

Date of Hearing: January 30, 2008

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent

Title: S.B. 2683, Relating to teachers

Purpose: To appropriate funds to complex areas for academic coaches, professional development, and the retention of teachers.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) supports S.B. 2683 which provides complexes with funding for academic coaches, professional development, and teacher retention initiatives. The Department currently has initiatives in place to provide on-going support to the teachers. Complexes should provide plans that are aligned with the current initiatives to obtain statewide sustained supports that are available to teachers.

The allocation of resources within a complex area has proven to be highly cost effective. By examining the No Child Left Behind data on teachers in the complex areas who are not highly qualified, complex area superintendents are able to identify the specific needs of the teachers to yield results for increasing student achievement.

The programs outlined in this bill directly impact teacher retention and student achievement. However, funding priority must be given to the Board of Education's supplemental operating budget requests before this measure.

**Testimony By Jim Shon, Executive Director - HiTech Quest
Before the House Committees on Education**

RE: SB 2683 RELATING TO TEACHERS

Public hearing on 01-30-08 at 1:15 pm in conference room 225.

HiTech Quest Supports this bill.

Academic and project-based "coaches" are an important feature of bringing real-world learning into our public schools and linking school teachers and students to mentors outside the school environment. The "model" of explicitly focusing on support for mentors and coaches matches the HiTech Quest experience and program.

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
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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 Hawaii
- 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

January 29, 2008

To: Committee on Education
From: Joy Nishimura
Curriculum Coordinator, Kipapa Elementary School

RE: Hearing on Wednesday, January 30, 2008, at 1:15 p.m.
Reference: FUNDING TO SUSTAIN THE
CENTRAL DISTRICT TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

I believe that the planned cut in funding for the 2008-2009 Central District Development Program would be a terrible mistake. This program is essential in supporting new teachers during their first years of teaching so that they can grow and develop into confident teachers that effectively facilitate our students' learning and lives.

New teachers may be knowledgeable in their field of expertise, but there is so much more that a new teacher has to learn during his/her first years; things that can only be gained through experience: classroom management; time management; developing an integrated and effective curriculum to achieve all standards, developing positive relationships with student, parents, colleagues, and other staff members; computerized report card system; special education; English language learners; day-to-day school operations; field trip planning and execution; certification and tenure issues, . . . the list goes on and on. Such issues can easily overwhelm a new teacher's primary focus—to teach students.

Through the assistance of the Central District Teacher Development Program, these teachers have a system in place that provides them with information and support through school-based mentors.

The program also provide effective and consistent professional development for school-level mentors on effective practices in working with and supporting their mentees. I feel that this component is essential to the success of the program, and the cut in funding would greatly impact the programs ability to sustain this consistent support.

In the past, we have lost too many knowledgeable new teachers that could have developed into great teachers simply because they were not supported and encouraged during their first career experiences. The staff of the Central District Teacher Development Program work extremely hard to provide this essential support so that we can sustain and nurture these teachers to have long and effective careers in the teaching profession. I request that the Program be allowed to continue its well-respected work with the mentors and mentees.

Please support Senate Bills 2683 and 2667, and provide additional funding to this important program. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Funding to sustain the Central District Teacher Development Program

Re: Senate Bills 2683 and 2667

Aloha,

My name is Maile Bajet and I am in my third year of teaching second grade at Aiea Elementary. I am writing in support for the funding of the Central-District Teacher Development Program. The Central District mentoring program has been essential to my success and development as a new teacher. During my first year of teaching I struggled trying to find support from our school level mentor as a result of limited time and resources because our school was in restructuring. Half way through the school year, I was fortunate to have been assigned a district mentor, Joanna Meza. The support she has provided helped be work through the overwhelming times of being a new teacher at a restructuring school. She has supported me in so many ways during my probationary period and continues to do so on her own time now that I've been tenured.

I can't say enough about how much the district mentoring program has helped me. In 2006, I was privileged to receive the honor of the Milken Teacher of Promise for the Moanalua/Radford/Aiea complex. I can honestly say that I probably would not have received such an award without the support of Joanna, my district mentor.

Please do not cut the funds for the Central District Teacher Development Program. With all the headlines and issues of retaining highly qualified teachers here in Hawaii, it seems odd that such funding to support teachers is even being considered to be cut. It would be a disservice to our students and teachers if funding for this program is cut.

Please help support and retain our teachers and continue to fund the Central District Teacher Development Program.

Mahalo,
Maile Bajet

Committee on Education, hearing on Wednesday, January 30 at 1:15, support Senate Bills 2683 and 2667

To: Committee on Education, hearing on Wednesday, January 30 at 1:15,
From: Carrieanne Lee, Title I/Curriculum Coordinator, Mentor Teacher at Waimalu Elementary School, Aiea
Date: January 29, 2008
Reference: Funding to sustain the Central District Teacher Development Program.

Dear Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Central District Teacher Development program and support the sustained funding of this program. I see the benefits that this program provides to teachers new to the professional and those new to the Hawaii Department of Education system. This program also provides leadership training for Mentors that will support the continued growth of our school systems. This program should have it's funding sustained and if possible also be expanded to include all school districts to increase and sustain the teaching profession in a time that we are starting to face a teacher shortage.

For the continued sustainability of our school system, we need to support teachers by providing them a strong foundation in the first few years that they are in the profession. The Central District Teacher Development program is an example of a program that supports this development of a strong foundation for teachers. The mentors provide emotional and professional support in various ways. They support teacher's curriculum, instruction, and assessment development. They also act as guidance support by sharing their experience as teachers and acting as peer mentors. These supports help teacher become more confident and assure of themselves which we hope will prompt them remain in the teaching professions.

The Central District Teacher Development program also provides leadership training for their teacher mentors. They teach us how to be mentors and leaders in our school through various methods such as cognitive coaching. This additional training supports the schools system by providing it with teacher leaders that can assist in guiding the schools to having high standards and achievement. As teacher mentors are developed the Department of Education is creating a way to sustain and increase the level of professionalism internally.

The need to sustain the funding for program such as the Central District Teacher Development program becomes essential is we believe that education of our children of Hawaii is important to the continued growth and success of the people of the State of Hawaii.

Sincerely,
Carrieanne Lee
Educator

Ailene Komori/WHEELERI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us

Senate Bills 2683 and 2667

To the Committee on Education, hearing on Wednesday, January 30 @ 1:15 p.m., reference: Funding to sustain the Central District Teacher Development Program.

I have been a teacher at Wheeler Middle School for the past 9 years. Every year we are faced with the challenge of retaining new teachers. Over the past few years, a substantial amount of the school's resources has been utilized for inservicing the rising number of new teachers on DOE directives, school improvement processes, standards-based education and so on. In order to support new teachers and hopefully retain them, we have started a school mentoring program. Our in-school mentors, however, are classroom teachers who do not have the luxury of time to help every one of our mentees. The Central District Teacher Development Program provides an invaluable service to our school. This year Wheeler Middle School has 17 new teachers who need a friend, a role model, a guide, an enabler, a motivator, a communicator, and a resource who they can confide in and rely on to give them the support they need. This year the Central District Mentoring Program has provided us with a district mentor who has done just that and who has relieved our in-school mentors of the overwhelming responsibilities that have been placed on them.

I urge you to please make available additional funds to continue and sustain the Central District Teacher Development Program. We want to retain our new teachers and I believe the mentoring program will help us do that...it is an effective program in assisting and retaining new teachers.

Thank you.