

Date: 02/08/2010

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 2485 Relating to Education

Purpose of Bill: Clarifies the duty of school community councils to review and approve the academic and financial plans of their respective schools. Removing the authority of principals to set aside any decision made by school community councils.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) does not support this bill. School Community Councils (SCCs) are a major part of the overall leadership structure at each school. The school principal is the critical leader and is responsible for establishing a vision for improving achievement for all students. The principal is ultimately accountable for achieving the goals of the school. The primary role of the SCC is to participate in the process that ensures that the needs of all students are specifically addressed in the overall education plan for the school. The SCC Handbook II provides information and procedures to councils in understanding their role and responsibility relating to the review and recommendation for approval of the Academic and Financial Plan. The Handbook also provides information and procedures regarding the appeal processes that are in place and the authority within the Department, Board of Education (BOE), and respective unions who are authorized to provide the final approval for decisions. The approval and appeal processes are conducted at all levels of decision making by the SCC, Principal, Complex Area Superintendent (CAS), Superintendent and the BOE, with authority

for the final approval of the decision being made by those held directly accountable. To amend the language as suggested in this bill would be contrary to BOE policies and Department procedures already developed to implement the spirit and intent of Act 51.



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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION**

RE: HB 2485 – RELATING TO EDUCATION.

February 8, 2010

**WIL OKABE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

Chair Takumi and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association supports HB 2485. We believe school community councils should have more authority and autonomy with regard to decision making at the school level.

The principal currently has the authority, under the law, to overturn any decision by the council. Why have a council if one person has that kind of power over the rest of the group?

The law as it is currently written sends a message to councils that, the state cannot trust anyone other than the principal to make important decisions for the school. Instead of the will of the members of a school's community being trumped by the principal, the principal, as executive officer, should be accountable to the stakeholders.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



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The Twenty-Fifth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Education
Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
February 08, 2010

H.B. 2485 – RELATING TO
EDUCATION

The Hawaii Government Employees' Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO opposes HB 2485.

Of particular concern is the deletion of current statutory language on page 6, lines 4 through 12. Principals are expected to be the educational leaders of their respective schools and in that capacity should continue to have the authority to set aside any decision made by the school community council if it is determined to be in the best interest of the school. We note that the current language provides the school community council appeal rights to the complex area superintendent and as necessary to the superintendent and board of education.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on H.B. 2485.

Respectfully submitted,

Leiomalama Desha
Executive Assistant

Representative Roy M. Takumi - Chair
Representative Lyla B. Berg – Vice Chair
House Committee on Education

Winton G. Schoneman, 486-9269 (H)

Monday; February 8, 2010

In opposition to House Bill 2485 – Relating to SCC Role in Academic and Financial Plans

Distinguished members of the House Education Committee, I come before you to offer testimony in opposition to House Bill 2485 – to clarify the duty of the SCC to review and approve academic and financial plans. By way of introduction, I am a small business owner in Hawaii Kai, I have no children in school (public or private) and have spent the last 5 plus years committed to improving education in the community in which I conduct business (I live in Aiea). I have been the School Community Council chair at Kamiloiki Elementary School since Act 51 established the SCC in 2004. I am currently the Kamiloiki Academic Signature Task Force chair and have guided Kamiloiki Elementary School and our community forward in the selection of Math, Science and Technology as Kamiloiki's school signature.

It is my opinion that this develops into an issue of accountability. I believe it is inappropriate for the School Community Council to approve academic and financial plans for schools because the SCC is made up of volunteers whom you may not be able to hold accountable. Further more, since it is the principal's primary responsibility to plan and run our schools they should have ultimate authority to approve school plans. The SCC should have oversight and concurrence. Should a conflict develop the Complex Area Superintendent should have the authority to resolve any issues.

Thank you,

Winton Schoneman

berg1-Matthew

From: bandllee5@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2010 8:44 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Subject: HB2485

Testifier's Name: Leila Lee
Committee: Education
Date/Time of Hearing: 02/08/10
Measure Number: HB2485

Dear Education Committee:

There is great dissatisfaction with the public school system. SCC version 2.0 gives parents, students, and community members a seat at the table, and a chance to shape the future of their public school.

Parents, students, and the community are the customers in this process. Having no hope and no control of changing the direction of their public school has resulted in parents leaving the public school system for private schools or homeschooling.

SCC version 2.0 is an opportunity to bring school, parent, student, and community together to collectively create a roadmap for their school. This change to SCC authority is important, because it gives the SCC ownership of the success or failure of their school. In other words, it makes the SCC accountable for results.

Sincerely,
Leila Lee