



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

Testimony to the Senate Committees on Education
Hearing Date: Wednesday, January 30, 2008
1:15p.m. – Conference Room 225

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Kamehameha Schools

Tuesday, January 30, 2008

Re: SB 3186 – Relating to Public Charter Schools

Good afternoon Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Tokuda and members of the Senate Committee on Education. My name is Shawn Malia Kana'iaupuni, PhD, Director, Public Education Support (PEdS) Division of Kamehameha Schools. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on SB 3186.

We believe that facility funding for charter schools is critically important for their success and that charter schools serve an essential role in the education of Hawaii's children.

Kamehameha Schools has been a collaborator in the charter school movement for more than six years now. As part of our Education Strategic plan, KS hopes to significantly impact more Hawaiian children ages 0-8 and grades 4-16+, and their families/ caregivers over the next five years, in collaboration with others whenever possible.

Currently, Kamehameha Schools collaborates with 14 nonprofit tax-exempt organizations, including `Aha Pūnana Leo, OHA, KALO and Ho`okāko`o Corporation, to assist a total of 12 start-up and 3 conversion charters. Kamehameha Schools believes that this collaboration provides more positive educational choices and ultimately academic achievement for Hawaiian students. Through these collaborations, Kamehameha Schools currently assists more than 3,000 students in 13 communities on 4 major islands, within the public education system.

In a report released August 2006 entitled, "Longitudinal Outcomes for Hawaiian-focused charter schools," the Kamehameha Schools research team concluded that Hawaiian-focused charter schools are implementing viable educational strategies, making significant gains over time for the lowest-achieving students. Supporting and replicating the successful strategies found in Hawaiian-focused charter schools may generate a promising return on investment for Hawaiian education throughout the public school system.

Kamehameha Schools supports the intent of SB 3186 which is to provide a greater measure of support for charter schools.

We appreciate this opportunity to submit comments on SB 3186 and support the initiatives of the legislature to further enhance charter schools.