

HB 1056

HD 1

Date: 03/23/2011

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 1056, HD1(HSCR756) RELATING TO THE CERTIFICATION OF PRINCIPALS AND VICE-PRINCIPALS.

Purpose of Bill: Amends section 302A-605, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to permit the Department of Education to determine alternative routes to certification for principals and vice-principals. (HB1056 HD1)

Department's Position: The Department of Education supports this bill. Nationwide, as well as in Hawaii, there continues to be concern over the potential shortage of highly qualified administrators as principals retire, resign or otherwise leave their positions. Currently, in the Honolulu District alone, over 50% or approximately 30 of their principals can retire. The current certification requirement states that an individual possess not less than five years of appropriate school level experience, of which at least three years shall have been as a teacher, is too restrictive and conflicts with the Race to the Top grant requirements. This bill includes additional language that will permit the Department to determine what would qualify as appropriate equivalent experience. This will allow the Department to consider other individuals who are experienced as leaders, but may not have three years of experience as a teacher, to potentially qualify for certification as a Principal or Vice Principal. If the current law is amended to replace the restrictive language regarding Principal and Vice Principal candidates qualifications, it would allow the Department to attract and retain an adequate supply of eligible highly qualified administrators for our public schools.

Personal Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education

March 23, 2011 at 1:15 PM
Conference Room 225

Written Testimony
By
Christine K. Sorensen
Dean, College of Education
University of Hawaii at Mānoa

**HB 1056: RELATING TO CERTIFICATION OF PRINCIPALS AND VICE-
PRINCIPALS**

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

As Dean of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's College of Education, I support this bill, which will work to satisfy the DOE's requirements pertaining to the Race to the Top Grant.

I am strongly in favor of providing alternative routes to certification. Besides Hawaii's interest in complying with Race to the Top requirements, alternative certification benefits the educational system by increasing the qualified applicant pool for much-needed administrative positions. Those who are alternatively certified are as capable of excelling in their positions as those who undertake traditional pathways to school leadership positions. Alternative routes to certification, whether offered by institutions of higher education or those outside higher education, have the potential to increase the pool of qualified leaders. For principals, however, I believe that some experience as a teacher in K-12 schools is necessary, and this bill includes such a requirement while allowing increased flexibility in the definition of that experience.

I also believe it is important to maintain an agency independent from the DOE to oversee licensing of educators. Having an agency which hires educators be the same that provides certification and oversight creates a conflict of interest. Holding a certification or license is, in essence, a way to indicate that an individual has the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions to practice a particular profession, regardless of the employing agency.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.