

**LATE**

To: Members of the Senate Education Committee

From: Malcolm Kirkpatrick

in re: SB 806 (Teacher Standards Board)

2011-02-07

Please DO NOT support SB 806 as written.

The Hawaii DOE operates one of the largest school systems in the US, the only State-wide school district. According to the NCES 2009 Digest of Education Statistics, table 36 the DOE reported a 2006 fall enrollment of 180,729 students. Taxpayers supported the Hawaii DOE with a revenue stream of \$2.985+ billion dollars in the 2006-2007 fiscal year, according to the US Census Bureau's Public Education Finances, 2007, table 1. The DOE reported total current spending of \$2.081+ billion, according to table 6 and per pupil spending table 8 of \$11,060. Table 11 puts the Hawaii per pupil revenue at \$16,520, which ranks fifth in the US. For all this, the Hawaii DOE generates a level of performance which puts Hawaii in the national cellar, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress 8th grade Math.

The above figures understate the cost of the Hawaii Department of Education. These figures do not include the cost of pension and health benefits to retired employees. These figures do not include the cost of pension and health benefit promises to current employees. These figures do not include the opportunity cost to students of the time that they spend in school. These figures do not include the cost to society of the lost information which a competitive market in education services would generate.

With SB 806, the legislature would tinker with an enterprise its defenders call "broken", "dysfunctional" and "obsolete". The Teacher Standards Board makes a large contribution to the failure of the State school system. Recall the history of this board. When Teacher Standards Board legislation first appeared before the Hawaii legislature, the HSTA testified in favor and the Board of Education opposed the legislation. At that time, I testified against the creation of a Teacher Standards Board. In the next session, the Board of Education supported the bill, and the legislature passed a bill that authorized the creation of a temporary board which was to prescribe credential requirements for applicants for teacher positions within the government school system. The Board would then hand these recommendation to the DOE Personnel Office and expire. Before the Teacher Standards Board existed, a Teacher Standards Board Planning Commission met to determine the shape of the Teacher Standards Board. This Planning commission discussed how to talk the legislature into making the Board permanent and how to talk the legislature into extending the Board's authority to teachers already in service. Since then, the legislature has repealed the sunset provision of the enabling legislation, expanded the Board from nine to fifteen members, and given the Board authority over licensing of teachers already in service. Meanwhile, the Board has failed to develop effective standards for new-hire or in-service teachers. For new-hire teachers, the Board requires College of Education training. No statistical, empirical evidence supports policies which restrict the teaching profession to graduates of Colleges of Education. For in-service teachers, the Board requires, among other things:

## Standard V: Demonstrates Knowledge of Content

STANDARD STATEMENT V: The effective teacher consistently demonstrates competency in content area(s) to develop student knowledge and performance.

Performance Criteria for Standard V: The extent to which the teacher:

Keeps abreast of current developments in content area(s).

Teaches mastery of language, complex processes, concepts and principles unique to content area(s).

Utilizes the school's current technologies to facilitate learning in the content area(s).

Connects knowledge of content area(s) to students' prior experiences, personal interests and real-life situations.

Possesses an understanding of technology appropriate to the content area, e.g. computer-assisted instruction.

And

## Standard VI: Designs and Provides Meaningful Learning Experiences

STANDARD STATEMENT VI: The effective teacher consistently plans and implements, meaningful learning experiences for students.

Performance Criteria for Standard VI: The extent to which the teacher:

Plans and implements logical, sequenced instruction and continually adjusts plans based on learner needs.

Provides learning experiences and instructional materials that are developmentally appropriate and based on desired outcomes, principles of effective instruction and curricular goals.

Incorporates a variety of appropriate assessment strategies as an integral part of instructional planning.

Links concepts and key ideas to students' prior experiences and understandings, using multiple representations, examples and explanations.

Applies concepts that help students relate learning to everyday life.

Provides integrated or interdisciplinary learning experiences that engage students in generating knowledge, using varied methods of inquiry, discussing diverse issues, dealing with ambiguity and incorporating differing viewpoints.

Teaches for mastery of complex processes, concepts and principles contained in the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards.

Provides knowledge and experiences that help students make life and career decisions.

Organizes material and equipment to create a media-rich environment.

And

Standard IX: Demonstrates Professionalism

STANDARD STATEMENT IX: The effective teacher continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions and actively seeks opportunities to grow professionally.

Performance Criteria for Standard IX: The extent to which the teacher:

Engages in relevant opportunities to grow professionally, i.e., taking university/college or in-service coursework, actively participating in a professional organization, serving on a cadre, council, or committee or serving as a cooperating teacher, mentor or advisor.

Reflects on practices and monitors own teaching activities and strategies, making adjustments to meet learner needs.

Provides and accepts evaluative feedback in a professional manner.

Conducts self ethically in professional matters.

Models honesty, fairness and respect for individuals and for the laws of society.

Demonstrates good work habits including reliability, punctuality, and follow-through on commitments.

Maintains current knowledge in issues and trends in education.

Practices effective listening, conflict resolution and group-facilitation skills as a team member.

Works collaboratively with other professionals.

Participates actively and responsibly in school activities.

Problems with the above abound. Consider: "Keeps abreast of current developments in content area(s)." Why? Does an English Literature need recent Melville scholarship into the homoerotic imagery of Moby Dick to teach this book? Does a US History teacher need the latest reports from Colonial-era excavations to teach the origins of the US Revolution? What "current development" in Polynomial Ring Theory do you imagine I need to teach Alg. I? If I could read current research in Real Analysis or Polynomial Ring Theory I'd have a PhD in that topic. Consider: "Provides learning experiences and instructional materials that are developmentally appropriate and based on desired outcomes, principles of effective instruction and curricular goals."

What "principles of effective instruction"? The College of Education for years promoted Whole Language methods of reading instruction. The DOE paid consultants from PREL to conduct workshops on Whole Language methods of reading instruction. The Whole Language fad died after PhDs in Linguistics and

Psychology insisted that Whole Language theory was so misguided it was "not even wrong", so stupid it couldn't be said to be a coherent theory. Since a PhD trumps a EdD, the Whole Language fad died. The College of Education promoted "discovery" methods of Math instruction. A massive study of methods of Math instruction, Project Follow-Through, has demonstrated the superiority of direct instruction and practice over "discovery" methods. Why hire experts if you do not intend to use their expertise? Why compel attendance at school if children will discover Math on their own?

Some of these "standards" describe good practice, but they are too vague to qualify as "standards". Consider: "Reflects on practices and monitors own teaching activities and strategies, making adjustments to meet learner needs." How does the TSB propose to measure that?

Consider: "Teaches for mastery of complex processes, concepts and principles contained in the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards."

I looked at the the HCPS III standards for Alg I. They are clear and relevant. The problem thit the Teacher Standards Board recommendation is that the TSB made the same practice a "standard" when student "Content and Performance Standards" referred to the <u>Final Report of the Hawaii State Commission on Performance Standards</u> (the Blue Book), which PREL billed taxpayers over \$600,000 to develop and which the DOE discarded after four years as hopelessly complicated and vague.

The Teacher Standards Board advocated enhanced salaries for teachers who obtain National Board certification. "A review of the literature concerning national board certification will produce a vast amount of information, both for and against. According to Goldhaber, Perry, and Anthony (2003), national board certification is a process by which "outstanding teachers with demonstrated skills would be appropriately recognized" (p. 1). Supporters of NBPTS believe that teachers with national board certification will become the leaders in changing the culture of American education and that these changes will have "significant beneficial impacts on students" (p. 1).

In opposition to national board certification, Goldhaber, Perry, and Anthony cite Wilcox (1999) in claiming that the "NBPTS is an "insiders' organization that bases its authority on the evaluation of its own members. The inclusion of two prominent educators' unions on the Board also raises red flags for some" (p. 1).

Ballou and Podgursky (1998) questioned the value of the national board certification. They cited many policy questions that remain unanswered in regards to this popular type of teacher certification.

Their first question is at the heart of the NBPTS's philosophy: "Is the national board able to identify superior teachers?" (p. 1). The answer to this question, according to Ballou and Podgursky, is that "we simply do not know" (p. 1)."

My point here is that the Teacher Standards Board members would not know a standard if you dropped one on their toes.

Who benefits from the Board's control over teacher credential requirements? As I suggested above the HSTA lobbied for TSB legislation. The Board originally consisted of four teachers, on HSTA recommendation, three administrators, on HGEA recommendation, a representative from the College of Education, and a Governor's appointee. Since, like the HSTA, the UHPA is an NEA subsidiary and UH administrators, like DOE administrators, pay dues to the HGEA, public sector unions controlled eight of nine seats on the Board. The current 15-member Board is similarly lopsided in its representation by insiders.

In giving to the HSTA and HGEA the power to decertify teachers, the legislature has placed the HSTA and HGEA in a serious conflict of interest. Unions function as a combination of talent agent and law firm. They negotiate contracts and enforce contracts. A teacher's dues basically put the HSTA on retainer. By giving to the HSTA the power to decertify teachers in service, the legislature has created an enormous potential for abuse. It's as though the legislature has given to a committee of lawyers the power to determine which clients a lawyer who has collected a retainer must defend.

In the 1990 Brookings Institution study of school effectiveness by Chubb and Moe, Politics, Markets, and America's Schools, the authors found that the strongest predictor of school success, after parent SES, was a composite variable they called "the degree of institutional autonomy". That is, the more people above the principal telling the principal how to do her job, the worse a school performed.

Principals at each school should have the power to determine the credential requirements of their own staff.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak.