



GOV. MSG. NO. 429

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

March 31, 2010

The Honorable Colleen Hanabusa, President
and Members of the Senate
Twenty-Fifth State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Sirs and Mesdames:

In accordance with the provisions of Article V, Section 6, of the Hawai'i State Constitution, I have the honor to submit herewith for your consideration and confirmation, the following nomination to the **Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board**:

Gail H. Awakuni

Term to Expire: 6/30/2013

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Lingle".

LINDA LINGLE

August 4, 2010

To: Senate Selection Committee on Hawaii Teacher Standards Board

From: Gail H. Awakuni

Re: GM 429: Nomination to the **Hawaii Teacher Standards Board**

1. Why do you wish to be a member of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board?

I wish to be a member of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board because I care passionately about the future of public education in the State of Hawaii. With my 30+ years of experience as a teacher and administrator, I can make significant contributions toward the teacher license renewal process, fiscal and operational process, and bridge between the board and department of education. Our children deserve to be educated by highly qualified teachers: Good Schools, Good Teachers. To preserve our democratic principles and freedom that we enjoy, we must work together collectively to uphold, improve, and preserve public education.

2. How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board?

I see my role and responsibilities as being an integral part of :

- a. Establishing standards for issuance and standards of licenses: issuing, revoking, suspending, and reinstating teacher licenses.
- b. Upholding the laws established for the Board.
- c. Managing and being accountable for its fiscal expenditures and operations.
- d. Reviewing and responding to personnel issues.
- e. Communicating with the department of education.
- f. Becoming knowledgeable of teacher preparation programs to approve teacher education programs in the State and licensing requirements of other states.
- g. Participating in professional development and promotion of high standards for teachers and exemplary teaching.
- h. Adopting, amending, or repealing rules and procedures, which may be, counter productive of producing high teacher standards and quality teaching.
- i. Developing, implementing, and administering the national board certification support program.
- j. Attending meetings and functions of the Board.

3. Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills,

expertise, or knowledge that would aid in your decision-making ability as a member of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board.

With my 35 years of experience as a teacher and administrator, I have walked in the path of a teacher and administrator. I do believe that in order to have good schools, we need good teachers, in addition, to a visionary leader. I've always believed that the "rubber meets the road" in the classroom.

Through my leadership and action, I have turned around a high school that no one would ever expect to be on the cutting edge and be among the most competitive high schools in the State of Hawaii and the nation. I could never have done what I am credited to have done without the support, commitment, and expertise of my teachers and staff.

In ten years, we have moved from the bottom of the state in test scores, achievement, graduation, and college going rate to the top tier of the high schools. We are the one of two Title I (poverty level based on free and reduced lunch percentage) high schools to ever meet AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) on the Hawaii State Test. We are one of the few public schools to ever compete and win the State Math Bowl and World Quest Competition. Our students collectively received 10.7 million in scholarships last school year – up from \$600,000 ten years ago. We have narrowed the achievement gap – the only school to accomplish this in the entire state. We have the highest performance in special education and the lowest retention rate in the state. We are the first public high school with the International Baccalaureate Program, online learning, AVID, Twilight School, 9th and 10th grade academies, wall-to-wall Small Learning Communities. Furthermore, we administer the most Advanced Placement tests in the state. I am the only National Principal of the Year from Hawaii, thanks to my teachers, administrators, staff, parents, and community. Examples of my skills, expertise, and knowledge are evident in the **results** of my leadership.

4. Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board?
Three qualities that describes me are: Visionary, Knowledgeable, and Reflective. I have committed my entire personal and professional life to education and the Department of Education. As a member of the Board, I would be able to represent and network with the Department of Education fairly and honestly, reflect upon the present issues, listen and make decisions to carry out the Board's responsibilities successfully.

5. Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board how would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

At the present time, I cannot foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during my service on the Teacher Standards Board. Should any possible conflicts of interest arise, I would avoid it and carry out my moral responsibilities. If necessary, I would resign.

I do not intend to continue on as the Campbell/Kapolei Complex Area Superintendent after my agreed upon date of return. I plan to return to James Campbell High School as Principal in July, 2010 and look forward to opening the school year.

6. What are three ways that the Teacher Standards Board should/must help meet the education needs in Hawaii?

First and foremost, we must ensure that our children are being taught by GREAT TEACHERS. Our students deserve to be educated by highly professional, qualified teachers with a moral obligation to serve. Teaching is an avocation not merely a job. I want teachers who are passionate about helping students learn and grow. I want teachers who regard teaching as a service, who are enthusiastic to serve, and believe we can change the world through education. I believe we must work with the stakeholders in providing incentives for teachers to excel and be measured by student growth and progress over time.

Second, set up, monitor, train, and assure that teachers continue to meet the ten teacher performance standards. Teaching should be a continual, spiraling improvement process. The Board must work with the Department of Education in ensuring teachers of highest quality.

Third, work with HSTA, the teachers' union, in developing and producing teachers who are highly committed professionals and who meet the ten teacher performance standards.

We all are working for the children; we must, however, work together not against each other, to improve student achievement.

7. What goals should the Hawaii Standards Board set and how would you propose to measure them?

The goals of the Hawaii Standards Board should be to:

- Determine how to carry out its responsibilities successfully. Measured by a comprehensive plan for transferring nonessential functions and duties to other agencies.

- Determine verification of ten teacher performance standards as required by law, Hawaii Revised Statutes, section 302A-805(a). Measured by an evaluation tool, observation, and evidence of teachers meeting the performance standards through student achievement.
 - Work with teacher preparation colleges, department of education and HSTA in developing data systems to measure growth of teachers' students in literacy and citizenship. Systematic and ongoing professional development would be needed to ensure fidelity of implementation in measuring student growth.
 - Develop a working relationship between the Board and the Department of Education, define roles and set up procedures for oversight of the board's operations, including its executive director, the board's finances, and/or the development of the online licensing system.
Measured by surveys, internal audits, clearly delineated roles and procedures that are communicated to all parties. An online licensing system would be a favorable response to the ongoing complaints of loss forms, timeliness of receipt or approval of licensure, and communication.
 - Clarify their respective powers, duties, responsibilities, and relationships between the teacher standards board and department of education.
Measured by mutual sharing of data necessary for licensing and verifying status of teachers, pursuant to section 6 of Act 2, Special Session Laws of Hawaii 2009. Teachers' licensure should be parallel to the teachers' Pep-T evaluation, which should be communicated to teachers. Each should support and work together in producing high quality, highly professional teachers, who yield student growth as determined by student performance. Determine criteria for measuring student growth, which would be used to measure teacher effectiveness.
8. The Hawaii Teacher Standards Board has rapidly undertaken major changes in the past year precipitated by a scathing auditor's report. Please review the Auditor's Report and SB2591 (Session 2010) and provide your feedback.
I've based my responses to the questions from the SB2591 (Session 2010) and the Auditor's Report. The principal duties of the board shall be to address the recommendations and comply with the law. An effective leader must have control of its budget and personnel, whether it is a CEO, Principal, manager, small business operator, non-profit agency, etc. Support, structure, and monitoring are needed in

any organization. These are the premise from which to start in addressing and implementing the auditor's recommendations.

More so, the licensure board could make a definite impact in the improvement of education and student performance in Hawaii. By working together with the stakeholders, we could live up to President Obama's expectations of school reform and renewal in the Race to the Top. This is a chance in my lifetime to impact future generations of learners in the State of Hawaii. This is a chance to inspire teachers to be the best they can be, be proud to be an educator, and touch lives. Our children need the best teachers, who are willing to nurture them; be dream makers not dream breakers.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.



State of Hawaii

Department of Education

Kapolei Middle School

91-5335 Kapolei Parkway

Kapolei, Hawaii 96707

Phone: (808) 693-7025 Fax: (808) 693-7030

April 8, 2010

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chairman
Senate Education Committee
Hawaii State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawaii

Senator Sakamoto and members of the Committee,

Dr. Gail Awakuni is the perfect choice to be a member of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board and I hope that you and the members of the Senate will give her your unequivocal support. Her outstanding professionalism and undying dedication to the education of young adults brought national recognition to her, her school and the state of Hawaii when Dr. Awakuni was selected to represent Hawaii as the 2005 NASSP/MetLife Principal of the Year and eventually was selected as the *national* Principal of the Year. The achievements and successes at James Campbell High School is a reflection of Gail Awakuni – intelligent, dedicated, professional, a believer in kids, a hard worker, a risk taker, a facilitator, a motivator, a leader...the list can go on and on.

When Gail took over the reins of James Campbell High School about ten years ago, the school was virtually in shambles. The police department figuratively had a “substation” on the campus. Students had no pride in their work or in their school. The top kids graduated; many average and below average ones failed. Even their sports teams were in the loser’s bracket. Teachers were disjointed in their philosophies, their purpose on campus and about the abilities of their students. When the strike occurred, some teachers crossed the very picket lines that their colleagues walked.

Over the next few years, through diligence and vigilance of purpose, Dr. Awakuni has transformed Campbell High School into the Ewa community high school where students want to attend and do well. She encouraged teachers who did not support her goals and philosophy to leave and replaced them with other highly qualified teachers who believed as she did – that the Campbell High School students could achieve socially, emotionally and academically. She implemented programs such as AVID, the International Baccalaureate program, Achieve 3000, full inclusion of special education students and differentiation to provide rigor and relevance in their curriculum, instruction and assessments. With these changes students and teachers came to believe in themselves and their ability to succeed. Test scores are up. Academic teams compete for national titles. The police “substation” in the front office is gone. Sports teams compete for first place. Teachers and students are proud to be from James Campbell High School. Last year, the 2009 graduating class garnered \$10.7 million worth of scholarships and student aid.

As the only public (non-charter) school administrator on the current Hawaii Teacher Standards Board I have tried to represent the voice of the public school administrator and the public school teacher. I have learned a lot too. I have waited for years for replacements for retired Principal Caroline Wong and several teacher vacancies. I abhor the politics that has become the barrier to having highly qualified, experienced education professionals appointed immediately to the Teacher Standards Board. Now, I will retire from the Board, confident that the voices of all public school administrators and teachers will continue to be heard. Dr. Gail Awakuni will bring the perspective of the public school teacher and high school principal that knows so much and has done it all.

Aloha,

/s/ Annette A. Nishikawa
Principal, Kapolei Middle School
Hawaii Teacher Standards Board member