



GOV. MSG. NO. 432

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**:

Ruth L. Silberstein

Term to Expire: 6/30/2013

Sincerely,



LINDA LINGLE

Ruth L. Silberstein

Questions:

a. Being a member of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board:

Having served in Catholic Schools for 22 years and in Public Schools for 23 years, I have experienced the importance and necessity of having highly qualified and effective teachers in every classroom in the State of Hawaii. We do need to move forward despite the many challenges that we face.

When educators possess the knowledge of content areas in which they teach, along with effective teaching, social and emotional skills to address the whole student, the quality of the teaching profession will be ensured and delivered. Embedded in this process are the Teacher Performance Standards along with continual renewal of learnings on the part of educators as education reaches the global frontiers. Effective student learning will then take place.

b. The roles and responsibilities of a member of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board:

Setting the criteria and processes for high teacher standards and effectiveness for Teacher Licensure is important. Not only does this affect learning but it also meets the NCLB mandate as well. Included in this process are many variables that are essential: dealing with policies, special funding, grants, annual reports to the governor and legislature, along with licensing fees and penalties. These variables necessitate all members working collaboratively together.

c. The HTSB is now in the process of addressing the concerns of the audit that was done. After reading the audit and the HTSB responses, much work has already been done in a short time in moving forward. I see much clarity now and being a person that loves simplicity, and knowing that I have much to learn yet, I feel that I may contribute in this vein of thought. As an administrator I believe in audits. Audits help us to see what may be hidden or what is unclear, or unstated, thereby allowing many misinterpretations by many. Audits help to bring these things to the light to improve on it, to agree or disagree. Audits should never be seen in a negative light. I would move forward also in a simple way to addressing the findings of an audit.

d. Three qualities to benefit the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board:

- a. 45 years of educational experiences in both private and public schools in working with and supporting teachers.
- b. Having been through restructuring and experiencing transformation.
- c. A simple person.

- e. There would be a conflict as a board member if meetings are held on days that I need to be with my teachers and staff for training purposes, here and off island. We are working hard, like all schools, especially to remain out of restructuring. We are also at the inception of transforming the school. There might be a way to deal with both in a reciprocal manner.
- f. Three ways for the HTSB to meet the education needs in Hawaii:
  - 1. Establish a clear and simple process for teacher licensing.
  - 2. Clarify relationship and role between the DOE and the HTSB. Can laws be clarified as well or changed if need be?
  - 3. Establish a monitoring system for teacher effectiveness in the licensing process.
- g. Goals for HTSB and proposals to measure them:
  - 1. Design an initial probationary license whereby teacher effectiveness is measured with the monitoring of the Teacher Standards via PEP-T, classroom observations, etc. If satisfactory, then a renewal of the license can be issued.
  - 2. Clarify how the DOE can assist by assuming certain aspects of the highly qualify and licensing process. Why is highly qualify and licensing separate, what is common, what is different? The common element is teacher effectiveness. Or is licensing only certification?
- h. The Audit was very interesting. It had very important points to consider as well as references to laws and mandates. It showed, too, that the audit and the HTSB had different interpretations of a law or mandate. The audit also lacked certain information regarding the operations of the HTSB. This was rightfully so, as the audit was based on objective findings, and not the processes that were in motion by the HTSB. As a result, some conclusions lacked validity which opened the way for the HTSB to be able to bring other facts to the surface and confirm or negate any findings.  
The main findings were:

The audit was also very good in that it brought to light what needed to be seen. Sometimes we are so busy with little things that are not clarified at the inception stage, which then become easily overlooked, thereby allowing other unclear activities to develop reaching a grand scale with time. This was seen with the confusion of access to funding, the power of final decision making, and accountability with contradictions. The HTSB responded very positively and acted in an efficient manner, making known what was valid in the audit, what was missing regarding the knowledge needed to clarify any statement, and making corrections where appropriate.

I personally think both sides did a great job, and both should be seen in a positive light. As a result of all of this, working with the Hawaii Information Consortium, the technology aspect is moving along to bring to fruition the licensing process.



# Chaminade University

O F H O N O L U L U

April 10, 2010

## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am submitting this testimony in support of **Ruth L. Silberstein** for the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board (HTSB).

The HTSB is charged with the responsibility of setting high teacher licensing and credentialing standards to ensure that the students of Hawaii are served by highly qualified teachers. This responsibility requires the members of the HTSB Board to be strong and knowledgeable instructional leaders who keep current with educational improvement initiatives, and have demonstrated the ability to lead and nurture transformational change in their schools. I have worked with Ruth in the past as the Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Support and currently as the Director of a Native Hawaiian Education Act project and Alternative Licensure Programs at Chaminade University. There is no doubt in my mind that Ruth possesses the attributes listed above. With the requirements and sanctions imposed by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Ruth made no excuses for the students' performance at Palolo Elementary School. Instead, she mobilized her teachers, students and parents to focus on increasing student achievement which enabled Palolo Elementary to meet the State student achievement expectations. Further, in embracing the "rigor, relevance and relationship" slogan, Ruth has launched a total school effort to place into action the 3Rs. Working with her faculty, she is developing a comprehensive school curriculum which focuses teaching and learning through the context of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Students are being engaged in rigorous scientific inquiry which are relevant to them and enables them to understand the relationships with each other and their environment. In short, Ruth has a deep understanding of what highly effective teaching looks like, sounds like, and feels like and she works tirelessly with her teachers to ensure that all of the children at Palolo Elementary School receive that quality education. Based on the justifications I have provided here, I sincerely hope that you will approve Ruth L. Silberstein to serve on the Hawaii Teachers Standards Board.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Katherine T. Kawaguchi  
NHEA Project Director and Director of Alternative Licensure Programs

**sakamoto2 - Erin**

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**From:** Sharon\_Mols/PALOLO/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Friday, April 09, 2010 12:34 PM  
**To:** EDH Testimony

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a testimony in support of Ruth L. Silberstein for the Hawaii Teacher Standards board. She is a wonderful person to work for and from my point of view, an excellent principal. It is no wonder she was chosen as Principal of the year in 2008!

Sincerely,

Sharon Mols

School Administrative Services Assistant

**sakamoto2 - Erin**

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**From:** Donna\_Lum/JARRET/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 10, 2010 11:23 AM  
**To:** Sen. Norman Sakamoto

Aloha Senator Sakamoto,

This is a testimony in support of Ruth L. Silberstein for the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board who I have known as a fellow principal for six years. Ruth will serve as an excellent representative on the HSTB where she is able to understand the State, administrative, teacher, and community perspective. During this critical time of accountability, need for a highly qualified teaching force, and outcry for school reform, I give my highest recommendation for Mrs. Silberstein's involvement with the HTSB.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 733-4888. Mahalo for your support of our efforts and high standard of quality for learning and public education.

Sincerely,  
Donna Lum, Principal  
Jarrett Middle School

**sakamoto2 - Erin**

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**From:** elliesbox@hawaii.rr.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 11, 2010 11:37 AM  
**To:** Sen. Norman Sakamoto  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of Ruth L. Silberstein for the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board

Ruth Silberstein is an outstanding educator dedicated to serving her community and helping children develop skills to become contributing members of society. Her passion and commitment to the field of education is unbelievable.