



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

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Wil Okabe
President
Joan Kamila Lewis
Vice President
Colleen Pasco
Secretary-Treasurer
Wilbert Holck
Executive Director

DATE: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2015

RE: H.B. 1406 – RELATING TO STANDARDIZED TESTING

PERSON TESTIFYING: WIL OKABE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

The Honorable Chair Roy Takumi, Honorable Vice Takashi Ohno and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Hawai'i's 13,500 public and public charter school teachers, and in line with over 3 million National Education Association members, The Hawai'i State Teachers' Association is in **STRONG SUPPORT of H.B.1406.**

Standardized testing is a staple of education systems around the world. When used appropriately they provide information to teachers and schools about the progress of their students and the areas where more attention and/or assistance may be necessary. When they are used correctly, teachers are able to provide a course of action that helps improve student outcomes. This is akin to what doctors would do for their patients when going over X-rays, or other lab/test results.

Unfortunately, for over a decade, standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately the community at large.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of lost learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized. As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers,

textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

H.B. 1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawai'i's children, HSTA **STRONGLY SUPPORTS H.B. 1406.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



EDUCATION CAUCUS

To: Chairperson Roy Takumi
Vice Chairperson Takashi Ohno
Members of the House Committee on Education
From: Education Caucus
Date: 02-18-15
Time: 2:00PM
Location: House Conference room 309
Position: **Strong support** of HB1406

Thank you Education Committee Chair Roy Takumi for hearing this bill. The Education Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii supports this bill and would like to speak to one very important aspect of this bill. Parents should be informed of their rights to opt-out of the Smarter Balanced Assessments.

Recently the Department of Education sent a letter to parents featuring tips for parents to help their child with homework and examples of Smarter Balanced Assessment questions versus the former state assessment. What the letter didn't say is that the Elementary Secondary Education Act allows parents the right to opt their children out of any state assessments including the Smarter Balance Assessment. Currently there is no Board of Education policy informing parents of their rights to opt out of the previous state assessment or the new Smarter Balance Assessments.

Parents, teachers, and students across the country are fed up with high-stakes standardized testing because it has led to the loss of education in arts, civics, science, and infringement on instruction time, social development, recess time, lunch time, and joyful learning. The August 2014 Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup national poll found that 54 percent of the general public said standardized tests are not helpful—the rate for public school parents was even higher, at 68 percent.

Parents, teachers, and students in Seattle pushed back against their standardized assessments, stating that they were inappropriate for teaching and learning. Their organizing efforts resulted in the district conceding that it would no longer require the test. The teacher who lead the boycott, Jesse Hagopian, just wrote an intriguing book called More Than a Score, The New Uprising Against High-Stakes Testing. He spoke to teachers on Maui at the Hawaii State Teachers Association Institute day in 2013. In his speech, he stated, "We face incredible challenges and social crisis in the world today....none of these problems can be solved by filling in a, b, c, or d."

Maybe parents are not being informed, because if a certain percentage of students opt out of the assessments, schools and teachers are wrongfully penalized. Schools and teachers should not be penalized if parents opt out because they don't feel the



assessments are appropriate. The Education Caucus is concerned that the state is open to lawsuits for not informing parents of their choices. On the Democratic Party of Hawaii website, there is a resolution called High Stake Testing. It calls for parents and students to be informed of their rights. No matter whether you feel that linking standardized assessments are appropriate, parents deserve to be informed of their rights. For these reasons, the Education Caucus strongly supports House Bill 1406.

Respectfully submitted,
Justin Hughey, Chair of the Education Caucus of the
Democratic Party of Hawaii



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

TESTIMONY FOR HOUSE BILL 1406, RELATING TO STANDARDIZED TESTING

**House Committee on Education
Hon. Roy M. Takumi, Chair
Hon. Takashi Ohno, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 18, 2015, 2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 309**

Honorable Chair Takumi and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 300 local members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in support of, with proposed amendments for House Bill 1406, relating to standardized testing.

The overuse of standardized tests in Hawai'i's schools has become an epidemic. Rather than focus on student learning, our schools devote increasing amounts of time to “test and punish” frameworks, in which critical thinking and applied knowledge are replaced with rote test-taking skills that adversely impact a teacher's or schools statistical assessment. According to the American Federation of Teachers report “Testing More, Teaching Less: What America's Obsession with Student Testing Costs in Money and Lost Instructional Time,” test preparation and testing in heavily tested districts can absorb up to a month and a half of school time. The grade-by-grade analysis found that students spend from 60 to more than 110 hours per year on test preparation, at an estimated cost per pupil of \$700 to \$1,000 in heavily tested grades. At the same time, abandoning so-called “toxic testing” could add 20 to 40 minutes of daily instructional time to secondary school grades, according to the report, with hundreds of dollars per students—and millions of dollars overall—reallocated to the purchase of instructional programs, school technology, infrastructure upgrades, and teacher pay increases. It is no wonder, then, that Hawaii Sen. Mazie Hirono is co-sponsoring a federal bill to end the abuse of standardized tests in our nation's classrooms.

Make no mistake, when we discuss standardized tests, we're talking about the Common Core State Standards Initiative, a set of corporatized standards that were foisted upon teachers and children across the nation without prior field testing. Developed by an organization called Achieve and the National Governors Association, and funded by the Gates Foundation, the standards were crafted with minimal public input. Under the Obama Administration's Race to the

Top grant program, states were effectively told that if they did not adopt the Common Core, they would not be eligible to receive a portion of the program's \$4.35 billion in grant money. As education policy expert Diane Ravitch has said, "Federal law prohibits the U.S. Department of Education from prescribing curriculum, but in this case the Department figured out a clever way to avoid the letter of the law." The result? A precipitous decline in test scores based on Common Core's arbitrary cut scores, a lack of critical thinking development based on Common Core's arbitrary pedagogical instructional time ratios, disproportionate harm caused to English Language Learners and low-income students, further elimination of arts education, and parents and students in at least 11 states joining the United Opt Out movement against the Smarter Balanced Assessment associated with Common Core, with students literally "opting out" of toxic high-stakes tests. Even the Gates Foundation, the alchemists responsible for the Common Core monstrosity, are backpedaling on their Frankensteinian experiment, calling for a two-year moratorium on linking Common Core to teacher evaluations or student promotion and their related "value-added methods" of measuring performance.

That said, on page 4, lines 8-9, we encourage you to replace the word "use" with the phrase "have access," thus preventing the unintended consecration of standardized test data as the primary teaching tool in state law. Only data that is disaggregated by student is useful to teachers seeking to improve the performance of individual students. Right now, test data is not disaggregated for teachers on an individualized basis, severely limiting the data's pedagogical utility. More importantly, there are many ways to be a good teacher, with test scores of any kind being only one teaching tool among many from which to draw.

When we protect against the abuse of toxic testing, we defend our children's future. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Executive Director
IMUAlliance

HB1406

Submitted on: 2/13/2015

Testimony for EDN on Feb 18, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| sarah shewmaker | Individual | Support | No |

To: Chairperson Roy Takumi
Vice Chairperson Takashi Ohno
Members of the House Committee on Education
From: Amy Perruso, Ph.D.

Subject: Support for HB 1406

My name is Amy Perruso, and I am writing as an educational researcher, a veteran public school teacher, and the mother of a public school student, in support of HB1406.

High stakes testing is absolutely and unequivocally destroying public school education in Hawaii and across the country. As educational researchers and professors from colleges, universities, and other research institutions throughout the United States with scholarly and practical expertise in public education recently argued in an open letter to Congress, “test-focused reforms... not only have been discredited for high-stakes decisions, but also have shown to widen, not close, gaps and inequities” (‘Open Letter to Congress’). I am a signatory to this letter for two reasons. First, I am deeply disturbed by the failure of reforms based on high stakes testing and accountability regimes to fulfill any real promise of increased equality of educational opportunity. Moreover, I think it is tragic that, although we have available to us far more effective research-based strategies that have been compellingly demonstrated to improve the educational opportunities and success of all students, particularly those in highest need, we are sacrificing our students to a rigid and ideological adherence to high stakes testing and accountability regimes. But these are intellectual reasons. It offends me, as a rational, educated adult in a representative democracy, that our public policy on education is uninformed and destructive.

This situation affects me, as it does most teachers I know, in a deeply emotional way as well. It makes me feel complicit and guilty, as a teacher, because I know I am implicated in an educational system that is hurting children. It makes me furious when I see the evidence of this destruction in our public school classrooms. Young people shape my life, and I have close relationships with many students – to have a young person describe a school-wide ‘party’ open only to those who were proficient on a stupid test as a defining moment in her life, or to watch young people compare themselves to each other on the basis of highly questionable testing instruments breaks my heart. These kinds of examples of the destructive fallout of the deeply flawed ‘results’ are not the only evidence of the depths of the problem. High stakes testing has deformed everything we do in the public school classroom. The descriptions my daughter and her friends offer of their educational experiences in their schools mirror what I expect the students in my own high school would offer, and more closely resemble those of penal institutions than educational institutions – there is little opportunity for creativity, curiosity or intellectual autonomy. Why? Because the entire educational experience of these young people is being directed towards efforts to improve scores on standardized tests. And it is this sense of complicity and frustration, perhaps even more than the lowest pay in the country, that demoralizes Hawaii teachers and is contributing to the beginnings of a mass exodus of the best and most committed veteran teachers.

As a citizen, I am in especially strong support of the provision of HB1406 that empowers teachers, administrators and state officials to inform parents of their right to opt their children out of high stakes testing. Most parents I know, who go to great lengths to compensate (outside of the school day) for the destructive effects of educational ‘reform’ in the public schools, are outraged when I tell them about their legal rights as protected under ESEA to opt their children out of high stakes testing. They are angry that they have never been informed about those rights, and they feel misled and betrayed. They lose even more faith in the Hawaii public educational system, because that information was not provided in a forthright and open manner. Public education in this state IS in crisis – not because the public schools are ‘failing’ but because we, as the responsible adults, are not yet making public policy decisions based on the best available research, nor are our public servants doing their utmost to protect the educational mission of public schools, which, at its very base, should be to cultivate love of learning in our children. Without that, we are lost.

Sincerely,

Amy Perruso, Ph.D.

HB1406

Submitted on: 2/16/2015

Testimony for EDN on Feb 18, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Amy Perruso | Individual | Support | No |

Comments: To: Chairperson Roy Takumi Vice Chairperson Takashi Ohno Members of the House Committee on Education From: Amy Perruso, Ph.D. Subject: Support for HB 1406 My name is Amy Perruso, and I am writing as an educational researcher, a veteran public school teacher, and the mother of a public school student, in support of HB1406. High stakes testing is absolutely and unequivocally destroying public school education in Hawaii and across the country. As educational researchers and professors from colleges, universities, and other research institutions throughout the United States with scholarly and practical expertise in public education recently argued in an open letter to Congress, “test-focused reforms... not only have been discredited for high-stakes decisions, but also have shown to widen, not close, gaps and inequities” (‘Open Letter to Congress’). I am a signatory to this letter for two reasons. First, I am deeply disturbed by the failure of reforms based on high stakes testing and accountability regimes to fulfill any real promise of increased equality of educational opportunity. Moreover, I think it is tragic that, although we have available to us far more effective research-based strategies that have been compellingly demonstrated to improve the educational opportunities and success of all students, particularly those in highest need, we are sacrificing our students to a rigid and ideological adherence to high stakes testing and accountability regimes. But these are intellectual reasons. It offends me, as a rational, educated adult in a representative democracy, that our public policy on education is uninformed and destructive. This situation affects me, as it does most teachers I know, in a deeply emotional way as well. It makes me feel complicit and guilty, as a teacher, because I know I am implicated in an educational system that is hurting children. It makes me furious when I see the evidence of this destruction in our public school classrooms. Young people shape my life, and I have close relationships with many students – to have a young person describe a school-wide ‘party’ open only to those who were proficient on a stupid test as a defining moment in her life, or to watch young people compare themselves to each other on the basis of highly questionable testing instruments breaks my heart. These kinds of examples of the destructive fallout of the deeply flawed ‘results’ are not the only evidence of the depths of the problem. High stakes testing has deformed everything we do in the public school classroom. The descriptions my daughter and her friends offer of their educational experiences in their schools mirror what I expect the students in my own high school would offer, and more closely resemble those of penal institutions than educational institutions – there is little opportunity for creativity, curiosity or intellectual autonomy. Why? Because the entire educational experience of these young people is being directed towards efforts to improve scores on standardized tests. And it is this sense of complicity and frustration, perhaps even more than the lowest pay in the country, that demoralizes Hawaii teachers and is contributing to the beginnings of a mass exodus of the best and most committed veteran teachers. As a citizen, I am in especially strong support of the provision of HB1406 that empowers teachers, administrators and state officials to inform parents of their right to opt their children out of high stakes testing. Most parents I know, who go to great lengths to compensate (outside of the school day) for the destructive effects of educational ‘reform’ in the public schools, are outraged when I tell them about their legal rights as protected under ESEA to opt their children out of high stakes testing. They are angry that they have never been informed about those rights, and they feel misled and betrayed. They lose even more faith in the Hawaii public educational system, because that information was not provided in a forthright and open manner. Public education in this state IS in crisis – not because the public schools are ‘failing’ but because we, as the responsible adults, are not yet making public policy decisions based on the best available research, nor are our public servants doing their utmost to protect the educational mission of public schools, which, at its very base, should be to cultivate love of learning in our children. Without that, we are lost. Sincerely, Amy Perruso, Ph.D.

HB1406

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for EDN on Feb 18, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| cheryl | Individual | Support | Yes |

Comments: As a retired teacher (40 years in the classroom), I strongly believe that the SBAC and other standardized testing which became mandatory with the Federal monies received are not solid educational practice. It is important for parents to be informed and allow them to make decisions for their children. Parents should be making the decision as they do daily for their children about all facets of life. I support this bill and IF we are going to have to give a standardized test then it makes more sense to give it at the beginning of the year. However, there are no guarantees that as in the current tests that there will be any viable information that the teacher can use. THERE IS NO RESEARCH on how standardized tests benefit any individual student. Thank you. I am always available to assist the education committee on educational issues and research.

To: Chairperson Roy Takumi
Vice Chairperson Takashi Ohno
Members of the House Committee on Education
From: Corey Rosenlee

Subject: Support for HB 1406

My name is Corey Rosenlee and I am a teacher at Campbell High School and the father of a public school student. I am here to testify in support for HB1406, especially the provision of informing parents of their right to opt their children out of high stakes testing. High stakes testing is ruining education for students and teachers. So let's look at Finland the best school system in the world, the best college system in the world, the U.S., and the best school in Hawaii, Punahou. So what do all these educational institutions have in common? None of them use standardized testing. They hire qualified teachers and then trust them to create the most effective curriculum to teach their students. Basically, these institutions succeed because they hire good teachers and let them do their jobs without narrowing the curriculum to focus on test scores. Public schools students on the contrary are treated as mere data points on the test score board. School becomes boring and uninteresting for both teachers and students since the only thing that matters is getting average students to pass the test. Both the lower end and the smart students become irrelevant to the teachers because the lower end students won't pass anyway, and the smart kids will take care of themselves.

What is left of the public school is just test score sheets. If you are rich, you send your children to a private school, so they can get some creativity at school; no one sends their kids to private schools so that they can get more testing on a few subjects.

But if you are poor your kids get to go to public school to become a data point. We are depriving our children of a well rounded curriculum. Subjects such as science and social studies are being squeezed out to make room for more time for reading and math. Forget about art and music or Hawaiiana. Teachers are cutting field trips and replacing them with practice tests, because both the school and the teacher feel the pressure at all costs to improve test scores. Since the teachers can't change poverty, they can change the time they give to tested subjects.

Are we so afraid that massive amount of parents will opt their children out of these tests, is to avoid informing them of their rights? And if that is our fear that what does it say about standardized testing. Please pass this bill and then maybe we can give all of our children a well-rounded education.

To the Committee on Education
Submitted by Harmony Seivert, Public School Teacher
RE: HB-1406
Hearing: 2/18/15, 2:00 pm

As a public school teacher and the parent of a child in public school, I strongly support HB-1406.

As we as faculty prepare for “testing season,” morale has definitely taken a dip. The format of the Smarter Balance (SBAC) test demands that in the 4th grade literally one fourth of instructional time second semester will be spent preparing for state testing; through practice tests and practice classroom performance activities to extra instruction in typing, clicking and dragging, switching between screens, and the other sub-skills necessary for a complex online assessment. Not to mention 7 hours minimum for the actual SBAC online assessment, multiple lessons for the classroom-based performance tasks, and two 45-minute sessions for HSA Science. Because the practice tests are not scored, they will only serve to prepare (or to intimidate) students and will not help teachers know how to better instruct their students for the real tests. Scheduling the computer labs is a complex task and because the labs are booked for several weeks with various testing activities in grades 3-5, they will not be available to enhance instruction.

I became a teacher to prepare my students for life, not for testing. Yet as teachers, we feel the weight of these test scores because our teacher evaluations are tied to them. What are we teaching our students through all this testing? How is a complicated test that requires so much practice and preparation a natural measure of their learning? How is it fair for students with limited access to computers at home? As a special education teacher, I do my best to make state testing as painless as possible, but with students who read more than 2 years below grade level, it always feels like educational malpractice. How can I encourage my students to feel positive about something that even with the allowable accommodations is so beyond their abilities? I have to be certified to administer the HSA Alternate assessment for my students with cognitive delays in addition to the regular assessments for my students who aren't fortunate enough to qualify for a more appropriate test format. Learning how to administer each assessment takes time. Time that could be better used to plan instruction for my students. I am not allowed to encourage parents to exempt their children, even if it feels like the humane thing to do. Our school's participation rate is at stake if too many parents request exemption. How did this one measure become so important to a school's ratings?

As a parent, I send my child to school to learn, not to be over-tested. I have always been a supporter of public education, but am not sure I can allow my child to be educated in a way that encourages him to take interest in right answers instead of risk-taking and creativity. Common Core standards aim to get our children to think critically and to explain their thinking, yet the culture of high-stakes testing squashes their motivation to think and decreases the instructional time to develop their craft as writers. As HB-1406 states, testing is currently “counterproductive.” How many times as a teacher at the high school level did I hear “Miss, just tell us the answer!” I don't want that kind of education for my children. Teachers need more time to teach.

As a National Board Certified Teacher, I am definitely a supporter of accountability for teachers and schools. Standardized testing can be a valuable tool when structured in a way that is meaningful for teachers and students, but I believe we have a long way to go. A survey of how our current model is affecting instruction and morale would be an excellent place to start. Giving

tests earlier in the year so results can be analyzed and used to drive instruction is also a good idea. Please support HB-1406 to help us make state testing in public schools more effective.

Thank you.

HB1406

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for EDN on Feb 18, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Lucia You | Individual | Support | No |

HB1406

Submitted on: 2/16/2015

Testimony for EDN on Feb 18, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mike Landes | Individual | Support | No |

Comments: I ask you to support HB 1406. Standardized testing has become overused in our schools, and proper planning has not been put into place to ensure that it is being used in legitimate ways that are beneficial for our students. We should make sure standardized tests are only used if they have been proven to be reliable and valid indicators of student performance as judged by people with actual teaching experience. We should make sure that students' time is not wasted with repeated standardized testing day after day. And, we need to give parents an absolute right to opt their students out of standardized testing, as well as complete information about how they can do so.

HB1406

Submitted on: 2/16/2015

Testimony for EDN on Feb 18, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mitsuko Hayakawa | Individual | Support | No |

Comments: Aloha Committee Members, I am a parent of three children and support this bill. I believe it sets a reasonable framework to help monitor the effectiveness of standardized testing and allow teachers and staff to better focus on the needs of students early in the year. I also appreciate that parents be informed about the option to not participate in these tests. Sometimes, parents assume they don't have a choice and I believe the BOE has an obligation to inform parents of their rights. Mahalo for hearing this bill.

To: Chairperson Roy Takumi
Vice Chairperson Takashi Ohno
Members of the House Committee on Education
From: Corey Rosenlee

Subject: Support for HB 1406

Hello. My name is Vivian Rosenlee, and I am a 6th grade student at the public Holomua Elementary School. This year, my teacher has been trying as much as he can to bring back any creativity in our learning experiences. But when his lesson plans and pay reflects on testing and our scores on those tests, there is only so much he can do. Most of my days are still consumed by math and reading. My teacher has been trying to integrate in as much art as he can, but we do music about once every two months, with the rest of 6th grade there as well.

I remember a day when my class had reading and math for most of the day, but at the end of the day we were able to do some art. Then my teacher realized that there was an event he had forgotten, so he chose to push back that day's lessons and eliminate the art. When we protested, he responded that our HSA tests were coming sooner then we thought. It made both me, the rest of my class, and my teacher sad to be missing out on the rare amounts of creativity that we are allowed to have.

THIS is why I am hear today. Because both students and teachers enjoy having and learning art, music, and Physical Education. And because we would all favor doing these things than taking standardized tests which NOBODY likes. These tests are unhelpful and destroy a child's learning experience, along with forcing teachers to make their students teach and memorize certain subjects in excess as so called "learning".

Standardized tests are destroying creativity, and creativity is the true heart of learning, not tests. I am here today because tests like the Common Core and HSA are harming both teachers and students. Thank you.

Dawn Raymond
P.O. BOX 10698
Hilo, HI 96721-5698

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Dawn Raymond. I am a teacher at Waiakea High School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawai i s children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Dawn Raymond

Jeremiah Brown
67-223 Kukea Circle
Waiialua, HI 96791-8560

February 17, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Jeremiah Brown

I am a teacher at Waipahu High School.

Standardized tests have been incorporated into public education to a point where they are no longer diagnostic in nature, but instead a malignant growth that doing harm to students, schools, and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of learning time lost, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jeremiah Brown
8085289434

Andrew Grant
1520 Palolo Ave. #F
Honolulu, HI 96816-2577

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Andrew Grant, and I am a teacher at Jarrett Middle School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawai i s children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Andrew Grant
808-383-2761

Kristal Jonasen
91-1100 Puahala Street
Ewa Beach, HI 96706-2146

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is

I am a teacher at

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawai i s children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Kristal Jonasen

Michelle de la Rosa
951003 Kaapeha Street #11
Mililani, HI 96789-4877

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Michelle de la Rosa

I am a teacher at Mililani High School

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

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In support of success for all Hawai i s children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Michelle de la Rosa

Evette Tamos
P.O. 6279
Hilo, HI 96720

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Evette Tamos

I am a teacher/school counselor at Pahoa Elementary

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

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In support of success for all Hawai i s children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Evette Tamos

Brad silva
106 Hanohano st.
Hilo, HI 96720-3402

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is

I am a teacher at

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

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In support of success for all Hawai i s children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Brad Silva

Wendy Sako
1281 Komohana St.
Hilo, HI 96720-2721

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Wendy Sako.

I am a teacher at Kea'au Elementary School on the Big Island.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

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In support of success for all Hawai i s children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Wendy Sako
808-959-1392

Anne Cross
PO Box 125
Hakalau, HI 96710-0125

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Anne Cross.

I am a teacher at Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary School in Hilo.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Anne CK Cross
8089375671

Date: February 17, 2015

To: The Honorable Chair Roy Takumi, Honorable Vice Takashi Ohno and Members of the Education Committee:

From: Beatrice DeRego, Teacher

Hawaii Dept. Of Education

Re: HB1406 – Relating to Standardized Testing

On behalf of the faculty and students at my school, I strongly support H.B. 1406 with amendments.

Standardized testing is a snapshot in time. For several days or weeks each year, students are placed in an environment that is often uncomfortable, and always overwhelming. They are expected to demonstrate mastery on most of the skills covered over the course of a year, in addition to the foundational abilities upon which the new instruction is based (with an assumption they have learned standards which weren't even in place when they were in elementary school). Currently, most students view this exercise with disdain as one of the many unpleasant tasks they are expected to accomplish by their teachers.

Unfortunately, the current structure of Hawaii's testing policies and the new Educator Effectiveness System exacerbates an already tenuous situation. Scores are high stakes for teachers and schools, but irrelevant to students, and often their parents. The scores and data both teachers and students receive is not disaggregated to the point where either can make an educated guess toward improving instruction or learning. Past HSA (Hawaii State Assessment) scores for English provided three overarching categories, with little breakdown into the related skills or standards affected. Perhaps the new Smarter Balanced Assessment will provide more useable reports.

Because there are no consequences for students, such as passing the past HSTEC (Hawaii State Test of Essential Competencies) required for graduation, students regularly blow off the test. Even the best students have bad days or weeks, and cannot be encouraged to focus a serious effort on a series of challenging tests that have no bearing on even their grade point averages. The most difficult students are removed from testing due to disruptive behavior caused by lack of skills, lack of school wide emphasis on the gravity of the tests, or general apathy.

Under the onus of the No Child Left Behind Act, testing became the be all-end all for curriculum and instruction. While providing positive effects, such as disaggregating groups to expose obvious gaps, the results were a punitive end-run attempt to privatize education by increasing the number of charter schools, school voucher programs, and testing consortiums ready and willing to take public tax dollars for "research based" constructive fixes. The current Administration increased the detrimental effects with a misguided focus on "bad teachers and teaching" and the onerous evaluation systems which are proving to be unfair, invalid, unreliable, and inequitable.

H.B. 1406 gives you the responsibility to put the joy and thrill of teaching and learning back into schools. Well planned testing that is minimally disruptive, aligned to the curriculum taught, and given an appropriate weight in the overall evaluation of both students and teachers is the first step to accomplishing this goal.

To achieve this outcome, paragraph §302A-B (7) must ensure administrator, teacher, and student input into the testing protocol devised by the Board, whose members are unfamiliar with the meticulous, tedious, and mundane processes required to ensure both the conditions necessary for standardized testing (including appropriate environmental concerns), and the demand for an actionable report from the testing service to ensure teachers can use the available data to differentiate instruction targeted to individual student needs as required in post-test activity.

Additionally, section §302A-D (4) must be removed from the bill. This section would require teachers to prepare an Individualized Education Plan for each and every student. This would be an inequitable burden on testing teachers without the additional time or compensation necessary to complete the task. For secondary teachers who often have a course load of between 100-200 students, the task would be impossible. Current structures in place at schools such as requiring a

syllabus from each class, online gradebooks, Smaller Learning Community parent access, parent-teacher-student meetings and open house nights already provide some of the avenues for parents needing additional information. Finally, the associated costs with producing these reports in teacher stipends to pay for their time, and supplies to produce and disseminate the reports is not cost effective compared to the limited amount of additional information which would be provided to parents/students.

For the sake of our future, I strongly urge you to pass H.B. 1406 with the suggested amendments.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Britney Carey
PO Box 1153
Hilo, HI 96721-1153

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is

I am a teacher at

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

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As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Britney Carey

Carina Morgan
59-615A Ke Iki Rd.
Haleiwa, HI 96712

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Carina Morgan

I am a teacher at Mililani High

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Carina Morgan
8087791869

Carrie Sato
147 Niuiki Circle
Honolulu, HI 96821-2319

February 18, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Carrie Sato. I am presently a state office teacher at OCISS and a teacher in the public school system since 1976.

Standardized tests have a place in education, but never been meant to drive public education. Presently tests are given for the collection of BIG DATA - to determine where a child should be at any given time compared with other students in this vast field of data collection. We are trying to move away from the "industrial model" and yet these tests are forcing children into the same type of "MOLD" - the one-size fits all for "those particular students" at that snapshot in time. As teachers, we are trying to develop each child. Each child's readiness level, interests, and abilities should be a major consideration not just English, Math, and Science testing. Children have more skills that need to be explored and nurtured; however, these tests only emphasize only three of Garner's multiple intelligences.

We need to do better for our students. We need to recognize more talents than just English, Math, and Science. We are in education to develop the person. Please support our children and emphasize the uniqueness in every child instead of gauging success from the narrow perspective of standardized testing.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Carrie Sato
808-373-3256

Charlene Hosokawa
3005 Kalihi St
Honolulu, HI 96819-3022

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is

I am a teacher at Moanalua High School.

Standardized tests have become too onerous in public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature. It is far too time consuming.

It has become detrimental and takes valuable time away from the classroom and acquisition of knowledge.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Charlene Hosokawa

Daniel Shapiro
Rr2 box 3856
Pahoa, HI 96778-7700

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is
Daniel Shapiro
I am a teacher at Hawaii Academy of Art and Sciences PCS

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Daniel Shapiro

Denise Yamada
94-217 Umeke Place
Waipahu, HI 96797-5633

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Denise Yamada.

I am a teacher at Waipahu High School.

The intention of No Child Left Behind Act was to improve the rigor of the education in America, but what it did was become a punitive device that takes away learning time from students. Students spend so much time taking tests that they do not have time to learn the tools they need for the tests.

Teaching has been reduced to teaching to the test, test taking strategies and very little creativity. Yes, I believe that education needs to be rigorous but it is unfair to base a school's performance on test scores.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Denise Yamada
8086782180

Elizabeth Brask
186 Kaulani Drive
Pukalani, HI 96768-8619

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

We are wasting instructional time with needless and redundant testing. Do you want to improve education? Then let teachers teach. Don't take up 1/3 to 1/2 of our time administering tests, when we could be engaging students in rigorous instruction.

Stop the senseless and COSTLY testing. Our focus should be on students and instruction, not the insane amount of needless paperwork and testing.

I voted for you. I depend on you to represent me.
Betty Brask

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Brask

Erin Raguindin
PO Box 174
Kaunakakai, HI 96748-0174

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Erin Raguindin

I am a School Counselor and Test Coordinator at Kaunakakai Elementary School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a very stressful and time-consuming activity that does more harm to students, schools than good.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that will require at least 10 days, weeks of lost learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Erin Raguindin

Fran Bellinger
P.O. Box 6033
Kaneohe, HI 96744-9167

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is FRAN BELLINGER

I am a teacher at KING INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL in Kaneohe, Hawaii.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha,

Fran Bellinger

Howard Hurst
P.O. Box 518
Waimea, HI 96796-0518

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Howard Hurst.

I am a teacher at Waimea Canyon Middle School on Kauai.

Standardized tests are no longer diagnostic in nature, but have instead become a profit driven commodity that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and the teaching profession.

What once was a process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an ordeal that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of lost learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that is culturally biased and irrelevant.

As more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies, teachers and students struggle to find reason. It is the antithesis of democracy when a for-profit company can lobby legislatures convincing them that they have the "panacea" and legislators support them, not teachers. Being an educator was once a respected profession that has been slandered by these carpetbaggers in their pursuit of profit. These companies through strategic market messaging have turned a once respected profession - teaching and teachers into societies "whipping boy".

HB1406 lays out the process, to the purpose, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Currently students have zero stake in standardized test outcomes. Standardized testing was once a summative measure that held students accountable for their efforts. Today standardized tests are used solely as a false metric of teacher proficiency. Standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. At present all standardized tests are doing is providing false validation to purchase more, more, and more; while so little funding goes directly to students and teachers.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Howard Hurst
808-631-6304

Jaclyn Wills
84-1016 Hana st
Waianae, HI 96792-2252

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Jaclyn Wills

I am a teacher at Makaha.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jaclyn Wills

James McCarthy
P.O. Box 161021
Honolulu, HI 96816-0923

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is James McCarthy. I am a teacher at SEEQS (School for Examining Essential Questions of Sustainability) Charter Middle School. I have also worked through the Artist in the Schools (AITS) program for fifteen years.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

James McCarthy
(808)393-6111

Janell Fisher
67-320 Kukea Circle
Waialua, HI 96791-9519

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Janell Fisher

I am a teacher at Sunset Beach Elementary School.

Standardized tests have been super-sized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Janell Fisher

Jessie Prest
129B Auhana Road
Kihei, HI 96753-6817

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Jessie Prest

I am a teacher at Kihei Elementary

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jessie Prest
8082801770

Jill Tengan
1568 Ala Puumalu Street
Honolulu, HI 96818-1547

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

I am writing in support of HB1406. I have worked as a public school teacher for the Hawai'i DOE since 2005, as an ELL (English Language Learner), Language Arts, Guidance, Performing Arts, and Dance teacher. I have seen how the purpose of standardized testing has become misconstrued and the priorities of the entire educational system have become warped because of the severe penalties and sanctions schools face due to low standardized test scores.

Currently, as a teacher of creative dance at the high school level, there is no denying that special attention must be paid to keeping the arts alive during this era of high-stakes testing and public school reform.

Public school educators experience top-down mandates that increasingly emphasize math and reading in the K-12 curriculum. With ongoing budget cuts to the Department of Education in the state of Hawai'i, in addition to pressures to increase college and career readiness as outlined in the Race to the Top Assessment (RTTA) Program and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), less time and resources are devoted to teaching the arts in schools. Arts programs, arts teachers, and their students end up suffering because of the constant messages sent by policymakers and curriculum planners conveying that the arts are not important. In a National Education Association (NEA) article, Holcomb (2007) shares the following regarding the state of arts education in U.S. schools: Now, five years after the No Child Left Behind law (NCLB) first opened to mixed reviews from captive audiences, arts education must fight for a seat in the classroom, despite the law's inclusion of the arts as a core academic subject. A small number of forward-thinking school districts have begun to integrate the arts across the curriculum and into the fabric of the school day. But in the vast majority of public schools, arts programs - and teachers - are in more trouble than ever, despite the growing body of evidence showing a powerful link between arts education, student achievement, and teacher performance. (Holcomb, 2007) The belief that math and reading should take precedence over the arts in schools has become widely internalized since NCLB was signed into law in January of 2002 (Dillon, 2006).

Working in the Department of Education in the State of Hawai'i, I have seen this happening over the past 10 years at the secondary level, as increased emphasis has been placed on meeting AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress). The consequences for not meeting AYP range from preparing and implementing a school plan for increasing students' proficiency levels in reading and math to "corrective actions" including replacing current staff, entering into contracts with outside management companies, and allowing current students the choice to attend a "higher performing school" (Alaska Department of Education, 2006; Knudsen, 2002).

At one middle school where I worked, the pressure put on the students and staff was so tangible, courses were added to the curriculum to “support” students who were on the border of passing the Hawai’i State Assessment (HSA). These classes strictly focused on the skills necessary to pass the standardized reading and math tests, and only targeted the students who could potentially pass the HSA with an extra boost of academic support in the area of testing for which the student scored just below 300, which is the passing or “proficient” score in either reading or mathematics. Interestingly, the students at the lowest end of the spectrum were not the foci of these special “support” classes because the span of points needed for them to reach “proficiency” in reading and math was considered too great. But perhaps the most disturbing part about these “support” classes was that they took the place of these targeted students’ elective courses, which included visual arts, performing arts, computer skills, and Polynesian music and dance. Although the purpose of the HSA is to hold schools accountable for providing each student with a quality education, this blatant narrowing of the curriculum has forced me to question the purpose and worth of standardized testing in our state.

Certainly there is a place for standardized testing in our schools, but it should not be the driving factor in our curriculum and instruction.

Furthermore, we must open our eyes to the fact that narrowing the curriculum to boost student achievement in a handful of subjects is a shameful disservice to students that should no longer be tolerated.

References

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Holcomb, S. (2007, January 17). State of the Arts. NEA Today. Retrieved from <http://www.nea.org/home/10630.htm>

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Sincerely,

Jill Tengan
8083511536

Karisse Sakahara
261-A North Kainalu Drive
Kailua, HI 96734-5839

February 17, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Karisse Sakahara.

I am a teacher at Kailua Elementary School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies. Additionally, these boxed curriculums are asking students to inhale an unreasonable amount of skills with very little time for mastery, let alone time for developmentally-appropriate practice in order to build confidence and a love of learning.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Karisse Sakahara
808-262-9181

Kendra Mizota
99689 Kahilina Place
Aiea, HI 96701-3538

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Kendra Mizota

I am a former teacher at Kauluwela Elementary School

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Kendra Mizota

Koalani Lagareta
3640 Alani Dr
Honolulu, HI 96822-1414

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Koalani Lagareta.

I am a teacher at Wai'alaie Public Charter School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Koalani Lagareta
8082557508

Krista Tatum
1060 Eha Street #105
Wailuku, HI 96793-2085

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Krista Tatum.

I am a teacher at Puu Kukui Elementary School.

Standardized tests have been super-sized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Krista Tatum
6084459433

Laura Warner
PO Box 927
Mt. View, HI 96771-0927

February 17, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Laura Warner. I am a teacher at Volcano School of Arts & Sciences.

I am submitting this document because education should not be driven by testing. I have motivated 3rd graders that love school through place-based teaching. Students learn in the community and are motivated, have a sense of place, and become stewards through helping their environment. Every common core standards can be met that has real meaning, however, getting students to regurgitate book testing and specific vocabulary; using one view point for all, and perform formatted questions does not build self-esteem, we should not set children up to fail because they might not understand the language of a test. Teachers cannot succeed in their profession if they are limited to teach "test success strategies" rather than education that builds interest, desire, meets the child at their needs. Education has always been left to communities, to meet student needs, not government driven. One test fits all, is about as appealing as buying a dress to meet clothing needs. Teachers can use testing as a tool to assess and support students, it should not drive teaching.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Laura Warner
808 937-4684

Laurel Clay
74-5602 Alapa St., PMB 507
Kailua Kona, HI 96740-3105

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Laurel Clay.

I am a teacher at Kealakehe Intermediate School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Laurel Clay
8089870573

Lianne Oshiro
410 South Hina Ave
Kahului, HI 96732-2717

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Lianne Oshiro.

I am a teacher at Kahului Elementary School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lianne Oshiro
264-2795

Lili Fujino
94-425 Papolohiwa Street
Mililani, HI 96789-2728

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Lili Fujino.

I am a 4th grade teacher (so I KNOW about testing) at Iliahi Elementary School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lili Fujino

Logan Okita
1914 10th Ave
Honolulu, HI 96816-2910

February 17, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Logan Okita.

I am a teacher at Nimitz Elementary School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities. Today we began a practice round of SBAC testing at my school. What did that mean for my first graders? Recess was delayed until 10:00 (we usually go out at 9:22) and we left to get ready for lunch at 10:40. Last year they could only go to the bathroom when escorted by an adult who came to pick up groups of students on a schedule.

Since it's practice they can go quietly in pairs. They might not be directly stressed by the pressures of testing, but they are impacted and hurt in the process.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Logan Okita, MEd NBCT
8083845595

Lori Tsukamoto
p.o. box 894333
Mililani, HI 96789-8323

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Lori Tsukamoto.

I am a teacher at Mililani High School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lori Tsukamoto

Lynette Low
3237 Hinano st.
Honolulu, HI 96815-4360

February 18, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Lynette Low. I am a teacher at Kaimuki High School

Classrooms are over 90 degrees in the beginning of the school year. The heat has cause my clothing to fade and perspiration has ruined most of my blouses. In addition, testing is non-stop.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lynette Low
808-733-4900

Lynn Otaguro
150 Halemaumau St.
Honolulu, HI 96821-2054

February 18, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Lynn Otaguro and I am a teacher at Lincoln Elementary.

I am writing in support of HB 1406 because I am concerned about the amount of time and resources being taken up by the high stakes testing of our children. An inordinate amount of time is being spent preparing for and practicing for tests like the SBAC. In addition, the tests themselves take much time to administer, stretching numerous hours over several days.

Because the tests are web-based, internet and technological resources have to be set aside in order to ensure that our students are able to take the tests. This means that those same resources are not available for instructional purposes by other classes or grade levels. In addition, because of the high stakes nature of the tests, DOE resources also are being spent on consultants and programs to help students and schools do better on these tests.

Sadly, however, as currently administered and utilized, the tests do little to help teachers with their instruction. At this point, the tests' main purpose seems to be ranking students and schools and evaluating teachers (and research shows that the tests are not even reliable measures for this). The tests do not provide timely feedback that would help teachers to better meet the needs of their students.

The current emphasis on standardized testing in public education is not serving our students. It has led to an undue emphasis on a narrow set of skills in limited areas of instruction. Resources that might otherwise be used to help our children grow in a more well-rounded way are being diverted to this narrow emphasis. While my school has chosen to keep art, music, and other things in its curriculum, the emphasis on testing and their high stakes consequences have led schools in other places to limit such offerings.

I wonder what kind of values we pass onto our children with such policies.

I wonder about the wisdom of pursuing high stakes testing in the face of their lack of benefit to our public schools. And for those who harp on the need to compete, I wonder how it helps our public school students to lose so much instructional time during which their private school counterparts can spend learning.

Therefore, I ask that you to please find a way to lessen the burden of testing on our students through HB1406. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lynn Otaguro
8082280684

Margaret Ohara
91-496 Maohaka Place
Ewa Beach, HI 96706-4531

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is

I am a teacher at Leilehua High School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Margaret Ohara

Maria Guardino
2916 Date St. 20C
Honolulu, HI 96816-1189

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Maria Guardino. I am a teacher at Kawananakoa Middle School.

As a teacher of English Language Learners (ELLs), I'm saddened that my students are required to take numerous Standardized tests that attempt to evaluate and compare them with their Native English speaking peers.

Beside the Common Core, ELLs must take the State ELL test, the WIDA. And if students are 4th or 8th graders, they take the Hawaii State Science test and often, the NAEP test as well. For many 8th graders, especially our English Language Learners, this adds up to numerous hours of lost valuable instructional time. The ELL test alone takes from 3 to 4 hours.

Typically, standardized tests are not taken in blocks of time, but disrupt bell schedules and planned curriculum.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for items such as computers, printers, and software which are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

Funding often seems like rain in the desert; it comes from above but rarely makes it to the ground (student). Funding needs to come down to the classroom for students to use daily (ie. computers, software) not in the form of a once a year test.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Maria E Guardino
8087345258

Marty Sunderland
PO Box 551741
Kapaau, HI 96755-1741

February 18, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Marty Sunderland

I am a teacher at Waimea Elementary School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities. Kindergarten students should not be taking twelve, yes twelve, standardized tests a year. This is testing for its own sake, not to assist with teaching.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Marty Sunderland
808-520-4834

Mary Miura-Aguinaldo
95-1137 Makaikai St. #63
Mililani, HI 96789-4397

February 18, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Mary Miura-Aguinaldo. I am a teacher at Mililani High School, and a parent of two elementary school aged children enrolled in public school.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities. I've seen countless students frustrated and stressed out over tests that are used in such a pervasive manner that it affects their physical health. I've counseled my own child and seen the impact these tests have on families and the change its brought about to the curriculum. These changes are harming our kids: test prep programs that require children to sit for HOURS to complete mandated online modules- our youngest students are subjected to this madness too. My younger child has gone from loving school to hating it because he spends most of his day seated with a computer program that spits robotic monotone lessons that are so boring and beneath his ability he sits and presses random keys till the prescribed time is up.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Mary Miura-Aguinaldo

Michael Kline
P.O. Box 1201
Kilauea, HI 96754-1201

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

I am a teacher at Kilauea Elementary School and a National Board Certified teacher. In preparation for the Smarter Balanced Assessment, we are being forced to give the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment. Both of these tests will take precious time away from teaching our students. The SBAC is enough, but now we are being forced to give the Interim too. In addition, we have been strongly encouraged to prepare our kindergarten to 2nd graders for these tests. This does not make sense!

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Michael Kline
808-651-9992

Nicole Amby
94-979 Kauolu Pl. K712
Waipahu, HI 96797-6399

February 17, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Nicole Amby.

I am a teacher at Waikele Elementary.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Nicole Amby

HB1406

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for EDN on Feb 18, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Robin Miller | Individual | Support | No |

Comments: I am a teacher writing in support of HB1406. Due to over testing, I have lost over 30 curriculum hours in January alone. Each month, my students are assessed multiple times, and I struggle to balance teaching vs. testing. At fourth grade, I not only need to consider SBAC language arts and math, but the HSA science as well. As a result, other important curriculum is pushed aside. PE, social studies, health and arts take a back seat in favor of tested subjects. I have seen huge amounts of our school monies go to outside providers for additional testing. I believe there needs to be a reasonable balance between using testing to inform teaching and to establish growth. Please restore rational use of assessment to our classrooms, and allow students the time they need to become well rounded citizens.

Romeo Eleno
PO Box 630266
Lanai City, HI 96763-0266

February 17, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Romeo Eleno

I am a teacher at Lanai High & Elementary School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Let the teachers test students in a conducive way to learning to optimize education.

Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

To support the success of all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Romeo Eleno
8082232482

Sharon Browne
98-1230 Moanalua Rd.
Aiea, HI 96701-4412

February 17, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Sharon Browne.

I am a teacher at Alvah Scott Elementary School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies. The amount of money spent cumulatively on testing our students is staggering!

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Sharon Browne
483-7224

HB1406

Submitted on: 2/17/2015

Testimony for EDN on Feb 18, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Stephenie Blakemore | Individual | Comments Only | No |

Comments: I do not think the state legislature needs to mandate what is clearly best practice in using assessments to help our keiki learn well. There is too much testing, and those tests do little to tell us what students know, but rather what they don't know. Many of these tests cannot begin to even tell us what our students can do because they fail to assess in ways that differentiate in the manner we teach so that our students can learn, and indeed they learn well. As teachers know our students learn in all kinds of different ways, through their strengths, the standardized tests do not even begin to provide that kind of information that would effectively drive instruction, and real learning. We need to get test makers and legislators out of our classrooms. Let us teach.

Teresa Rosario
1418 Kilohi Pl
Wailuku, HI 96793-9330

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is

I am a teacher at

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Teresa Rosario
8082761472

Terry Low
4762 Hauaala Rd.
Kapaa, HI 96746-1813

February 17, 2015

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Terry Low

I am a teacher at Kauai High School

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, Please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Terry Low
808 822-3790

Travis Armstrong
1705 9th Ave A
Honolulu, HI 96816-2892

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Travis Armstrong

I am a teacher at Highlands Intermediate School

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Travis Armstrong
8087819672

Florence Togioka
po Box 652
Waimea, HI 96796-0652

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Florence Togioka

I am a teacher at Waimea Canyon Middle School

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Florence Togioka
8084314310

Lawrence Denis
PO Box 385847
Waikoloa, HI 96738-0847

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Lawrence Denis.

I am a teacher at Waikoloa School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Denis

Rebecca Pickett
PO Box 506
Kilauea, HI 96754-0506

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Rebecca W Pickett

I am a teacher at Kapa'a High School

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Rebecca W Pickett
8086350268

Jill Yamasawa
1120 Kakala St 501
Kapolei, HI 96707-2074

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Jill Yamasawa

I am a teacher at Kapolei Middle School

Standardized tests have been over emphasized in public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jill Yamasawa

Robynne Klein
45-211 Mahinui Pl.
Kaneohe, HI 96744-1720

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Robynne Klein.

I am a teacher at Kalani High School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

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In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Robynne Klein
8083410621

Elizabeth Peel
1400 Pensacola St. #601
Honolulu, HI 96822-3812

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Elizabeth Peel.

I am the librarian at Central Middle School.

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an teaching to the test in order to increase achievement.

As resources have become scarce for school libraries, technology centers, the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies. These tests mostly serve to line the pockets of those invested in these companies, not our students.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Peel
412-496-8232

LATE



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/18/2015
Time: 02:00 PM
Location: 309
Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 1406 RELATING TO STANDARDIZED TESTING.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the BOE to administer standardized tests early in the school year in order to use the tests to inform instruction in the school year in which the test is administered. Establishes conditions for standardized testing. Requires periodic audits of standardized testing protocols and reports to the legislature and the governor.

Department's Position:

This testimony provides comments from the Department of Education on H.B. 1406 on Standardized Testing.

The Department endeavors to balance compliance of federal and state laws regarding standardizing testing with administration of an assessment portfolio that provides quality information on student learning to support improvements at the classroom, school, complex area, and state levels. To that end, the Department recently launched an internal review process of the statewide assessment portfolio with the explicit goals of streamlining the required assessments. This audit process includes input from complex area superintendents and principals on the guiding principles for statewide assessment use and feedback on specific assessments.

The Department is encouraged with the support in H.B. 1406 for work that already occurs. Examples include ensuring:

- Assessment results are returned in an appropriate and timely manner.
- Assessments are aligned, appropriate, authentic, and developed with teacher input. For example, the Department worked with teachers from across the state to develop the actual test items for the Smarter Balanced Assessment and to set the achievement level descriptors.
- All appropriate stakeholders have access to relevant data to inform teaching and learning.
- Assessments have appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities and English

language learners.

However, the Department is concerned that several sections of H.B. 1406 are outdated and could put the State out of compliance with federal law. The Department is also concerned with potential burden that portions of the bill would place on schools, complex areas, and the state office.

- **Section 302A-C(3): the board shall ensure that test assessment literacy is incorporated into each teacher preparation program.** The Department is concerned that this proposed language would make the board responsible for the activities in teacher preparation programs. The Hawaii State Board of Education does not have the statutory authority to require changes or content inclusions in the curricula of teacher preparation programs.

- **Section 302A-D(5): adequate amounts of funds be made available for supplemental educational services under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).** The Department is concerned that this requirement would place the state out of compliance with U.S. Department of Education approved waiver to ESEA. The U.S. Department of Education approved the Department's waiver application in 2013. The application included a waiver to reallocate supplemental educational services funds to support struggling schools' improvement efforts.

- **Section 302A-E: parental appeals.** The assessments currently required statewide – Smarter Balanced (SBA), Hawaii State Assessment (HSA), and the ACT – do not lend themselves to a parental appeals process for several reasons. First, the SBA and HSA are summative assessments designed to inform the status of student learning across a school and the state. They do not have high stakes for individual students, which would make a parental appeals process moot. There is an appeals process in place for schools.

Second, the ACT is administered nationwide with standard administration protocols from state to state. Therefore, the state cannot add a Hawaii-specific appeals window for parents.

- **Section 302A-H: waivers for extenuating circumstances.** The Department is unclear which entity the waivers are intended for – students or schools. If the waivers were intended for schools, this would put the state out of compliance with federal assessment requirements in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. If for students, then this section is redundant to section 302A-K.

- **Section 302A-J: statewide survey.** The Department is concerned that this activity will place significant burden on schools and the state office while also providing results that may not be actionable or valid. When assessments are aligned to academic standards, nearly all classroom activities help prepare students for assessments to some degree.

In addition, the Department has made a significant effort to reduce the survey burden on schools. The addition of this year long survey places greater administrative burden and takes time away from the operations of the school.

Finally, some of the proposed survey components vary year to year. For example, teachers will spend varying amounts of time aligning curricular materials depending on how new the materials are. Similarly, teachers may have different definitions for test preparation.

- **Section 302A-K: right to opt out.** ESEA does not currently contain language to expressly permit a “right to opt out” of the required statewide assessments. This could potentially put the Department at odds with the US Department of Education. In addition, the Department is concerned that this could undermine the school accountability system by skewing the results of schools’. ESEA currently requires 95 percent participation on the assessments for each school. Significant numbers of non-takers would result in an incomplete picture of school performance, resulting in an inability to target resources and supports appropriately.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill. We are happy to answer any questions.

Ben Blakemore
PO Box 181
Volcano, HI 96785-0181

LATE

LATE

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Education
HI

Dear House Committee on Education:

Aloha,

My name is Ben Blakemore. I am an educator at Keaau Middle School

In addition to the statement below I sincerely believe our students are feeling burned out on testing and it takes away from their learning opportunities.

Recently, teachers were told that our students could not participate in educational activities and excursions out of school, during the entire month of May, due to the "sacred" testing schedule. Additionally, highly trained staff members of schools (in particular counselors) are pulled away from giving counseling services to students to do the coordination of multiple tests throughout the school year (Now almost a full time job). That means, in effect, that students are being shorted on counseling services, especially when the DOE and State does not fund testing coordinators for schools. THIS INSANITY MUST STOP!

Standardized tests have been supersized into public education to a point where it is no longer diagnostic in nature, but has instead become a malignant growth that is in fact doing harm to students, schools and ultimately our communities.

What once was a fairly straightforward process that may have taken a day or two to complete, has now become an extravaganza that requires staffing positions dedicated to the administration of the tests, weeks of loss learning time, and an increasingly rigid adherence to a curriculum that has become, itself, standardized.

As resources have become scarce for the arts, physical education and other student learning opportunities that are 21st Century staples, more money is being directed to external providers, textbook firms and testing companies. In many cases, these three entities are either connected to or parts of one another and/or larger for-profit companies.

HB1406 lays out, in very meticulous order, the way standardized tests should be administered. From the process, to the purpose, it will be clear, should this legislation become law, that testing should be returned to its rightful place in our school system. Our standardized tests could once again be used to inform our curriculum, not drive it. Our standardized tests could, once again, help us identify the best way to help our students succeed as the individuals they are rather than force them to become part of a standardized mass.

In support of success for all Hawaii's children, please SUPPORT HB1406. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Ben Blakemore



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Twenty-Eighth Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Committee on Education

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
February 18, 2015

LATE

LATE

H.B. 1406 – RELATING TO STANDARDIZED
TESTING

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO opposes H.B. 1406 which amends Section 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, by adding a new subpart to part II regarding the administration of standardized testing.

While this measure makes important observations about standardized testing, Section 302A in its current form now provides the Board of Education (BOE) with direction and authority regarding the implementation of statewide performance standards.

This measure also provides for a one-year statewide survey of school administrators and teachers regarding standardized testing including a report of the results of the survey to the governor and legislature. Although we oppose this measure, this type of data is also important as the BOE and the department of education moves forward in its efforts to provide our youth with the best education possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding H.B. 1406.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

LATE

LATE

HB1406

Submitted on: 2/18/2015

Testimony for EDN on Feb 18, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 309

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Karen Wallis | Individual | Support | No |

Comments: I teach Special Education on the Big Island. I support testing at the beginning of the school year so we can spend the school year teaching the students the skills they need instead of teaching to the test. Our students are currently tested too much. We have weekly tests, monthly benchmark tests, practice SBAC, and the yearly SBAC. Test anxiety has caused our students undue stress, I personally had a student attempt to leave school because he did not want to take the practice SBAC, others were "sick" and a few cried. Testing should not be a traumatic experience for our children. I think our students would be better served if we tested early in the year and used that information to inform instruction for the rest of the school year.