

Date of Hearing: February 1, 2008

Committee: Education, Ways & Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: S.B. No. 2651, Making an Appropriation for the University of Hawaii

Purpose: Appropriates funds for an office of school redesign in the College of Education at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Department's Position: The Department supports S.B. Bill 2651, and concurs that sustained technical support to secondary schools engaged in redesign efforts is critical to their success.

The Department supports the functions of the Office, particularly where assistance in planning and implementation are provided in ways that address schools' specific needs.

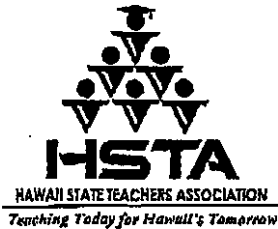
The proposed function of and scope of schools served by the Office is appropriate and applicable to school redesign efforts.

However, the Department is concerned that the proposed funding level limits the capacity of the Office to serve "all public secondary schools, public charter schools, and independent secondary schools in Hawaii," and provide "both financial and human resources to all." The funding level may limit the Office's ability to provide the one-on-one technical support needed, and relegate its role to a strictly

clearinghouse function. Such static support will provide little for schools considering or already implementing redesign.

In summary, the Department supports this Bill with reservations over the proposed scope of the Office's functions and its capacity given the proposed funding level.

However, we defer to the University of Hawaii, the identified expending agency, as to funding priority.



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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION**

**RE: SB 2651 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF
HAWAII.**

February 1, 2008

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

Chair Sakamoto and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association supports SB 2651.

This bill appropriates funds to create an Office of School Redesign at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Education, and is intended to provide the following:

1. Improved student achievement through standards-based education;
2. Comprehensive support for all students; and
3. Continuously improve performance and quality.

We believe that the assistance that would be provided by the Office of School Redesign would greatly improve secondary education, if it enabled schools to address the needs of today's students and create the right size learning environments, such as smaller schools and schools within schools, that are recognized as more conducive to student achievement.

We urge the committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify

Testimony in support of SB 2651
Senate Committee on Education
February 1, 2008, 1:30 p.m. Room 225

By:

Gary W. Griffiths, Coordinator
Office of School Redesign
College of Education
University of Hawaii at Manoa

SB 2651: Making an Appropriation for the University of Hawaii

Honorable Senators Sakamoto, Tokuda, and Members of the Committee on Education:

I was just informed at the beginning of this week that the Chancellor, Virginia S. Hinshaw, University of Hawaii at Manoa is not in support of SB 2651. According to the Chancellor SB 2651 is outside of the core mission of the University. I could not disagree with that assessment more. The core mission of the College of Education at the University of Hawaii at Manoa is to support the mission of education (P-20) throughout our state.

The Office of School Redesign (OSR) is a partnership between the Department of Education (DOE) and the College of Education (COE). The partnership has been in existence for the past three years. The DOE has provided funding for OSR during that time.

Hawaii's secondary schools are among the largest in the United States. There are only a few institutions that can trace their roots back to the beginning of the last century by looking solely at their structure today. Our high schools are among those institutions. Visiting a typical comprehensive high school in Hawaii is a lot like taking a historical walking tour. Little has changed in our schools in the last 85 years. The school day is still structured to meet the administrative needs of the system, not the educational needs of students. For the most part, the curriculum is delivered in small-disconnected parts governed by a focus more on time and control, not on meeting the learning and educational need of students. Large secondary schools tend to warehouse students and in this setting students find themselves lost in the scuffle of humanity. Students will often form strong peer-group identities and connections, which leave little room for positive adult connections. These students are often lost in the system, i.e. "slipping through the cracks." Students that have strong support systems outside of the school setting are able to rise above their situation and find ways to navigate through the system.

Schools and the schooling experience must be reflective of what the learner needs. Learning structures must be created that makes sense to students. Through the efforts of many creative and supportive secondary principals, the Superintendent, and OSR, there are changes occurring in Hawaii's secondary schools. OSR has been involved in working with schools in their efforts to create and support smaller learning communities within our large high schools. OSR worked directly with principals on the creation of a High School Leadership Compact, which focuses on the development of

goals and principles for school redesign. These efforts bring into clearer focus what needs to be done to better prepare our students to deal with the rigors of living and learning in the 21st century. OSR maintains an online resource library in which current articles and other materials about school redesign efforts nationwide are shared weekly with principals. In addition, OSR has maintained a professional learning team among a select group of principals. The focus has been to collaborate on school redesign efforts and share "promising practices."

For the past two years OSR, working with more than 26 high schools statewide, has developed a High School Student Compact, which is a companion to the High School Leadership Compact developed by principals. In the Student Compact, students have clearly identified changes that are necessary for our schools to be more responsive to their needs. Through the supportive efforts of the Superintendent, the Student Compact has become a focal point for school redesign in Hawaii.

This spring OSR will be working directly with middle school principals in developing an "Agreement" that will focus on middle school redesign and reconfirm our commitment to middle level education. In addition, OSR is in the final stages of planning for the development of a Middle School Student Compact.

Using the High School Leadership Compact as a guide, OSR developed and surveyed 39 out of 43 high school principals to help them determine where they were with their school redesign efforts and what kind of support they need from the system. DOE to help focus the support given to schools has used the survey results.

During the past three years OSR has developed and maintained important partnerships with various community groups to help in promoting school renewal and redesign efforts. Currently OSR is working with a "grass roots" community group in promoting science technical engineering and math education in our schools (STEM). This partnership is doing an effective job in raising awareness for STEM education throughout our state.

With the changes occurring within the DOE funding structure, i.e. weighted student formula, etc, funding for OSR is in increasing jeopardy. DOE will no longer have discretionary funds at the state level to maintain this type of effort, no matter how meritorious they are. The College of Education does not have the funds to support OSR. Funding support would provide OSR the necessary stability to carry on with future plans to help schools reinvent themselves.

Given the turn of events over the past week with the non-support for SB 2651 from the Chancellor, University of Hawaii at Manoa, I am in the position of writing this testimony as a concerned educator, not as the coordinator for the Office of School Redesign, who has dedicated more than 37 years to the education of Hawaii's children.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



HAWAI'I EDUCATIONAL POLICY CENTER
Informing the Education Community

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education

February 1, 2008, 1:30 pm, Room 225

by

Donald B. Young, Director
Hawai'i Educational Policy Center
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2651: Making an Appropriation for the University of Hawai'i

Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Educational Policy Center (HEPC) supports SB 2651, which creates and provides an appropriation for the Office of School Redesign in the College of Education at UH Manoa.

HEPC acknowledges that the State of Hawaii is unlikely to have the resources to break up its larger schools into small stand-alone campuses. However, it is possible to create smaller, relatively self-contained learning communities on a larger campus that offers some, if not all, the advantages of smaller schools to students.

We know that many students do not thrive in a large setting but do much better in smaller learning communities, or schools within schools. With a growing number of Pacific Islanders, feedback indicates that some cultures are particularly affected by the size of the learning community.

In the recent past, a number of high schools have begun planning for schools within schools, using outside grant funds. The Office of School Redesign has worked with them and it is important to continue this kind of support to maximize their efforts to date. It was intentionally established outside the Department of Education so that it could act independently to facilitate change and improvement in DOE extremely large high schools.

SB 2651 describes the intended functions of the OSR, which is currently housed in the College of Education. Initiated in 2003 as a joint effort of the College of Education and the DOE, OSR has been funded through June 2008 by the DOE through a Memorandum of Agreement with the UH as an office outside the Department of Education that serves as a catalyst for rethinking how high schools can be organized and operated to instill relationships, relevance, and rigor.

Hawai'i's high schools average among the nation's second largest. As Dr. Mary Anne Raywid has documented, the evidence is now extensive that small schools have major benefits over large ones, including: higher attendance and graduation rates; higher levels of academic achievement; fewer students dropping out; a stronger sense of connectedness on the part of students and higher levels of participation in extracurricular activities; greater parent involvement; and better student behavior and fewer disciplinary incidents. Further, students from minority and low-income families are particularly handicapped by large schools and benefitted by small ones.

With meager funding of about \$75,000 per year, the OSR initiated and supported school efforts to redesign our very large high schools into smaller learning communities. Working with 12 schools, OSR has convened regularly scheduled Professional Learning Teams of school administrators to collaborate on school redesign and best practices; in collaboration with administrators statewide OSR completed a Principals' Compact establishing goals and agreed upon principles for school redesign; and OSR convened statewide student conferences resulting in the High School Student Compact describing what the primary stakeholders, students, want their schools to become.

With the changes in funding allocations within the DOE to weighted student formula, the funding stream for OSR is in jeopardy, as the DOE will no longer have discretionary funds at the state level to maintain such efforts. The College of Education does not have the funds to support OSR. Allocating the \$300,000 directly to the College as proposed in SB 2651 will provide stability for OSR, further the partnership between the College of Education and the DOE, and provide external resources and support at a time when our public schools are struggling to reinvent themselves.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.