

LATE

Personal Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Education

January 30, 2008, 1:15 pm, Room 225

by  
Donald B. Young, Acting Dean  
College of Education  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

**SB 2683: Relating to Teachers**

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

My name is Donald Young and I am the acting dean for the College of Education. I support the intent of SB 2683, which appropriates funds to complex areas for academic coaches, professional development, and retention of teachers.

This bill will further efforts to retain teachers in Department of Education employment by providing academic coaches to beginning teachers and professional development aimed at teacher retention. However, I believe that SB 2683 as drafted is too narrowly defined and too narrowly focused to have the positive impact on developing the teacher workforce as envisioned.

The Hawai'i Educational Policy Center in its Interim Report to the Legislature responding to the requests of the 2007 SCR 56 S.D.1, concluded

*Preliminary data indicate that by 2010-2011 school year, the number of new hires required in Hawai'i's public schools can be reduced from 1,600 annually to approximately 1,400; by the 2015-2016 school year the number can be reduced to approximately 800. Further reduction does not seem feasible because this is the approximate number of teachers who annually leave DOE employment due to retirements, health issues, and deaths.*

The HEPC Interim Report recommends a number of strategies to enable the State to accomplish this goal. Many of those strategies are described in other bills that will be heard this afternoon. Collectively they have the potential to produce a highly qualified teacher workforce in Hawai'i and to retain them in the profession once they have completed their training.

As the HEPC report concludes:

*Quality induction-mentoring programs provide the best available option to retain teachers in DOE employment. Numerous studies have documented positive effects on teacher retention and perhaps more important, on student achievement. A 2007 study published by Educational Research Service documents the in monetary terms the benefits*

*of funding quality induction-mentoring programs. Among the reported benefits are lowered social costs of losing new teachers from the profession, return to the school system in increased teaching skills and effectiveness of new teachers, higher student academic achievement in classrooms taught by beginning teachers equal to that of veteran teachers, lower student dropout rates, and better educated students. Economically, the researchers found that for each \$1 invested in quality teacher induction-mentoring programs returned \$1.88 to the district, \$.98 to the state, \$1.66 to society, and \$3.61 to the new teacher. The researchers conclude, ". . .we were able to demonstrate that induction returns extend far beyond mere teacher retention questions. The influence on new teacher practice is by far the most important benefit and potentially extends farther if we consider the benefits to children assigned to effective teachers over the course of their K-12 careers."*

I suggest combining the features of SB 2683, SB 2667, and SB 2653 to support a comprehensive, high quality teacher induction and mentoring program. The available data are clear that doing so will enable the Department of Education to retain more highly qualified teachers, develop a high quality teacher workforce, and reduce the number of new hires needed each year.

Such a comprehensive induction and mentoring program was unanimously supported by the Teacher Education Coordinating Committee, which includes representatives of all the teacher preparation institutions in Hawai'i. These Institutions of Higher Education are committed to working with the Department of Education to support their graduates as they enter and mature in the teaching profession.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

## LATE TESTIMONY

### Senate Bills 2683 and 2667

Committee on Education, regarding the hearing on Wednesday, January 30 at 1:15,  
Reference: Funding to sustain the Central District Teacher Development Program.

To Whom This May Concern:

It has come to my attention that the Title II funding for the 2008-2009 Central District Teacher Development Program has been drastically cut!! This will severely reduce the mentoring services, assistance and support provided to the Central District schools by district mentors. If our mission is to provide quality teachers for our students, then we must provide the support needed to retain our new, nontenured teachers.

As a beginning teacher over 13 years ago, I remember what it was like at my first teaching job at Haleiwa Elementary School. It was a grade 5/6 combination class, and I felt totally lost. Back then, I didn't have the support from a trained mentor like all our new teachers in the central district have today. I honestly believe that without our teacher development program here in the central district, we would be losing more of our new teachers. With the support and guidance from the district mentors, new teachers have someone to trust and respect. Someone who cares and wants success for them. Like any situation in real life, if there is individual who supports you, chances are you will succeed.

Please consider funding our Central District Teacher Development Program. It is an important and effective mentoring program which provides support and assistance to our new, nontenured teachers, and will help to retain many who would otherwise leave for other job opportunities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Lori Jakahi  
Literacy Resource Teacher  
School Level Mentor  
Mililani Mauka Elementary School

## LATE TESTIMONY

Attention to: Committee on Education, regarding the hearing on Wednesday, January 30 at 1:15,  
Reference: Funding to sustain the Central District Teacher Development Program.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to support Senate Bills 2683 and 2667. As a newly tenured teacher and as someone who has benefited from mentor tutoring, I highly support the continuation of this vital service.

As the demands on teachers increases, as a new teacher it is even more stressful. I honestly do not know how I would have survived without my district mentor. Not only did she guide me through the DOE process, but it was also a great way to gain knowledge from other teachers at other great schools. Having a mentor at your school is helpful to navigate your own school; but, having a central district mentor exposed me to a variety of strategies and ideas. It is the sharing from school to school which is vital and missing in our schools. Schools are too distant from one another, thus are all struggling to create the same things. However, having a district mentor creates an increase in communication amongst schools. Please do not cut this vital resource for our new teachers!

Sincerely,

Ms. Melelani Dycus

## LATE TESTIMONY

**Senate Bills 2683 and 2667**

**Attention to: Committee on Education, regarding the hearing on Wednesday, January 30 at 1:15,**

**Reference: Funding to sustain the Central District Teacher Development Program**

I would just like to say that the mentoring program is very beneficial for new teachers. I had a mentor, Joanna Meza, for my first two years of teaching at Pearl Harbor Kai Elementary. She was an invaluable resource. In a career which can be very demanding and stressful, Joanna helped me immensely with my development as a teacher. She did classroom observations, gave me feedback, and was an ear in times of need. If I ever had any questions, she was available to help out. I don't know if I would have made it without her. We had new teacher meetings, were given lots of information, got an opportunity to network with other new teachers (and share our concerns and successes), and learn strategies for teaching, classroom management and more. I felt very, very supported having a mentor during my first two years.

It would be a real disappointment to see funding for the mentoring program cut. It is a vital resource and help for new teachers.

Sincerely,  
Jainnie T. Cox

# LATE TESTIMONY

As resource teachers for the Central District Teacher Development Program, we are working to support and assist our beginning teachers. This is our Vision and Goal.

Vision: To positively impact student achievement, we envision the development and retention of highly qualified and effective teachers.

Goals: Improve teaching performance

- Increase the retention of promising beginning teachers

- Promote the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers

- Assist in meeting requirements for State of Hawaii teacher licensure

Program Description: Each non-tenured teacher is assigned a mentor who will provide support tailored to meet his/her needs. Some areas that the beginning teacher may receive assistance in are:

- School protocol and procedures

- Advancement of professional practice

- Professional and personal support

- Classroom management and Instructional strategies

With 4 full time mentors, 2 resource teachers and 65 school level mentors, we are currently in the Central District Schools supporting and assisting 502 beginning teachers. It is a sad time for all, as we learn of the funding cuts for next school year which will negatively impact the amount of support for our beginning teachers.

We sincerely ask for your support for Senate Bills 2683 and 2667, so we can continue the support and assistance of our teachers in the beginning years of their teaching profession here in Hawaii.

Cutting funds and downsizing the existing program as our teachers face the tremendous demands of the teaching profession is a step backwards for the beginning teachers as well as the mentor teachers.

We need your support in continuing our work with our Teacher Development Program in Central District and thank you for taking the time to consider our request.

Mahalo,

Gail Ahina

Glenn Yoshimoto

Resource Teachers

Central District Teacher Development Program

Good Afternoon!

It was just called to my attention that there may be a funding cut for our Central District Teacher Development Mentoring Program. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of this program.

I am a school mentor. Most school mentors are also classroom teachers. We mentor our newly hired teachers for two (or more) years. We try to meet before school, during lunch, after school, or whenever we can find the time.

A lot of my mentoring skills came from experience, however, a lot of information about being a "Highly Qualified" teacher, becoming certified, passing the PRAXIS, etc. comes from the Central Teacher Development Program that is conducted by Calvin Shimomura and his staff. They are well trained and very efficient at their job, communicating important information for us to disseminate to our mentees (non-tenured teachers).

We want to have our newly hired teachers stay in Hawaii. This program really helps with that. New teachers often leave when they don't feel support at school, in the district, or state. Many of us become their "moms" and "dads" at work. I've had to help several of my mentees find doctors, housing, supplies, appliances, etc.

Please support SB 2667 and SB2683. If we were given more notification about these bills and the hearing date, I'm sure several of us, including our mentees, would have come to testify about the importance of the Central District Teacher Development Program. It is a valuable program that should not be cut.

I would appreciate hearing from you.

Thank you,  
Charlene Murata  
Wheeler Middle School  
Sha\_Murata@notes.k12.hi.us

## LATE TESTIMONY

Re: SB 2667 and SB2683

Dear Sirs:

I am writing in support of the Central District Mentoring program for teachers. As a former probationary teacher, I can attest to how much more this program has assisted me in terms of teaching skills and preparation. My former mentor, Joanna Meza also equipped me with valuable resources to use and from her expertise, shared hers, as well as other teachers' methods of teaching the various subjects in my grade level. This program also offered me an opportunity to make visitations to other schools which provided me different insights to teaching.

It would be very detrimental to new teachers if funding for this valuable program is stopped or cut back. There are many things that one learns through schooling, but this program offers learning opportunities that are not taught in classes. Please consider keeping this program alive by providing the appropriate funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lee Kunimitsu

Teacher - Aliamanu Elementary School