

To: Senate and House Education members

From: Malcolm Kirkpatrick

In re: HB 183

2009-02-02

Please DO NOT support ~~SB 142~~ HB 183

Senate Bill 142, Section I constructs a false history of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board. It asserts:

1 In 2001, the legislature transferred
2 responsibility for licensing teachers from the department of
3 education to the Hawaii teacher standards board. The transfer
4 was based on recommendations from the Hawaii Policy Group of the
5 National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, a national
6 organization with twenty-three partner states, including Hawaii.

First misrepresentation: Participation in NCTAF by individuals or organizations within the State of Hawaii does not make Hawaii a member or partner of NCTAF, any more than churches are members or partners of State governments.

By authorizing the board to assume responsibility for teacher
8 licensing, the legislature sought to strengthen the teaching
9 profession by making the board self-governing and accountable
10 for teachers who obtain and maintain licenses in Hawaii.

Second misrepresentation: In the initial legislation, the Teacher Standards Board was a non-cost bill which proposed a temporary Board, which was to develop licensing criteria for new-hire teachers and then to go out of business. The initial legislation did not empower the Board to revoke licenses of teachers already in service or to charge teachers already in service for the privilege of being less secure in their jobs. 3000 teachers signed a petition against this expansion of the Board's powers.

The initial legislation mandated a nine-member Board, with four members from the HSTA, three from the HGEA, one from the College of Education (the UHPA is an NEA subsidiary) and one member from the Board of Education. Counting the UHPA member, the NEA has a majority on the Board. Counting the HGEA, public-sector unions dominate the Board eight-to-one. This places the public-sector unions in a very convenient conflict of interest situation: any teacher whom the HGEA and HSTA find inconvenient can be terminated through revocation of her license, with no consequent obligation by the union to defend

her. It is as though the Legislature has given to a board of lawyers the power to determine which clients lawyers on retainer must defend. Basically, the Teacher Standards Board empowers the HSTA to renege on its contractual obligation to defend teachers.

The Board's performance standards for teachers required that teachers develop coherent sequences of lessons, that they adapt lessons to individual learning styles, and that they take advantage of spontaneous opportunities for instruction. These are all good ideas, but they are inconsistent, and so cannot qualify as "standards". The Board required that teachers align instruction to the DOE's curriculum content and student performance standards. The "standards" to which this requirement referred were those of the Final Report of the Hawaii State Commission on Content and Performance Standards (the "Blue Book") which the DOE abandoned after three years as complicated, contradictory, and vague. My point here is that the members of the Teacher Standards Board would not know a standard if you dropped one on their toes.

The Teacher Standards Board requires that teachers have degrees from an accredited teacher preparation program. No statistical, empirical evidence supports such a restriction.

The Teacher Standards Board has supported salary enhancements for teachers with National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification. No statistical, empirical evidence supports such a policy.

The Value-Added Achievement Gains of NBPTS-Certified Teachers in Tennessee:

A Brief Report

J. E. Stone, Ed.D.

College of Education

East Tennessee State University

Conclusion:

The findings of this study present a serious challenge to NBPTS's claims regarding its teacher quality standards and certification process. At the very least, they suggest that public expenditures on NBPTS certification and teacher bonuses should be suspended until it can be clearly and independently established that NBPTS certification delivers what it promises.

Abolish the Teacher Standards Board.