can borrow an instrument to take home to her family to proudly play “Three Blind Mice”. This bill can help eliminate these excruciating instances.

Our band program has approximately 250 students enrolled, and we cannot match up one instrument per student. While sharing is common among many band programs, I believe it becomes a health concern when you are sharing instruments with others. The recent outbreaks of TB and other infectious diseases in our schools worry me because of students doubling up on instruments. Funding for new instruments for the instrumental classes will help to alleviate, if not eliminate the possibility of infectious diseases going through our music programs.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in support of Senate Bill 2165. I hope that my testimony allowed you an inside view of our current situation. Thank you for your time.

Senate Bill (SB) Number 2165

Title: DOE; Performing and Fine Arts Education Programs; Appropriation

Good afternoon, Senators. My name is April Nakayama and I am a sophomore at J.B. Castle High School. I am testifying on SB No. 2165, DOE; Performing and Fine Arts Education Programs; Appropriation.

I support this Bill for the following reasons. The fine arts are a way for students to express themselves in diverse ways, while meeting new people and building strong friendships. It offers kids many opportunities to be creative and allows them to be who they are. Schools without a fine arts program are not only taking away from our student's education, but also not allowing them to get credits in certain areas they might need for college.

By passing this Bill it will help increase the chance of students getting into a college ~~they~~ [☆]. ~~They~~ Also it allows students to be well rounded and lets them take classes in areas they enjoy. Students are most likely to pay attention and do better in classes they enjoy rather than taking classes they dislike just because they have to.

☆ OF THEIR CHOICE

Senate Bill Number 2165

Title: DOE; Performing and Fine Arts Education Programs; Appropriation

Good afternoon, Senators. My name is Dana Terasako and I am a junior at J. B. Castle High School. I am testifying on SB No. 2165, Fine Arts.

I support this Bill because the fine arts are a great way to be involved in school and make life long friends. The fine arts teach you life long skills and enable students to broaden their horizons. Students who are unable to attend Fine Arts programs are being deprived of obtaining required credits need for college and of the skills mentioned before.

As a very active member in the Fine Arts program I have personally made life long friends, acquired more than enough credits to graduate and go to almost any college of my choice. Most colleges do recommend having taken a foreign language and most high schools require two consecutive years of a foreign language to graduate. Schools that do not have such classes are holding their students back from furthering their education and ~~broadening~~ expanding their minds.

* from high school

~~note to~~

Manuel Bermudez
Lānaʻi High & Elem. School

Good afternoon I am here today to support senate bill 2165.

“I am enough of an artist to draw freely upon my imagination.

Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited.

Imagination circles the world.”

A quote from the world’s most famous scientist – Albert Einstein.

As we all know an education has great value in society and life itself, but a Helium article, on education philosophy, reminds us that two primary goals of an education are to pass on the culture and prepare students for the work place.

So where would a person learn such skills? Well the answer is quite simple;

The Fact Is, no subjects are more basic to our human nature than literature, art, and music.

The arts pass on the culture and provide unrecognized employment opportunities in the market place. Art is a unique subject that teaches cultural lessons no other subject can teach. For many centuries social institutions have understood the true value of art, and with it they have used it to pass on their highest morals, values, principles, and survival skills. Granted math facts are critical in today's world as are grammar, punctuation, and spelling. However, art can teach us students to expand our knowledge of the "Real world," and the human condition. It's true that, our present day culture values, running a bulldozer, closing a deal, or programming computers more highly than abstractions like morals, ideas, and philosophy.

Some consider art a leisure subject, but art is always beneficial too. An example would be the Art Therapy Connection. The Connected For Kids Organization reported on the benefits of the art therapy. They stated that the Art Therapy Connection helps children, and teens in danger of failing, or dropping out of school by encouraging them to create art, and safely communicate their thoughts and feelings. They also stated that the Art Therapy connection works to increase concentration

levels, self-esteem, and self-control, as well as enhance interpersonal skills and defuse angry thoughts.

Believe it or not, art can actually pay off in the work place. For example, every single product we purchase, from cereal boxes to candy bars to automobiles, their basic ideas are the results of our human creativity. Perhaps more importantly, none of these products would exist today if it weren't for creative thinkers, such as Artists who create ads; design posters, web pages, and TV commercials. Musicians are also artists who write the songs that sell the product. Hawaii needs creative thinkers, visionaries, leaders, activists, and policy makers who create new ideas, rather than to repeat the old ideas and present them as new. Art and music in schools help prepare students to be these visionaries and yet the Arts still struggle for equal treatment in public education.

The Fine Arts are very beneficial in so many ways. Overall, Hawaii schools should continue the Fine Arts state wide, because with art we shape our future, and embrace our past. Students need Fine Arts to help keep us balanced in all subject areas and in our every day lives. If the state cuts the Fine Arts classes and does not give us an opportunity

to excel in these areas we will never know our potential and may possibly lose out on opportunities that are yet to be discovered within us.

If we want Hawaii to be an innovative leader in business and technology, we must support fine arts education by specifying funds to support Fine Arts classes. I strongly urge you all to support Senate Bill 2165.