



GOV. MSG. NO. 192

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

HONOLULU

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR

March 30, 2011

The Honorable Shan S. Tsutsui, President  
The Honorable Jill Tokuda, Education Committee Chair  
and Members of the Senate  
Twenty-Sixth State Legislature  
State Capitol, Suite 409  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear *Shan* President Tsutsui, Chair *Jill* Tokuda, and Members *Members* of the Senate:

This communication fulfills the requirement of Section 302A-F of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes. This document articulates my goals and priorities with respect to the formation of a highly functioning, well-balanced board, and describing appointees' qualifications.

Education is one of my highest priorities. High quality education makes every other social and economic goal we desire for Hawai'i possible. Our children need and deserve an education that prepares them for success in college and careers, both in Hawai'i and globally, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In November 2010, Hawai'i's people voted decisively to change from an elected to an appointed board of education. The Legislature expeditiously passed enabling legislation granting the Governor authority to appoint members including the chair. The law provides a direct line of accountability to the Governor. K-12 education is our state's most significant investment since the Department of Education is about 1/3 of the state's budget, and the entire state depends on the productivity and outcomes of our educational system.

My goal is for the Board of Education to work collaboratively with my administration and the Superintendent to put Hawai'i's children first and to improve our public education system for the benefit of our future. We must restore public confidence in our schools. We must put the interest of children first, engage educators, parents and community members, recognize teachers as professionals, empower principals as leaders of their schools, and hold principals accountable for student learning. We must promote and reward

innovation including online learning, enrichment activities, creative schedules, effective and accountable charter schools, early childhood programs to prepare our children to enter school ready to learn, and other means to reach high statewide standards and to meet the unique needs of students across our diverse state. We will follow through with our nationally recognized Race to the Top plan to: raise academic standards so that all children graduate high school prepared for success in college, careers and life, redesign curriculum, implement transparent assessment and accountability systems, deliver targeted teacher support, and dramatically improve outcomes in our most vulnerable communities. We will partner with businesses and philanthropic organizations in new and creative public-private ventures. As a result, every child will receive a comprehensive education program that meets the highest standards and reflects our unique island values within a global context.

In forming this inaugural Board of Education, I sought to bring together a combination of skills, talent and experience that leverages the diversity of our state for effective governance of one of our most important government functions: education. I considered individuals' professional skills, range of board experiences, educational experiences and personal experiences as products of and/or parents in our public schools, and the contribution of individuals to balancing the board composition.

I am pleased to appoint the following individuals to the inaugural State of Hawai'i Board of Education:

	<u>Term Ending</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
Keith Amemiya	6/30/2012	At-large
Nancy Budd	6/30/2012	Kaua'i
Charlene Cuaresma	6/30/2013	Honolulu
Brian De Lima	6/30/2013	Hawai'i
Kimberly Gennaula Hagi	6/30/2013	Honolulu
Donald Horner	6/30/2014	At-large
Wesley Lo	6/30/2014	Maui
Cheryl Ka'uhane Lupenui	6/30/2012	Honolulu
James Williams	6/30/2014	At-large

Each of these individuals is a leader within different communities in Hawai'i. They represent the diversity of Hawai'i on many dimensions. They are leaders in business, education, government, community building, public health and the legal community. Collectively, they have served on innumerable boards including the Boy Scouts Council, Aloha United Way, Hawai'i County Council, Hawai'i State Teachers Association, Parent Teacher Student Association, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity, and the Task Force on Reinventing Government. They are also public school parents and alumni, and contributors to educational improvement initiatives; one was even the first student member of the Board of Education in 1972. The nine appointees represent Hawai'i's student population, geography and educational stakeholders. However, as board members, their responsibility is not to represent specific interests but to inform decision making

with their diverse experiences and to serve as trustees of the broad public interest and of students statewide.

**At-large: Keith Amemiya** is the Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board of Regents at the University of Hawai'i. He is the former Executive Director of the Hawai'i High School Athletic Association. Amemiya served on a number of boards including the Honolulu Firefighters Foundation, Aloha Council of the Boy Scouts of America, Susannah Wesley Community Center, and The Learning Coalition. His appointment is for a one-year term.

**Kaua'i: Nancy Budd** is an Attorney in Private Practice. Budd has served with the Kaua'i Planning and Action Alliance and as Director and President of the Kaua'i District Parent Teacher Student Association. She is also a reading tutor at Wilcox Elementary School. Budd's daughter graduated from Kaua'i High School. Her appointment is for a one-year term.

**O'ahu: Charlene Cuaresma** is the Associate Director of the Graduate Professional Access Program at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. She is also the Community Director of the Asian American Network for Cancer Awareness, Research and Training. Cuaresma, a Waipahu High School graduate, is active in many Filipino community initiatives. Cuaresma's appointment is for a two-year term.

**Hawai'i: Brian DeLima** is an Attorney in Private Practice. He is a former Hawai'i County council member. DeLima is a graduate of Hilo High School and in 1975 he served as the first student BOE member. His daughter, who has special needs, attends Hilo Intermediate School. DeLima's appointment is for a two-year term.

**At-large: Kimberly Gennaula Hagi** is a Philanthropy Director at Kapi'olani Health Foundation. She is a former news anchor and previously worked as Communications Director for Liberty House and Sharper Image. Her two children attend Hokulani Elementary School, and she has been a member of an advisory board to the Superintendent. Gennaula's appointment is for a two-year term.

**At-large: Don Horner** is Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of First Hawaiian Bank. In February, the Governor appointed him to fill the vacancy of the at-large position on the board. (<http://Hawaii.gov/gov/newsroom/press-releases/governor-abercrombie-selects-community-leader-for-the-board-of-education>)

**Maui: Wesley Lo** is the Chief Executive Officer at Maui Memorial Medical Center. He previously worked as the Maui County Finance Director and the Chief Financial Officer of Maui Memorial Medical Center. His children attend Baldwin High School and Pomaikai Elementary. Lo's wife is a counselor at Maui

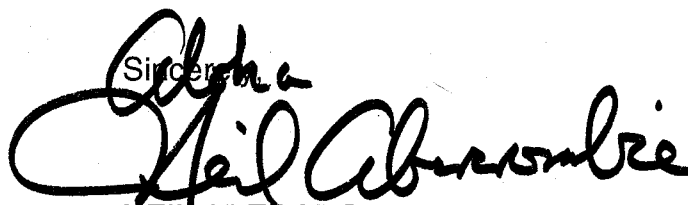
High School. His appointment is for a three-year term.

**O'ahu: Cheryl Kauhane Lupenui** is the Chief Executive Officer of the YWCA of O'ahu. She has served on the boards of Hawai'i Tourism Authority's Hawaiian Resource Advisory Board; the Center for Asian Pacific American Women; and Aloha United Way. Lupenui's appointment is for a one-year term.

**O'ahu: James D. Williams** is retired Administrator and CEO of the Hawai'i Employer-Union Benefits Trust Fund (EUTF). Currently, he is the Vice-Chair of Voyager Public Charter School. Williams previously served as President and CEO of Royal State Learning Foundation; Interim Director and President of the Hawai'i State Teachers Association; and was a teacher at Kauanakakai Elementary School and Moloka'i High School. Williams' appointment is for a three-year term.

These individuals share an abiding commitment to ensuring the highest quality education for all of Hawai'i's students and to providing educational leadership. They also share a "can do" attitude and sense of urgency for better outcomes despite the challenging economic times. Serving on this inaugural Board of Education will require a significant investment of time, talent, energy and heart. The nine individuals are making themselves available for constructive engagement. Following Chair-designee Don Horner's example, many are clearing commitments to be able to engage deeply in improving our public schools. They will serve the diverse interests and needs of students and their families, the education system of Hawai'i from early childhood through higher education, and the public libraries well.

I sincerely believe my administration will be judged on the success of the board in winning public confidence in our schools and improving the outcomes for our children and the state. I am confident that these nine individuals will provide strong leadership to achieve this new day for Hawai'i. I look forward to their confirmation and working together with them and the Superintendent.

Sincerely,  
  
NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
Governor, State of Hawai'i