

LATE

Kids hurt too

HEALING YOUNG HEARTS

January 28, 2008

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To: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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From: Cynthia White, Executive Director of Kids hurt too

Re: Support for SB 2242 & SB 2241, Relating to school-age children and non-school hour programs

Kids hurt too is a non-profit organization providing peer support and mentoring services to children in low income single-parent and foster parent families, which includes orphans, foster children, children of divorce, and other children separated from one or both parents. We define our service population as grieving children; therefore our services focus children on learning to cope with the loss of parents through positive and healthy choices.

Kids hurt too received a non-school hour programs grant in 2007. In September of that year, we started an after school mentoring program, providing services at the Beretania Community Park on Aala Street in the downtown area that is across the street where we will open a permanent facility for after school mentoring services and peer support programs. Our goal was to establish a presence with the youth in the community, get their input and involvement in activities we will offer in the permanent center in the Kukui building. We provided activities after school in a rented classroom at the district park. In order to encourage participation in our activities, staff and HFYC youth mentors walked around the grounds of the park where children gathered. Our first involvement with the local youth was to interrupt the bullying and teasing of younger youth while offering them safer things to do. A few youth attended, participating in social skills training activities, music lessons, learning healthy eating habits and having healthy snacks, and learning guidelines for safe conduct during our hours of operation. To our amazement, within a few weeks, the youth did not walk to our program, they ran. Soon we had up to 40 youth running to our classroom to join in the activities. We conducted evaluations, getting input and feedback from the youth on their learning and interests.

We believe our after school program was a tremendous success and please ask for your support in continuing funding for SB 2242 and SB 2241.

**Testimony By Jim Shon, Executive Director - HiTech Quest
Before the House Committees on Education, Human Services and Public
Housing**

RE: SB 2241, SB 2242, SB2162

Senate Committees on Education, Human Services and Public Housing

DATE: Monday, January 28, 2008
TIME: 1:15 pm
PLACE: Conference Room 225

HiTech Quest Supports these bills.

For a number of years HiTech Quest has been involved in facilitating project-based learning in Hawaii's schools. (Please see attached sheet for a summary of our activities.) We have observed that the time and financial constraints on schools inhibits efforts to bring innovative programs to students that are often best delivered outside of the traditional school scheduled day.

Recently, the State of Hawaii embarked on an ambitious effort to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) in our public schools and college campuses. In order for this to bear real fruit in the near term, there is the need for an agency to facilitate, coordinate, and broker the partnerships between schools, colleges, client organizations, and the business community. HiTech Quest is currently exploring opportunities to incorporate project based learning into the Senior Project, as well as to assist in the State's efforts to promote STEM learning.

Any additional resources that can enable our schools to add these innovative educational strategies to the school curriculum and to engage a larger percentage of students is to be commended.

We would suggest that one important strategy for limited funding is to focus on those schools that already have thematic academies to encourage their further development and enhancement.

A recent report by the Hawaii Educational Policy Center on the teacher shortage includes a comprehensive list of hard to staff schools. These should also be considered in targeting your resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
Jim Shon

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About HiTech Quest

Over the past five years HTQ has sponsored more than 250 projects involving 649 students from 33 schools (public, private and home school). More than \$100,000.00 in scholarship money and software prizes has been awarded in recognition of the student's accomplishments.

The 2007 HiTech Quest Strategic Plan calls for:

- Recruiting Teacher Coordinators with Project Learning Teams
- Coordination and execution of HTQ Project Showcase Technology-focused enrichment programs to enable youth to develop additional skills that will enable them to be successful in the technology industry.
- The technology-focused enrichment programs will challenge students to develop additional technical skills. Because the programs are project-based in a real-world context, the participants develop an understanding of what will take to be successful in a career in this highly competitive, ever changing industry.

In this context HiTech Quest serves as a “case manager” to facilitate partnerships between businesses, sponsors and foundations willing to invest in education, client organizations needing a service, a teacher with a student project learning team, and a business mentor for the learning team. Specifically, HTQ provides:

- Administration support and technical assistance for Project Learning Teams in High Schools
- Recruiting & coordination for Volunteer Business Mentors
- Funding for Teacher Coordinators
- Recruiting client organizations and sponsor organizations
- Recruiting Teacher Coordinators with Project Learning Teams
- Coordination and execution of HTQ Project Showcase
-

For High School Teachers and Learning Teams, HiTech Quest Provides

- Project-based, real-world, hands-on educational experiences
- Ties to local business community – the viability of a career in Hawai'i
- Leadership skills in technology
- Teacher Training in project-based learning strategies and techniques
- Additional income
- Investment in technologies and capabilities for the classroom
- Opportunities for after school and vacation engagement

A non-profit organization whose mission is to use contextual and project-based learning experiences in conjunction with the secondary education and business communities to help build a strong technology workforce in Hawaii. 2