SCR121/SR61

REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW THE REINVENTING EDUCATION ACT OF 2004, AS AMENDED.

EDU, WAM

Date: 03/23/2012

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Resolution: SCR 121 / SR 61

Purpose of Resolution:

Department's Position:
The Department has concerns with SCR 121 / SR 61 as currently drafted. Act 51, Session Laws of Hawaii 2004 contained 13 main elements with 36 separate deliverables some of which were very bold and broad in their application while others were discrete one time activities. The Department, while appreciating the importance of evaluating the implementation and effect of supportive legislation on the attainment of the State's educational goals, knows full well that a task force will be very resource intensive.

Given the breadth of Act 51, it will be a tremendous burden on the department at a time when we are still working to get out of high risk status in the Race to the Top grant, as well as, submit a solid Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind) Flexibility / Waiver application with the US DOE. Additionally, the Hawaii State Teacher Association master contract must be worked on, and we are in the midst of a major effort to update the strategic plan (which also will call for reorganization of the various state offices) etc. These are efforts that require key leadership participation, and I am afraid that is not going to be possible to dedicate that amount of leadership attention to an evaluation of Act 51 with everything else that must be done.

We are, however, looking at retaining a consultant to review the weighted student formula, which is one of the major areas of concern for schools. Rather than a task force on all of Act 51, suggest the legislature have us review Act 51 and report back. It can be couched as phase 1 of a multi-phase review of Act 51.

HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
Teaching Today for Hawaii's Tomorrow

1200 Ala Kapuna Street ⅄ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ⅄ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ⅄ Web: www.hsta.org

Wil Okabe
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Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SCR 121/SR 61– REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW THE REINVENTING EDUCATION ACT OF 2004, AS AMENDED

Friday, March 23, 2012
Conference Room #225 1:15pm

WIL OKABE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association strongly supports SCR 121 and SR 61. We believe that the Reinventing Education Act of 2004, or "Act 51," is long overdue for evaluation by stakeholders.

When it was originally passed, Act 51 was intended to enhance accountability, resources, and professional development. With the implementation of weighted student formula, the measure was to equalize funding throughout the Department of Education by tying financial allocations to student populations and needs. In instituting School Community Councils, the law was intended to give all stakeholders responsibility for school governance.

Eight years later, many of the reform's mandates have yet to provide the performance boost. The weighted student formula, in our opinion, has been repeatedly adjusted to accommodate small schools, who would otherwise suffer funding decreases. In fact, so many exceptions were carved out of the formula for individual communities that the Board of Education, in 2011, was forced to scrap funding adjustments for schools facing population size or geographic challenges. Instead they codified a new version of the formula that gives the state superintendent a $3 million discretionary account to help those schools on an as-needed basis.

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We are especially supportive of subjecting School Community Councils to evaluation. SCC's could be powerful groups at the individual school level if they truly understood and followed the guidelines. They were designed to be the primary decision-making body regarding academic and financial planning and school policy. The Principal of a school was given full responsibility for leading the process. A school's financial plan must be vetted by the stakeholders on the SCC. Any exceptions to the HSTA-BOE master agreement that a school might seek—for example, bell schedules or the school calendar, must also be approved by the SCC. Unfortunately, teachers are caught in a feedback loop that may prevent their voices from being heard, particularly with regard to school-based budgeting. If a financial proposal is offered to the SCC by school administration—say, terminating teaching assignments in one department to add assignments in another—but teachers reject the proposal, they must currently appeal to escalating levels of administration, including the complex area superintendent and superintendent of schools. Yet, the CAS and state superintendent are unlikely to overrule school administrators. On the contrary, they often work in tandem with one another. Thus, teachers are left without an independent outlet for reviewing their concerns, aside from the HSTA grievance process in the case of contractual violations.

Disenfranchised educators are one of the most severe unintended consequences of Act 51's implementation. We strongly support efforts to assess this and other effects of the reform and will gladly accept a place on the proposed evaluation working group. Thank you for including HSTA in your resolution and this opportunity to testify in support.

46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Legislative Director

TESTIMONY FOR SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 121/SENATE RESOLUTION 61, RELATING TO ACT 51

Senate Committee on Education
Hon. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Friday, March 23, 2012, 1:15 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

Honorable Chair Tokuda and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing the IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 150 local members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in support of SCR 121/SR 61, relating to evaluating Act 51.

When the Reinventing Education Act of 2004 was passed into law, it heralded big promises for local schools, including more equal funding, increased access to educational resources and classroom materials, greater community involvement in school governance, and streamlined accountability. Nearly eight years after the measure was signed into law, however, its proposals remain a mixed success, at best. Act 51's primary funding reform—introduction of a weighted student formula—has been mired in controversy since its inception, largely because of its adverse impact on schools with small population sizes or geographical isolation. Concerns have been mitigated, somewhat, by the adoption of a $3 million discretionary fund, operated by the Department of Education, to address such schools' needs, but the problem of resource inequality lingers. Similarly, accountability reforms, such as the creation of School Community Councils, been a boon to communally supported schools seeking innovative curriculum or calendar changes, but a boondoggle to teachers and administrators at schools that have persistently had trouble garnering stakeholder involvement. At a time when many schools are seeking Board of Education waivers to pilot new programs, bell schedules, and achievement measures, it is imperative that schools have the flexibility and tools to coordinate with all impacted parties. Lawmakers will only know the extent of existing resource shortages if a comprehensive evaluation of Act 51's reforms is performed, resulting in suggestions for how new mandates might be augmented as we move toward a more integrated, high-stakes education system. Finally, technology is progressing at an unprecedented speed. Though enacted less than a decade ago, Act 51's proposals could not have anticipated the meteoric rise of social networking or use of computerized tablets for educational purposes. Once convened, the working group called for by this resolution can, and likely will, assess how new technology might facilitate educational reforms or necessitate altogether new improvements.

For these reasons, the IMUAlliance wholeheartedly supports a review of Act 51's mandates and their impact upon local classrooms. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this resolution.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Legislative Director
IMUAlliance

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 11:48 AM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: msacco2@juno.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR121 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Mark T. Sacco
Organization: Individual
E-mail: msacco2@juno.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
I support this bill. All students need a safe envioronment in which to learn effectively. School should be a place where young people learn how to be socially responsible citizens and bulling has no place in that (or any other) environment.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 11:55 AM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: buller.laura@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR121 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: LauraBuller
Organization: Individual
E-mail: buller.laura@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
Act 51 does not provide equitable funding for small rural school. Please consider reforming this Act.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 12:03 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: pniibu@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR121 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position:
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: patricia niibu
Organization: Individual
E-mail: pniibu@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
Many students who could be more academically proficient are afraid to because of the harassment that will come with it.

Many possible future leaders within the classrooms have a fear of taking the lead and speaking out due to bullying.

I advocate to make it a law that should there be any bullying intentions apparent, it should be reported and addressed immediately.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 12:08 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: kmossman@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Testimony for SCR121 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Karolyn Mossman
Organization: HSTA
E-mail: kmossman@hawaiiantel.net
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
I served on the Committee on Weights for the intial few years and reappointed again this past year. I find that the intent to provide additional support for students in need is not really being done. The WSF is not working well for many school situaations and needs comprehensive review.

Similarly, while some school SCC work well, many and ineffective or exist in name only.

Local decision-making is eroded by bills such as the bell schedule bill, common calendar, and other centralized decision-making.

It is time to review the the reinventing educatrion act of 2004 for its effectiveness at meeting the intent and whether it meets current needs in light of education reform measures.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 12:10 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: rb_hawaii@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR121 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Bridget Hannu
Organization: Individual
E-mail: rb_hawaii@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
My name is Bridget Hannu and I am a 7th grade teacher at Kapolei Middle School. I believe that assessing Act 51 would be beneficial to all Hawaii students. In evaluating the effectiveness of Act 51, recommendations could be made to better achieve the State's educational goals therefore providing better education for all students. I thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution and urge you to support SCR 121/SR 61.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 12:27 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: jrfsanborn@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR121 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: jacqueline sanborn
Organization: Individual
E-mail: jrfsanborn@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
I support SCR121 because disenfranchised educators is one of the most severe unintended consequences of ACT 51's imp;emendation. I strongly support efforts to assess this, and other, effects of the reform.

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Sharon L. Smith
Organization: Individual
E-mail: aloalo47@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
As a teacher I, strongly support SCR 121 and SR 61. I believe that the Reinventing Education Act of 2004, or "Act 51," is long overdue for evaluation by stakeholders.

When it was originally passed, Act 51 was intended to enhance accountability, resources, and professional development the local school setting. Through the implementation of weighted student formula, the measure was supposed to equalize funding throughout the Department of Education by tying financial allocations to student populations and needs. In instituting school community councils, the law was intended to give all stakeholders voice in, and responsibility for, school governance.

Eight years later, however, many of the reform's mandates have yet to provide their advertised performance boost. The weighted student formula, for example, has been repeatedly tweaked to accommodate small schools, who would otherwise suffer funding decreases. In fact, so many exceptions were carved out of the formula for individual communities that the Board of Education, in 2011, was forced to scrap funding adjustments for schools facing population size or geographic challenges and, instead, codify a new version of the formula and gives the state superintendent a $3 million discretionary account to help those schools on an as-needed basis.

I am especially supportive of subjecting School Community Councils to evaluation. SCC's are powerful groups at the individual school level, the primary decision-making body regarding school policy. A school's financial plan must be vetted by the school's SCC, for instance, and any exceptions to the HSTA_BOE master agreement that a school might seek—regarding bell schedules or the school calendar, for example—must also be approved by the SCC. Unfortunately, teachers are caught in a feedback loop that may prevent their voices fro being head, particularly with regard to school-based budgeting. If a financial proposal is offered to the SCC by school administration—say, terminating assignments in in one department to add assignments in another—but teachers reject the proposal, they must currently appeal to escalating levels of administration, including the complex area superintendent and superintendent of schools. Yet, the CAS and state superintendent are unlikely to overrule school administrators and SCC's. On the contrary, they often work in tandem with one another. Thus, teachers are left without an independent outlet for reviewing their concerns, aside from the HSTA grievance process in the cass of contractual violations.

Disenfranchised educators is one of the most severe unintended consequences of Act 51's implementation. I strongly support efforts to assess this, and other, effects of the reform. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this resolution.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 12:29 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: putzuluc@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR121 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Christine Putzulu
Organization: Individual
E-mail: putzuluc@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
I am in favor of SCR121 and SR51. Re-evaluation of Act 51. School Community Councils (SCC's) are powerful groups at the individual school level, the primary decision-making body regarding school policy. A school's financial plan must be vetted by the school's SCC, for instance, and any exceptions to the HSTA-BOE master agreement that a school might seek-regarding bell schedules or the school calendar, for example-must also be approved by the SCC. Unfortunately, teachers are caught in a feedback loop that may prevent their voices from being heard. Your consideration for support in SCR 121/SR61 would be appreciated.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 12:31 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: brendan.poff@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR121 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Brendan Poff
Organization: Individual
E-mail: brendan.poff@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
Currently ACT 51 does not work at my school. While there is something like an SCC, it really only exists in name only. We have had close to zero community support/representation and the few that have tried don't stay. They don't understand what is going on. Can't say I blame them when you're handed an AC/FIN plan that is just full of numbers and technical terms that you don't understand and neither does the average teacher. That is how it goes down. The principal realizes that by law he must present it, let SCC have their say and then he can do what he deems the right thing to do regardless of any opposition. We are always told his decisions are in the best interest of the students. This year he decided to eliminate all counselors at my middle school. Middle school!! One of the most developmentally important times in a child's life. We are told teachers are generic counselors so it's ok. It's in the best interest of the students and he will argue with anyone about it. Of course nobody supports it but he gets to make the call as per the ACT 51 guidelines. Matter of fact he can recite the portion of the act that gives him such power verbatim. That is in no way democratic but rather dictatorial. Teacher realize this and know that their say doesn't matter, so why speak up and challenge your boss if he's only going to get angry at you for it? Then we are told we can file an appeal to the principal decisions but the person who hears it is the CAS, the principals boss who already is more than likely aware of the situation. Do you really believe the CAS would override their principals? That would reflect poorly upon them. A more democratic system needs to be in place. This isn't a business or company, it's an educational system. ALL parties voices should be valued the same: admin, teacher, student and community. I support this bill.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 12:41 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: jalesna@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR121 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Janice Eala
Organization: Individual
E-mail: jalesna@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
I believe that ACT 51 is outdated. It should be under evaluation by stakehoders. SCCs should be subjected to evaluation. Teachers should have a stronger say in proposals that would otherwise be dominated by SCCs and school administrators. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this resolution.

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 12:59 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: Ack519@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR121 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Anne C.K. Cross
Organization: Individual
E-mail: Ack519@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support the convening of a working group to review the Reinventing Education ACT of 2004. I also strongly support the proposed participants of the working group. It appears that some parts of the ACT such as SCCs are not being implemented with the intent of the law.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this resolution.

Erin Conner

From: Julie [jteruya@earthlink.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 1:53 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Subject: Support for SCR104 and SCR121

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

Mahalo to Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kidani, Senators Slom and Taniguchi for introducing SCR104 and SCR121, and to Senator Chun Oakland for introducing SCR104 as well. I support both resolutions.

I am a Special Education Teacher and I teach students who are in junior kindergarten through fourth grade.

I support SCR104. I have seen and heard about students bullying and students who were bullied. There are videos posted on the Internet and students are posting both what happened and when "fights" will happen. Most are off the school campus, but events leading up to the "fight" (teasing, verbal aggression, threats, etc) occur on the school campus. There are school administrations who don't do anything when parents and teachers tell them. One parent decided to pull the child out and homeschool her because administration didn't protect the child while she was in school. One administrator (on Monday) told the mother of a victim that she should keep her child at home "until the situation blows over." (The incident happened at the community park on Saturday and the girl who beat her up also verbally "harassed" teachers and administration put her in a class that she wanted to be in!) At some schools, there are no consequences that prevent students from "the events that lead up to" the aggression so they continue to tease, spread rumors, etc. There needs to be more at the school to protect the victims from the bully. As much as I try to teach the 5R's Program (respect, responsibility, resiliency, relationships, and resourcefulness) and the general learner outcome (GLO) of community contributor and effective communicator, I found that some parents don't enforce them. School is where many children learn (sad to say that some learn more at school than at home) so schools should do their part to try to prevent behavior that could lead to a child that becomes a productive tax paying citizen.

I also support SCR121. I believe that "Act 51" needs to be looked at and parts of it need to be changed. One part that has affected me is that the principal has final say. The teachers wanted a full-time counselor this year, but the temporarily assigned (TA) principal sold half the position to purchase technology. There was nothing that we could do because by the time we "go through the process," the school year would be over. I also support SCR121 because there is a teacher representative in the working group. Teachers need to voice their concerns because decisions are made that affect our job.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I ask for your support.

Sincerely,
Julie Teruya
Special Education Teacher
Kaneohe

Erin Conner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 2:41 PM
To: EDU Testimony
Cc: devispencer@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR121 on 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for EDU 3/23/2012 1:15:00 PM SCR121

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Devi Berg
Organization: Individual
E-mail: devispencer@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments:
Dear Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

I strongly support SCR 121 and SR 61. I believe that the Reinventing Education Act of 2004, or "Act 51" needs to be revisited and is overdue for a evaluation by all stakeholders. Eight years later, many of the benefits Act 51 was intended to accomplish have yet to be realized. We need to review Act 51 to see what changes are needed. Disenfranchised educators are one of the most severe unintended consequences of Act 51's implementation. I strongly support all efforts to assess this, and other, effects of the reform. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this resolution.