

SCR155 / SR117

Measure Title: REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ABOLISH HIGH-STAKES TEACHER EVALUATIONS.

Report Title: Department of Education; Board of Education; High Stakes Teacher Evaluations

Description:

Companion:

Package: None

Current Referral: EDU, WAM/JDL

Introducer(s): KIDANI, BAKER, CHUN OAKLAND, Shimabukuro



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

Date: 03/28/2016
Time: 01:20 PM
Location: 229
Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Resolution: SCR 155 REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ABOLISH HIGH-STAKES TEACHER EVALUATIONS.

Purpose of Resolution:

Department's Position:

The Department respectfully submits the following comments with respect to SCR 155.

The proposed resolution would request that the Board of Education ("Board") and the Department of Education ("Department") take certain actions with respect to the current teacher evaluation system. Among those requests are for the Department to continue in effect the teacher evaluation ratings from school year 2015-2016 to school year 2016-2017, discontinue the use of standardized tests as a component in any evaluation system and "collaborate with the Hawaii State Teachers Association ("HSTA") on a new evaluation system that satisfies the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act."

The current evaluation system for teachers is the product of collaboration with the HSTA and other stakeholders. The primary components, structure and impact of the evaluation system, including its relationship to teacher compensation, were negotiated with the HSTA and memorialized in a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU"). Changes to the MOU will presumably be the subject of the parties' negotiations for the next collective bargaining agreement, whose effective date is July 1, 2017.

The Department also notes the HSTA MOU provides for a Joint Committee, with membership from HSTA and the Department, to review the teacher evaluation system and make recommendations to the Superintendent and the Board to improve its design and implementation. Over the past three years, modifications to the system have been implemented by the Department based on input from the Joint Committee and other stakeholder groups, including teachers, administrators, and national experts.

The parties will necessarily analyze and appropriately take into account the impact of the

recently enacted Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA") as they collaborate on future modifications to the teacher evaluation system, whether in negotiations or otherwise. ESSA provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to revisit the direction and details of the current evaluation system to ensure it is aligned with the best interests of the State's public school students.

Finally, the Department notes a number of factual inaccuracies in the proposed resolution. These include the following corrections: (1) the State was awarded \$75 million from the federal Race to the Top grant in 2010; (2) Board Policy 2055 has been replaced by policies 202.4 Principal Performance Evaluation and 203.4 Teacher Performance Evaluation; and (3) the current evaluation system does not rely on "value-added measures," as referenced in the Resolution, as a measure of teacher effectiveness.

For the reasons summarized above, the Department respectfully submits that the proposed resolution is not required and requests that the Legislature instead defer to the existing collaborative and collective bargaining processes to determine the future of the teacher evaluation system.



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION

RE: SCR 155/SR 117 - REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO
ABOLISH HIGH-STAKES TEACHER EVALUATIONS.

MONDAY, MARCH 28, 2016

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

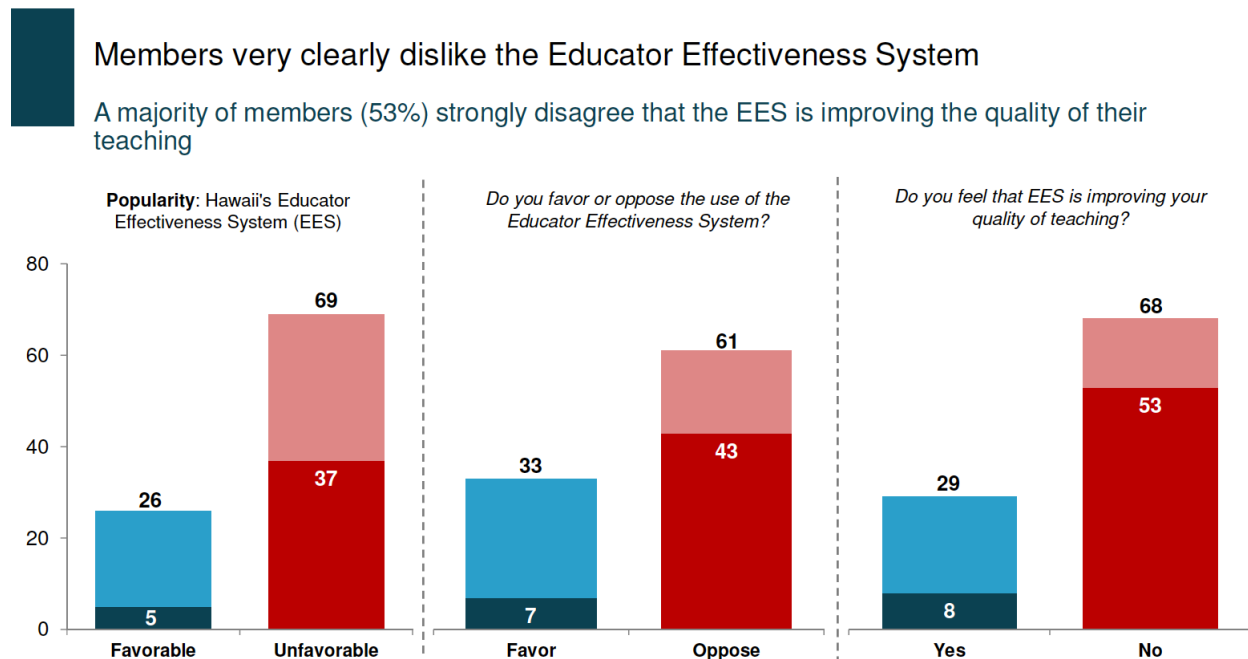
The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SCR 155/SR 117**, requesting the Board of Education to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations.

In 2012, Hawai'i received \$75 million in federal dollars from the Race to the Top (RTTT) program. As part of the grant application process, states had to agree to implement high-stakes teacher evaluations and performance pay. The Hawaii State Department of Education and Board of Education, cajoled by former Gov. Neil Abercrombie, thus birthed the Educator Effectiveness System, in which teacher ratings would theoretically reflect student achievement—especially standardized test scores—and determine pay raises and reemployment rights.

Yet, recent research has criticized the “value-added method” used to calculate local teachers’ effectiveness, with some detractors saying that the “tests used for calculating VAM are not particularly able to detect differences in the content or quality of classroom instruction.” The American Statistical Association, for its part, has said that VAM formulas fail to determine effectiveness “with sufficient reliability and validity,” noting that teachers can receive wildly fluctuating results from year to year. In Hawai'i, VAM scores are even used to evaluate teachers who have never taught the students for which they are assessed. In fact, although our state’s ESS is predicated on the VAM model, it is actually worse than similar models employed nationwide. VAM typically accounts for varying student demographics—for example English language learners, special education, and low

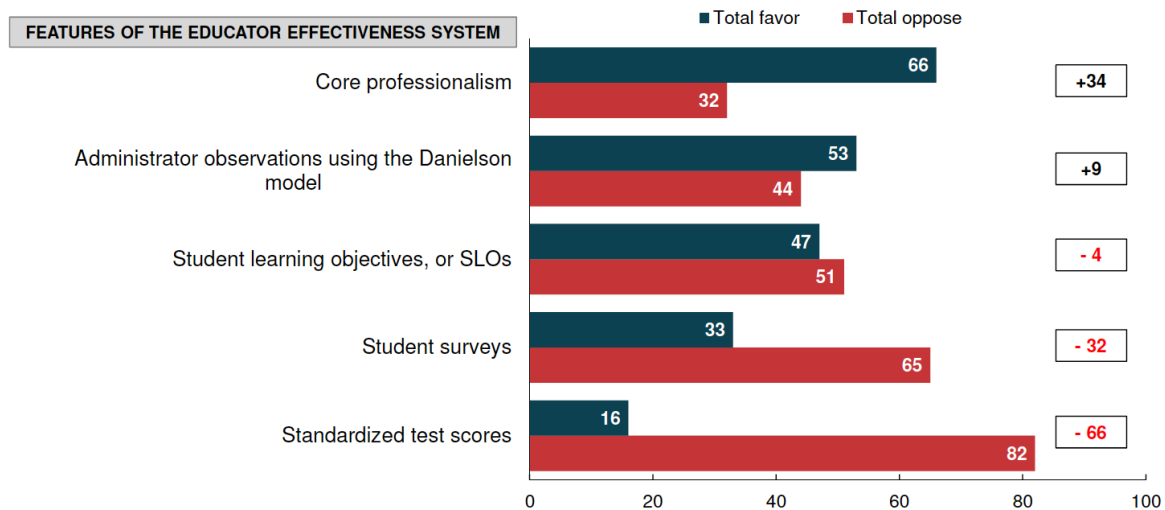
socioeconomic status—in comparing student growth scores. EES, in contrast, takes none of these factors into account.

The impact of the EES on teacher morale has been stark. In HSTA polling, a majority of teachers report feeling burdened by the evaluation system, receiving insufficient departmental and administrative support to handle EES tasks, and questioning the overall fairness of the evaluation process. A total of 68 percent of poll respondents answered “no” when asked if EES leads to teaching improvements. Additionally, 61 percent of teachers oppose use of EES, while 69 percent overall had an unfavorable view of the evaluation system (see chart below).



Moreover, the EES relies heavily on standardized test scores, further tying curricula to toxic levels of testing that erode creative thinking and have no adverse consequences for students. In effect, the department’s evaluation system is paradoxically high-stakes for teachers, while relying on no-stakes student assessments. HSTA polling shows that 82 percent of teachers oppose the use of standardized test scores in the state’s teacher evaluation system, with the only positive marks coming for those aspects of evaluations that involve collaboration and individual professional development plans that involve reflection on professional practice (see chart on next page).

Specifically, the use of standardized test scores and student surveys in the EES is most loathed
On the other hand, members are in favor of the core professionalism and administrator observation elements



Evaluations have also been shown to be subjective and in some cases biased, as evidenced by the number of teachers filing successful appeals challenging their results. Appeals have also been filed on procedural grounds, as administrators frequently fail to complete components of evaluations or reschedule classroom observations on short notice. Numerous changes have been made to the EES since its implementation (for example, teachers receiving “effective” evaluations are now held harmless the following year), but the cumbersome and clunky nature of the evaluation protocol remains, suborning teacher autonomy to standardized tests, test-driven curricula, and for-profit education consultants.

Under the recently passed Every Student Succeeds Act, however, Hawai'i can end high-stakes evaluations. ESSA gives states the flexibility to repeal and replace high-stakes evaluation protocols. Specifically, ESSA eliminates the definition of a "highly qualified" teacher and provides states the opportunity to redefine what this, or a similar designation, entails; ends federal mandates on teacher evaluations and allows states to develop and implement their own systems; permits states to determine how and to what extent test scores may factor into evaluations; establishes a Teacher and School Leader Innovation Program to provide grants for districts to innovate teacher-quality improvement measures; and emphasizes the need for ongoing professional development. In short, we have an opportunity, now, to create a wholly new system for assessing educator performance. Since Elementary and Secondary Education Act waivers (which required high-stakes teacher evaluations) will be null and void on August 1, 2016, the DOE can and should carryover their evaluation ratings for the 2016-2017 school year and use this time to partner with HSTA on a new protocol.

Hawai'i's current teacher evaluation system deprofessionalizes classroom instruction. Because teachers deserve professional respect, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this resolution.



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

**TESTIMONY FOR SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 155/SENATE
RESOLUTION 117, REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO
ABOLISH HIGH-STAKES TEACHER EVALUATIONS**

**Senate Committee on Education
Hon. Michelle N. Kidani, Chair
Hon. Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair**

**Monday, March 26, 2016, 1:20 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

Honorable Chair Kidani and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 350 members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in strong support of SCR 155/SR 117, requesting the Board of Education to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations.

As a condition of receiving Race to the Top grant funds, in 2012, Hawai'i agreed to implement high-stakes teacher evaluations, in which teachers' "effectiveness" would be tied to student learning growth and, in turn, used to determine pay raises and reemployment rights. In practice, however, the DOE's "educator effectiveness system" has been devastating. Year after year, HSTA polling shows that a large majority of teachers feel that their work time is besieged by the evaluation system, which they find inadequately explained, lacking administrative support, and unfair. Moreover, 50 percent of the "student growth percentile" score used in EES ratings is based on standardized test scores, marrying instruction to toxic levels of standardized that undermine critical thinking and are academically inconsequential for students.

Evaluations are also subjective and overburdening for school administrators, as demonstrated by the number of teachers appealing their results. Appeals are most commonly made on procedural grounds, as administrators frequently fail to perform evaluation component or, in some, complete the evaluations at all (notably, some administrators have attempted to withhold pay increases for teachers whose

evaluations they failed to complete, in violation of state law and the HSTA-BOE Master Agreement). While the evaluation system has been “improved” through annual discussions among stakeholders—for instance, by eliminating student survey data as a high-stakes evaluation component and allowing “effective” teachers to skip some components during the following school year—the classroom climate produced by test-driven evaluations continues to erode teacher morale and academic freedom, replacing educator flexibility with profitmaking education consulting “expertise.”

Leading education researchers have criticized the “value-added” evaluation model used to craft the state’s EES. The American Statistical Association has said that VAM formulas, on which EES is based, fail to determine teaching effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity even when they account for impacting student factors, like English language proficiency and socioeconomic status. EES fails to consider differing student characteristics, comparing students to their peers as if they were a homogenous population. A 2010 report published by the Economic Policy Institute and authored by leading education professionals—including Diane Ravitch and Linda Darling-Hammond—stated:

For a variety of reasons, analyses of VAM results have led researchers to doubt whether the methodology can accurately identify more and less effective teachers. VAM estimates have proven to be unstable across statistical models, years, and classes that teachers teach. One study found that across five large urban districts, among teachers who were ranked in the top 20 percent of effectiveness in the first year, fewer than a third were in that top group the next year, and another third moved all the way down to the bottom 40 percent. Another found that teachers’ effectiveness ratings in one year could only predict from 4 percent to 16 percent of the variation in such ratings in the following year. Thus, a teacher who appears to be very ineffective in one year might have a dramatically different result the following year. The same dramatic fluctuations were found for teachers ranked at the bottom in the first year of analysis. This runs counter to most people’s notions that the true quality of a teacher is likely to change very little over time and raises questions about whether what is measured is largely a “teacher effect” or the effect of a wide variety of other factors.

A study designed to test this question used VAM methods to assign effects to teachers after controlling for other factors, but applied the model backwards to see if credible results were obtained. Surprisingly, it found that students’ fifth grade teachers were good predictors of their *fourth* grade test scores. Inasmuch as a student’s later fifth grade teacher cannot possibly have influenced that student’s fourth grade performance, this curious result can

only mean that VAM results are based on factors other than teachers' actual effectiveness.

VAM's instability can result from differences in the characteristics of students assigned to particular teachers in a particular year, from small samples of students (made even less representative in schools serving disadvantaged students by high rates of student mobility), from other influences on student learning both inside and outside school, and from tests that are poorly lined up with the curriculum teachers are expected to cover, or that do not measure the full range of achievement of students in the class.

For these and other reasons, the research community has cautioned against the heavy reliance on test scores, even when sophisticated VAM methods are used, for high stakes decisions such as pay, evaluation, or tenure.

Accordingly, the Board on Testing and Assessment of the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences has said, "VAM estimates of teacher effectiveness should not be used to make operational decisions because such estimates are far too unstable to be considered fair or reliable." A review of VAM research from the Educational Testing Service's Policy Information Center concluded, "VAM results should not serve as the sole or principal basis for making consequential decisions about teachers. There are many pitfalls to making causal attributions of teacher effectiveness on the basis of the kinds of data available from typical school districts. We still lack sufficient understanding of how seriously the different technical problems threaten the validity of such interpretations." Finally, RAND Corporation researchers reported that, "The estimates from VAM modeling of achievement will often be too imprecise to support some of the desired inferences...The research base is currently insufficient to support the use of VAM for high-stakes decisions about individual teachers or schools."

In December of 2015, Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds Act, which explicitly ends the federal mandate on teacher evaluations. Put simply, it's time to try something collaborative. Something that supports teachers and students. Something localized. Something new. This proposal advances respect for teachers, who provide the sign and signal of our society's audacious future. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this resolution.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Executive Director
IMUAlliance

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: writenow808@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR155 on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM
Date: Saturday, March 26, 2016 5:37:12 PM

SCR155

Submitted on: 3/26/2016

Testimony for EDU on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Isbell	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: When the first appointed board of education was seated in 2011 after passage of the ballot amendment abolishing elected boards, it was announced that the public school system would be ran under a business model. To do so would suggest that as with most business, success would equate with economic viability. Just prior in 2010 came Race to the Top, a four-year grant for \$75 million in federal dollars as long as districts that accepted the money agreed to the conditions of the failed policies of then-Sec. of Education Arne Duncan. Among those conditions were tying school and teacher evaluations to standardized test scores, a concept that since has been roundly and variously deemed unreliable. What a deal! Infusion of millions in federal aid into the new business model! With this "New Beginning," the state of Hawaii could dramatically increase the number of college-ready high school graduate products, while at the same time ridding itself of underachieving employees. Now, that's a business model! But has it really worked? If one overlooks the dubious notion that public school students can be viewed as "products," has the rate of college-ready high school seniors really risen significantly? The graduation rate actually dropped last year. Has the number of bad teachers identified really warranted the expense in developing and administering the Educator Effectiveness System? Education Week reported "just 2.1 percent needed improvement and only 0.2 percent were ineffective." Meanwhile, the \$75 million received from the federal government for Race to the Top paled in comparison the costs associated with compliance with the requirements of the program. If the DOE is to be truly transparent, an accounting of the total spent to comply with this program is warranted to be able to objectively determine whether EES and its ancillary components are indeed cost-effective. It is foolhardy to continue with business as usual, because the DOE simply cannot be operated under a business model. The result has been the expense of untold millions on what can be qualified as political- and bureaucratic motivated programs. Think of what could have been done with those funds if truly directed to school-level improvements. With the exit of Duncan, and introduction of the newly revised Elementary and Secondary Education Act, teacher and school evaluations need not be tied to standardized testing, although under ESEA, the testing itself is to continue in some form. Hawaii public schools would be well-served to immediately disconnect school and teacher evaluations from standardized testing, and to minimize the testing, the scores of which have been targeted as unreliable,

and biased developmentally, geographically, culturally, and racially. Who in education would argue that predominantly, test scores favor students from the best socio-economic circumstances? Yet we are to deliver a quality public education to every child. Business as usual in this case is clearly not good business. It does not compute. Reprioritize the DOE, and cease trying to push a square block through a round hole.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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March 27, 2016

SCR 155/ SCR117: REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ABOLISH HIGH-STAKES TEACHER EVALUATIONS

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Amy Perruso and I am a social studies teacher at Mililani High School. I am writing in support of the elimination of high stakes teacher evaluations, based on their effect on the entire system of public education in Hawaii. Under the new Hawai'i Educator Effectiveness System (EES), teacher ratings based in part on student standardized test scores (shown to be an inaccurate and misleading indicator of teacher effectiveness) have demoralized teachers and undermined schools as sites of collaborative learning and teaching.

Teachers have been watching with a great deal of distress and frustration as the sort of engaging and relevant learning that attracted them to the profession is increasingly eliminated from the public school experience. Teacher job satisfaction in Hawai'i, as across the country, has continued to drop precipitously over the course of the 21st century. This dissatisfaction has emerged in large part from the deprofessionalization of teaching in public schools.

The construction of teacher identity, how teachers understand themselves, is dependent upon their power and agency over their working conditions and their capacity, within positive learning environments, to contribute to student learning and engagement. After the passage of No Child Left Behind, key popular educational 'reform' policies in Hawai'i and across the country moved teaching away from professionalism. These reforms included policies that evaluated teachers based on students' annual standardized test score gains (using the highly questionable 'value-added method'), found by scholars to lower the professional status of teaching. Value-added policies are 'de-professionalizing' in that they pressure teachers to mechanically teach to tests while systematically devaluing the broader yet essential elements of teaching. Scripted and narrowed curriculum focused on test preparation that undergirds the teacher evaluation system moves teaching away from professionalization. It prevents teachers from using their professional judgment to make curricula decisions for student learning, thereby sacrificing higher-level learning, creativity, flexibility, and breadth of learning.

In studies that explored teacher identity and agency, teacher agency has almost disappeared in the new reform context, as teachers struggle to create trusting learning environments in while their work is increasingly made more managerial with increased accountability pressures. Additional studies examined the relationship between teacher autonomy and on-the-job stress, work satisfaction, empowerment, and professionalism, and found that as testing pressures and curriculum autonomy decreased, on-the-job stress increased, and that as general teacher autonomy increased so did empowerment and professionalism. Also, as job satisfaction, perceived empowerment, and professionalism increased, on-the-job stress decreased, and greater job satisfaction was associated with a high degree of professionalism and empowerment. These effects of professional autonomy did not differ across teaching level (elementary, middle, high school).*

In order for public schools to become spaces of authentic and empowering learning, students must not only experience democratic practices, but also feel that they have ownership in the educational process and the power to effect change. Teachers play a critical role in building student confidence and creating an environment in which students can begin to exercise democratic principles and empowerment. Teachers with a strong sense of professional and personal agency are in the best position to empower students because they can model ways in which positive change can be effected not only in their classrooms, but in the school and in their communities. This process needs to begin with taking the opportunities made possible by ESSA, and eliminating high-stakes teacher evaluations for public school teachers in Hawaii.

Thank you,

Amy Perruso

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Andy Jones, and I'm a Language Arts teacher at Radford High School. I've been at Radford 2007; previously I taught in Taiwan 1994-2006.

I'm writing to encourage you to support the resolution that has just been introduced to place the Educator Effectiveness System (or EES) in abeyance.

I think we need to ask ourselves two questions: First, is a teacher evaluation mechanism really necessary to effective teaching and effective school systems as it ostensibly is in other areas of human and professional endeavor? Second, does the system currently in place in Hawaii provide accurate information on teacher performance?

The first question I'm really not sure about. In the world's top-performing school system, namely Finland, there are no teacher evaluations. Rather, teachers are selected from the academic top as opposed to the academic middle here in the U.S. Teacher training and induction is highly rigorous, and no teacher enters a classroom prior to at least six years of university education, including a Masters degree. From thereon teachers are trusted. This of course all hangs together with the question of teacher Recruitment and Retention. The mere fact of a formalized teacher evaluation system suggests that we do not need to recruit the brightest and most promising teacher candidates, as they do in most Asian and European countries, and that instead we can recruit whomever, shuffle them through a minimal and perfunctory certification program, and micromanage their teacher activities ad infinitum thereafter.

I'm not suggesting that teacher evaluation systems are out of the question in our current educational climate. But the example of Finland and I'm sure other high-performing countries should at least lead us to reconsider the value and worth of this particular approach to encouraging and developing teacher quality.

The second question, in contrast to the first, leaves me with no doubts. This year – a year in which, like the majority of Hawaii teachers, I am temporarily off the hook from the EES drudgery - I am having the best and most effective school-year I've had in quite some time; indeed, my administrators have acknowledged my hard work in the classroom by bestowing on me the Radford OC16 Outstanding Educator award for this school year. I am far more effective this year than I was in the previous two school years, during which I was forced essentially to suspend my earnest transition from 20th-century to 21st-century Language Arts practice and methodology so as to deal with the mountain of paperwork associated with EES. During the 2014-15 school year I received a Highly Effective rating. To be honest, however, looking back on it, it is hard to see how the system demonstrated that I was highly effective at anything besides dutifully complying with bureaucratic mandates that were incredibly time-consuming and simply got in the way of my progress as a classroom teacher, not to mention causing me to

use up nearly all of my 18 personal and sick days in order to complete all of the work, as well as more holidays, Saturdays and Sundays than I would care to count.

The OECD reports tell us that American teachers were among the most overworked teachers in the world even prior to the new generation of misguided and demoralizing teacher evaluation systems. There is simply not enough time in the day to adequately complete our basic professional duties associated with classroom teaching AND the various components of EES, regardless of their relative worth and merit. I would strongly urge legislators that would support the resolution to take EES off of our plates until a reasonable and worthwhile evaluation system has been developed.

Sincerely,
Andy Jones

From: [SH 77](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Saturday, March 26, 2016 7:28:32 PM

Aloha to Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Anjanette Naganuma and I am an ELA teacher at Lahainaluna High School. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, effective evaluations provide information pertinent to professional improvement in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose is not served by high stakes teacher evaluation models, such as EES.

There are many student-centered reasons to oppose the use of high-stakes teacher evaluations. The use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher ratings fail to determine effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Moreover, the current legally unnecessary linkage between student scores and standardized tests, codified in BOE Policy 2055, overemphasizes standardized tests and erodes actual teaching and learning time.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the EES. Instead, we need an evaluation system that provide supports teachers and students by replacing fear with faith in the professionals tasked with crafting our children's future.

Sincerely,

Anjanette Naganuma

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: dercoff@aol.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SCR155 on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM*
Date: Sunday, March 27, 2016 9:44:48 PM

SCR155

Submitted on: 3/27/2016

Testimony for EDU on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Beatrice DeRego	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: lncalina@juno.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SR117 on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2016 7:47:27 AM

SR117

Submitted on: 3/24/2016

Testimony for EDU on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brandie Calina	Individual	Support	No

Comments: As a concerned parent, I support abolishing high stakes testing & evaluations. My elementary son is just as frustrated with the system as we are.

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From: [Caryn Fukuda](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Friday, March 25, 2016 10:02:16 PM

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Caryn Y. Umetsu and I am a teacher at Mililani High School. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, effective evaluations provide information pertinent to professional improvement in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose is not served by high stakes teacher evaluation models, such as EES.

There are many student-centered reasons to oppose the use of high-stakes teacher evaluations. The use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher ratings fail to determine effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Moreover, the current legally unnecessary linkage between student scores and standardized tests, codified in BOE Policy 2055, overemphasizes standardized tests and erodes actual teaching and learning time.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the EES. Instead, we need an evaluation system that provide supports teachers and students by replacing fear with faith in the professionals tasked with crafting our children's future.

Sincerely,

Caryn Y. Umetsu

94-430 Kiilani St

Mililani, HI 96789

From: [Cherie](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony on SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Friday, March 25, 2016 10:55:40 PM

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Cherie Okada-Carlson and I am a teacher at Konawaena Middle School. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, effective evaluations provide information pertinent to professional improvement in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose is not served by high stakes teacher evaluation models, such as EES.

There are many student-centered reasons to oppose the use of high-stakes teacher evaluations. The use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher ratings fail to determine effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Moreover, the current legally unnecessary linkage between student scores and standardized tests, codified in BOE Policy 2055, overemphasizes standardized tests and erodes actual teaching and learning time.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the EES. Instead, we need an evaluation system that provide supports teachers and students by replacing fear with faith in the professionals tasked with crafting our children's future.

Sincerely,

Cherie Okada-Carlson

Captain Cook, Hawaii

808.936.0449

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“We did not change as we grew older; we just became more clearly ourselves.” — Lynn Hall

From: [C Dewhirst](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Wednesday, March 23, 2016 10:58:50 PM

As a teacher it is insulting when I am observed and given feedback from checklists while being measured by test scores of students who may or may not have a dinner at home.

From: [Claire Gearen](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: testimony in support of SCR 155/SR117
Date: Sunday, March 27, 2016 11:29:44 AM

Dear Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Claire Gearen, and I am a teacher at Mililani High. I am a career public school teacher and have taught both in Washington state and my home state of Hawai'i for a total of sixteen years. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations (SCR 155/SR117).

We know that there are serious questions about both reliability and validity not only in value-added models that rate teachers based on students test scores, but also in student test scores themselves. Les Perelman has demonstrated the inadequacy of Automated Essay Scoring (AES), yet while the Educational Testing Service has dropped the essay-writing portion of the SAT, AES continues to be used by testing companies. Furthermore, when humans are involved in scoring, workers without teaching credentials are being hired on a contingent basis at only \$12 to \$14 an hour. (See this article in the *New York Times* by Motoko Rich <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/23/us/grading-the-common-core-no-teaching-experience-required.html>.) While these workers may hold college degrees, they are not educated in the content area. It is one thing to allow administrators without knowledge in the teacher's content area to evaluate teachers under their supervision, it is quite another to have contingent, non-specialist labor influence the evaluations of teachers. Why require teachers to have proper credentials if those evaluating teacher outcomes are not qualified?

I am especially concerned about the negative impact of our current reliance on high stakes testing in the elementary grades. I have heard about classrooms in which the only two computers are designated for testing only. I have heard about young children who don't want to go to school. I've heard about fourth graders who must write one essay a week only to have the essay graded by software. While there are teachers across our schools resisting the pressure to teach to the test, our current reliance on high stakes testing is diminishing the educational experience for a generation of students.

Thank you for your support of public education. Please pass this resolution pointing to a better future.

Sincerely,

Claire Gearen

Honolulu, HI 96826

From: [David Brown](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155/SR117
Date: Sunday, March 27, 2016 6:08:08 AM

Dear Committee,

I taught in California public schools for 30 years before moving to Hawaii to teach at a fantastic place - KAM III in Lahaina. The evaluation process here in Hawaii is ridiculous! Please vote to replace it with something reasonable. If you have any questions don't hesitate to call me at home. 808-344-1124

God Bless You,

David Brown

Sent from my iPhone

The committee(s) on EDU has scheduled a public hearing on 03-28-16 1:20PM in conference room 229.

Testimony in support of SCR 155 REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ABOLISH HIGH-STAKES TEACHER EVALUATIONS:

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

I'm Debbie Anderson, a 25 year teacher returned recently from sabbatical in Canada. We urge you to pass SCR 155 in support of research-based effective teacher evaluation for empowerment.

The purpose of education is to develop human resources to their fullest potential. Our education system is a public good, not for the purpose of private profit. The system's design should facilitate empowerment of all learners, including the most direct facilitators of learning, the teachers. We need to address the number one cause for public school teacher dissatisfaction in Hawaii, the draconian Educator Evaluation System (EES).

Background

Teachers voted down a pay raise in a contract offer in 2012 because they refused to be evaluated by a system which had not been developed fully. In an unprecedented move, the leadership of the teacher's union pressured a revote so teachers would have a "seat at the table" in "consulting" about the EES. What HSTA did in effect was add their needed signature to a \$75 million grant application for a waiver to federal law which had expired in 2007. At our 2016 Education Empowerment Conference, presenter Diane Ravitch said she was sorry for Hawaii winning this "Race To The Top." Thus a federal addition worth 8% of the Hawaii State DOE budget tyrannized the other 92%, removing the Professional Education Program for Teachers (PEP-T) and its *Duty 5* Conference encouraging Reflective Practice through Action Research.

Alternative

Only one State Legislature chose to protect its fair teacher evaluation from the unconstitutional federal pressure of \$40 million in funding from No Child Left Behind (NCLB). HSTA's equivalent WEA has shown the harm of linking student test scores to teacher evaluation and opposes strongly tying student test scores to teacher evaluation.

A groundswell of parent and community voices requested Congress to change law and policies, an OptOut Movement, Against Common Core, etc.

Opportunity

With the December 2015 re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education act, the prior stipulations are no longer justifiable. The State of Hawaii has a chance to undo the harm caused by the previous NCLB, and open a new chapter for Hawaii's public education system.

Teachers want to be more effective. We want to use formative tools which are fair, reliable and valid to inform our instructional practices for improving student growth. We need a system which will hold up to the Supreme Court's benchmark, the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing at teststandards.org. Help us redesign a better system. We are asking you as our Legislative representatives to lead our appointed Board of Education into a better future. Please support SCR 155! Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Debbie Anderson, M.Ed., M.L.I.S., NBCT

The committee(s) on EDU has scheduled a public hearing on 03-28-16 1:20PM in conference room 229.

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http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/04/24/washington-no-child-left-_n_5207245.html

From: [Dena Souza](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: "Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117"
Date: Saturday, March 26, 2016 8:49:27 AM

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is _____ and I am a teacher at _____. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, effective evaluations provide information pertinent to professional improvement in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose is not served by high stakes teacher evaluation models, such as EES.

There are many student-centered reasons to oppose the use of high-stakes teacher evaluations. The use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher ratings fail to determine effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Moreover, the current legally unnecessary linkage between student scores and standardized tests, codified in BOE Policy 2055, overemphasizes standardized tests and erodes actual teaching and learning time.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the EES. Instead, we need an evaluation system that provide supports teachers and students by replacing fear with faith in the professionals tasked with crafting our children's future.

Sincerely,

Address (optional)

Phone number (optional)

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Dena Souza and I am a teacher at Chiefess Kamakahahei Middle School on Kauai. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, effective evaluations provide information pertinent to professional improvement in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose is not served by high stakes teacher evaluation models, such as EES.

There are many student-centered reasons to oppose the use of high-stakes teacher evaluations. The use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher ratings fail to determine effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Moreover, the current legally unnecessary linkage between student scores and standardized tests, codified in BOE Policy 2055, overemphasizes standardized tests and erodes actual teaching and learning time.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the EES. Instead, we need an evaluation system that provide supports teachers and students by replacing fear with faith in the professionals tasked with crafting our children's future.

Sincerely,

Dena Souza

Po Box 1250 Kalaheo, HI 96741

1-808-652-3733

From: [Elizabeth Bauer](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#); [Corey Rosenlee](#)
Subject: concerning SCR155 AND SR 117
Date: Saturday, March 26, 2016 9:21:45 AM

To ALL this concerns,

Educators tried to inform legislators about our concerns for education many times in the past. We cautioned that on the battlefield it is the educators that know what the needs are, the resources available, and the goals for our beloved students. We tried to accommodate the Department of Educations directives the best we could considering our overall awareness that students HAVE TO be educated or reached (from) where they are and motivated, engaged, and involved, to progress to their own learning goals. We keep our overall goals and aspirations high; but understand that it takes work, time, money, and caring to make it happen. We have to fight ignorance, poverty, cultural differences, language deficiencies, drug addiction, broken families, economic disparities, housing shortages, and more. The evaluation system failed to determine teacher effectiveness with "sufficient reliability and validity". The value added measures do not detect "differences in the content or quality of classroom instruction". Furthermore, I KNOW that ESS compromised our professional autonomy. Furthermore, 88% of principals thought too much emphasis is placed on test scores and 78% thought ESS adversely affected school relationships. Principals and teachers do best when they worked together for the betterment of their students. Nothing can measure that accurately; especially not TEST SCORES. Please make this change now and remove the test scores and evaluations based only on these; even the DOE changed its mind on relying so heavily on these test scores. SO, please do not make us wait any longer to be done with this evaluation. Our contract left negotiation open on the details of the evaluation and I always hoped that what was best for our students would allow us to do the right thing. Please do that NOW.

Elizabeth Bauer
Elementary School Teacher for 20 years in Hawaii

MARCH 26, 2016

ALOHA E CHAIR KIDANI & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

HONOLULU STATE CAPITOL

I am a special education teacher at James B. Castle High and School. I've been there almost three years at the end of this school year. I support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. The most effective evaluation provides information pertinent to professional improvement that increases teachers' effectiveness in facilitating student learning and growth. This is supported by basic brain research, like Carol Dweck's work on growth mindset, and research into what works well in school systems worldwide. This does not combine well with the use of evaluation results for employment decisions where many will focus on the latter use to the detriment of the more important purpose.

According to the American Statistical Association, the use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher, principal and school ratings fail to determine teaching effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Also, a 2014 study published in the American Educational Research Association's journal Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis showed that value-added measures are not able to detect differences in the content or quality of classroom instruction.

Further, the burden of testing on students, schools is potentially harmful, and the corresponding loss of teaching time taken away by testing time is wasteful providing more reason to avoid the use of test scores for evaluating. We need a "win, win" resolution! No more: More testing gives more reliable data; less testing gives less reliable data. We know that the truth is the student scores are lower because with all the testing, we spend less time teaching and so student scores are lower. We must use formative assessment and/or instruction to briefly assess our students daily to determine needed refinements to our lessons

Please vote to pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the current evaluation system implemented by the Department of Education. An evaluation system whose true purpose is to provide information and supports toward improving teaching, learning and schools will help our students grow much more and with better quality. Mahalo for your kokua and kako'o,

ME KA MANA'O NUI,

ELIZABETH PA NAKEA

From: [Jackie](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: SCR 155/SR 117
Date: Friday, March 25, 2016 7:33:38 PM

Dear Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Jackie Davis and I am a teacher at Kula Elementary School. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, effective evaluations provide information pertinent to professional improvement in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose is not served by high stakes teacher evaluation models, such as EES.

There are many student-centered reasons to oppose the use of high-stakes teacher evaluations. The use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher ratings fail to determine effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Moreover, the current legally unnecessary linkage between student scores and standardized tests, codified in BOE Policy 2055, overemphasizes standardized tests and erodes actual teaching and learning time.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the EES. Instead, we need an evaluation system that provide supports teachers and students by replacing fear with faith in the professionals tasked with crafting our children's future.

Sincerely,

Jackie L. Davis

5000 Kula Highway

Kula, Hawaii. 96790

Sent from my iPhone

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: mendezj@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SR117 on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM*
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2016 1:19:45 PM

SR117

Submitted on: 3/24/2016

Testimony for EDU on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: [Jennie Yee](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Sunday, March 27, 2016 9:03:09 AM

RE: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117

Honorable Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

I am Jennie Yee, teacher at Castle High School and educator in Hawaii for 30 years.

I support SCR 155/SR 117, requesting the Board of Education to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations.

In the twilight of my teaching career, I conscientiously reflect on the decline in working conditions for public school teachers. Community sentiment against public school teachers is having a more serious consequence than most citizens realize, to the point where fewer qualified teachers want to work in a highly stressful environment with diminished financial or personal reward. It is disheartening to turn around and to see the dwindling line of candidates waiting to take my place once I retire.

A recent Civil Beat article describes the plight of our state's teacher crisis:

Hawaii is currently suffering through a teacher shortage. The Hawaii Department of Education filled many teaching vacancies with "emergency hires" this year, underscoring the teacher shortage persistently plaguing this state. With more job openings in higher paying industries, college graduates are no longer entering the teaching profession. The recent standards and high stakes testing movement has compounded the problem by making the profession less forgiving, pushing potential teachers away and driving current teachers out.

Please allow me to thank you for sponsoring a resolution so necessary to improving the working conditions of our public school teachers. Instead of taking weeks to prepare for an onerous procedure to prove we are doing well, time could be better spent on enhancing creative educational practices that excite students to learn. When community members claim that teachers were never properly evaluated, I find it necessary to educate them on a previously successful evaluation system that had been in place for years. It was manageable and provided enough administrative support for those teachers struggling in their careers. We need to return to common sense practices that encourage our brightest candidates to actually become public school teachers in a work environment that does not punish them for having made that decision.

I sincerely support SCR 155 / SR117 and thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Jennie Yee
Castle High School Teacher
808-305-0780

From: [Jessica Kauhi](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2016 5:44:03 PM

Chari Kidani and Committee Members,

This email is regarding my support of SCR 155/SR117 and the removal of high-stakes teacher evaluations and the discontinued used of standardized tests in evaluating any public school teacher or administrator. If we, as educators, are going to be expected to do our best for the best of our students, we need to focus on the best possible way of educating the whole child. As often as we try not to worry about, high stakes testing is always a front running concern. I am one of 3 teachers at a very small school. This means that our entire school's rating is dependent on how my students perform on these tests. It is a lot of pressure to try to ignore when focusing on educating each child. We need to invest more time and money on educating the whole child and providing equal access to education for all students.

Mahalo for hearing my testimony.

Jessica Kauhi

From: [Jodi Kunimitsu](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: SCR 155 / SR 117 - Testimony In Support
Date: Friday, March 25, 2016 1:21:55 PM

Aloha Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Jodi Kunimitsu, and I am a teacher at Maui High School. I am writing in support of SCR 155 and SR 117, related to High Stakes Teacher Evaluations. I am currently teaching freshmen math at my school. Our school is organized into academies, so I am working closely with four other teachers who teach the same students as me. Of these four other teachers, three of them are not yet tenured. As the most veteran teacher of this group (with 13 years of experience), I feel that I am often looked upon to encourage and mentor these teachers. The biggest stress for all of them is the current EES evaluation.

The EES evaluation causes so much stress for teachers that it takes away from actual classroom instruction, planning, and collaboration, that should be happening. Teachers hear "horror" stories about other teachers who get marked "basic" for things and they, in turn, freak out and start stressing unnecessarily about their own evaluation. The added stress is not something that these new teachers need. It's not something any teacher needs, for that matter.

There are several components about this current EES evaluation that make no sense at all, even to a veteran teacher as myself. For example, in regards to the Tripod Survey, there is a question - "Do you get to choose the activities you do in this class?" - which is always my lowest percentage for my own personal Tripod. I teach math. The DOE has pretty much mandated us to use their curriculum (they claim it's not a mandate, but won't provide us with any other curriculum). I can't even choose the curriculum that I use - how can I possibly allow my students a range of activities to choose from??

Another part of the EES that makes no sense is the use of test scores to evaluate a teacher. The students who take the test have no buy-in whatsoever on these tests! We can ask them to care about their school and their teachers, but it does not make them try any harder on these tests. There is also the issue of whether or not these tests are FAIR. How can we tell teachers to differentiate their instruction - recognizing that students are at different levels and have different needs - then turn around and give them all the SAME test? Then we go ahead and penalize teachers on their evaluation, if the SCHOOL'S score is not at a certain level? How is that FAIR?

I am okay with having some kind of evaluation for teachers, but I am completely against UNFAIR evaluations - those that penalize teachers for components that they have no control over. We do not penalize doctors when patients pass away; we do not penalize lawmakers when bills do not pass - we should not be penalizing teachers over scores that students earn on a test. Teachers are already underpaid for the amount of work we put into our profession - why are we making it more stressful for teachers to remain in the profession.

Please pass SCR 155 and SR 117 - so that we can review the teacher evaluation system and make it one that is fair for all teachers. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

Jodi Kunimitsu
Kihei, Maui

From: [Joe Weldon](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Sunday, March 27, 2016 6:42:27 PM

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2016/03/common-core-and-the-centralization-of-american-education#.VvWMQxLFh74.mailto>



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Joe Weldon



“All efforts made in support of children are worthwhile.”

Common Core and the Centralization of American Education

Edited by Lindsey M. Burke

Abstract:

Stop a federal bureaucrat, a schoolteacher, and a parent on the street and you will likely hear three different observations about what education can, and should, do. Considering these differing perspectives provides insight into why opposition to Common Core has been strongest among parents. National standards may provide useful information to state and federal policymakers, but have driven curriculum and pedagogy in a way that dissatisfies parents. Each of the essays contained in this short compendium delivers a different perspective on the shortcomings of the push for Common Core national standards, but each concludes that American education will not flourish under a system that is increasingly centralized.

Introduction

What should education accomplish? The question has a narrow answer when the respondent is a federal bureaucrat, charged with counting academic outcomes in the aggregate to assess student performance relative to some national metric. But as the respondent gets closer to the student—or is himself the student—the answer is far more refined and paints a more nuanced picture of what individuals hope to achieve through education.

Stop a federal bureaucrat, a school teacher, and a parent on the street and you will likely hear three different observations about what education can, and should, do. The federal bureaucrat may respond in terms of what education should accomplish for the nation; the teacher might filter her response through the lens of her classroom; and the parent, naturally, will think in aspirational terms of what she hopes education can do for her child.

Considering these differing perspectives on the purpose of education provides insight into why

opposition to Common Core has been strongest among parents and why national organizations and governors—responding to federal incentives to stick with the national standards and tests—have been slower to reverse course or even reconsider. National standards may provide useful information to state and federal policymakers, but they have driven curriculum and pedagogy in a direction that dissatisfies parents.

The Common Core State Standards Initiative was created by Achieve, Inc., and driven primarily by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association. The effort began moving forward in earnest in 2009, with the financial support of the Obama Administration. Following the introduction of Common Core, the Administration offered \$4.35 billion in federal Race to the Top grant money, along with waivers from the onerous provisions of the widely derided No Child Left Behind Act.

Forty-six states signed on to Common Core, either enticed by the waiver/grant package dangled before them by Washington, or out of a belief in the project itself. Whatever the motivation, the Common Core standards, along with federally funded common assessments aligned to the standards, put American education on the path toward a national curriculum.

Some policymakers and many parents voiced concerns about what would surely lead to significant growth in federal intervention in education as a result of the federally funded Common Core push. As columnist George Will put it, Common Core is “the thin end of a potentially enormous federal wedge.”¹ As Will concludes:

It is not about the content of the standards, which would be objectionable even if written by Aristotle and refined by Shakespeare. Rather, the point is that, unless stopped now, the federal government will not stop short of finding in Common Core a pretext for becoming a national school board.

To improve education, choice is the only “common standard” that is needed. Parents should have choice among schools, teaching methods, and, critically, curricula.

The essays contained in this short compendium each deliver a different perspective on the shortcomings of the push for Common Core national standards, but each concludes that American education will not flourish under a system that is increasingly centralized. They are each adapted from talks delivered at The Heritage Foundation on November 19, 2014.

—Lindsey M. Burke

The March Toward Centralized Education

A historical review of federal education policy makes one fact clear: the trajectory of Common Core is a direct path to a federal curriculum.

During the colonial period and into the 1830s, education was something that was expected to occur in the home, in voluntary communities, in religious communities—the government, especially the national government, did not have a large role. Indeed, until about 1830 and the beginning of the Common School movement, education was something that was based in civil society. In the 1830s, Horace Mann became the “Father of the Common Schools,” and he and others pointed to Prussia, France, and the

Netherlands to make their case for nationalized education. This is not to argue that Mann desired federal control, but in the common school model the germs of federal involvement in education are visible.

In 1867, the first iteration of the U.S. Department of Education was introduced. But within two years it was downgraded to just a bureau of education, the function of which was to collect statistics, not in any way control education. The next federal foray into K–12 education—though the law was more about higher education—would not come until almost a century later, with the 1958 National Defense Education Act (NDEA).

At this juncture, the federal government was still trying to find constitutional justification for its involvement in education by arguing its actions were, for instance, connected to defense, something over which the Constitution gives the federal government authority. In any event, the NDEA was the first time the federal government became significantly involved in trying to control education. This federal involvement was not limited to higher learning; it also encompassed K–12 education, driven by science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) issues, the justification being that the United States needed more scientists, more engineers, and better mathematicians.

By 1965, the federal government, through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), expanded its involvement beyond areas with explicit defense connections. Importantly, the government did not mention increased federal control over education; rather, funding was the primary justification for this expansion.

In 1979, the Department of Education was created, largely at the behest of the National Education Association (NEA). The NEA was, at this point, a new teacher’s union (albeit a very large teacher’s union). When Jimmy Carter was elected President, power over education became further concentrated in Washington.

In 1983, with the publication of “A Nation at Risk,” further centralization of education in Washington became a moral imperative. People began to look to the federal government to fix the nation’s crippled education system. Shortly thereafter, the ESEA reauthorization required, for the first time, that states define achievement levels for federally supported students and identify schools in which students were not making acceptable progress.

In 1994, GOALS 2000 was proffered, which contained a small financial incentive for states to adopt standards and assessments. At the same time, the ESEA was reauthorized as the Improving America's Schools Act, with an eye toward linking adoption of standards and tests to a state's ability to acquire Title I funds. Meanwhile, the federal government funded the development of national standards in several subjects, but the history standards were pretty much reviled by the entire country, and Congress halted, at least for the moment, the overt move toward national standards.

In 2001, the debate over the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act began, and by January 2002 the legislation had been signed into law. The passage of the NCLB is a landmark moment for federal control in education, as, for the first time, Washington was to dictate state standards, while mandating state testing and yearly progress goals—even the breaking down of scores by sub-groups of students. The NCLB did not, however, prescribe what would be taught.

In July 2009, the Department of Education announced Race to the Top, which called for states to be evaluated on a number of criteria proposed by the Obama Administration. For example, states would now have to adopt common standards that were common to a majority of states. There was only one standard that met that requirement, so it was not stated specifically in the regulations; its identity, however, was obvious: Common Core. Race to the Top was followed by waivers from the NCLB, again attached, in part, to the adoption of common standards by states.

Why is Common Core problematic? As evidence from both inside and outside the United States makes clear, centralization and control do not work; rather, freedom is the force that sparks educational improvement. Freedom unleashes competition, which, in turn, drives innovation and leads to specialization. The idea that there should be one monolithic set of standards and that everybody should move at the same rate makes no sense, as anyone who has met more than one child can readily attest.

Moreover, real accountability, immediate accountability, comes from freedom, choice, the ability to leave a provider that is not giving you what you want and take your business elsewhere. That is why there are a lot of recommendations for what to do when states get rid of Common Core.

Ultimately, the solution to America's education problems is not more centralization. Instead, the answer is to create school choice for everyone. Furthermore, America's teachers need to be free to try different approaches, so they can focus on the needs of unique subsets of students. Funding should also be attached to students, so that parents can seek out those providers that are best for the unique needs of their child. Ultimately, this nation has moved in exactly the wrong direction. Americans do not need centralization at the national level; rather, we need to move to complete decentralization so we can treat children as what they are: unique individuals.

—Neal McCluskey

Instead of Nationalization, States Need to Provide Local Flexibility on Standards and Assessments

At the dawn of the educational standards and testing reform movement in the late 1980s and early 1990s, two very different arguments were advanced on behalf of state academic standards and tests as a replacement for what had been a local decision. These two arguments were based on different models for how reform based on standards and tests would impact schools and students.

The first of these models was advanced by Chester “Checker” Finn Jr., a former Assistant Secretary of Education in the Reagan Administration. Finn maintained that a shift to school choice—which he supported—required that parents be informed choosers; that as in any market, consumers must be able to make an informed choice in order for the market to be effective in promoting quality products and services. Within the education context, Finn argued, parental consumers would need to be informed by standards-based tests developed by the states in order to ensure their rigor and reliability. In this model, the standards-based assessments serve as an end-of-year quality check that parents can use to inform a decision to choose a different school for their child or to keep him or her in the same school. Because this model relies on market-based language, many conservatives, and even some libertarians, were persuaded to support the state standards and testing movement.

The second intellectual model for state standards and testing, referred to as “systemic reform,” was advanced by Marshall “Mike” Smith, who later

became Undersecretary of Education in the Clinton Administration. In Smith's model, as it was refined over time, curriculum standards serve as the fulcrum for educational reform implemented based on state decisions; state policy elites aim to create excellence in the classroom using an array of policy levers and knobs—all aligned back to the standards—including testing, textbook adoption, teacher preparation, teacher certification and evaluation, teacher training, goals and timetables for school test score improvement, and state accountability based on those goals and timetables.

As it turned out, it is the second model that now predominates and drives instruction in most public schools and districts. Rather than a state-validated metric used to inform parental choice at the end of the school year, state academic standards became a blueprint according to which schools and classrooms operate throughout the year as well as a tool used by policymakers to oversee them from above. The disappointing track record of this approach in achieving its ambitious goals resulted, in 2009, in its adherents proposing national—rather than state—academic standards and testing: Common Core.

As the full effects of standards-based “systemic reform” were felt in state after state since the implementation of the federal NCLB, opposition—including from parents—has grown. Parents support testing when they can use it as one piece of information among others to evaluate whether the needs of their children are being met. Such usage has been the historical role of testing in private schools, where it does not drive the curriculum or school operations. If the results are not what parents expect, they are free to discuss the matter with the school's educators and, if not satisfied, transfer their child to a different private school. Parents continue to support this use of testing; however, support for standards-based tests as a major, even dominant, focus of instruction and academic operations is now declining. Standards are, after all, not well-designed as a roadmap for instruction. Indeed, from the standpoint of many parents, having your child reduced to a decimal point in a state accountability formula used by bureaucrats to judge your school is problematic. Parents do not support such testing because it does not necessarily meet the needs of their child; in fact, such rigid formulas are often not very useful in evaluating overall school quality either.

Common Core defines and constrains the content and sequencing of the curriculum—and, in many cases, even the instructional methods—to such an extent that the distinction is disingenuous.

The Singapore math standards, for example, require mastery of the standard algorithm for addition and subtraction at early elementary grades. (On this point, they are generally consistent with the standards of other high-achieving Asian countries.) In first grade, Singapore starts with applying the standard algorithm to addition of 2-digit numbers. The expectation is increased to 3-digit numbers by second grade, followed by 4-digit numbers in third grade. Singapore increases expectations gradually, teaching conceptual understanding as well as computational fluency.

Common Core has a dramatically different approach, even though it claims to be internationally benchmarked. It delays mastery of the standard algorithm for addition and subtraction until fourth grade. Why? At earlier grades, Common Core has students practicing until fluent various “non-standard” approaches, typically based on place value, with the goal of teaching conceptual knowledge. After spending their early elementary years on these alternative approaches, in fourth grade, students are suddenly expected to demonstrate mastery of the standard algorithm with large numbers. Such questionable, unproven approaches should not be mandated nationwide.

Apart from particular topics, Common Core encourages the teaching of all mathematics through an approach that is at odds with what is used in high-achieving nations. Andrew Porter, a scholar who largely subscribes to Common Core's instructional philosophy—the modern version of instructional progressivism—performed a systematic comparison of all of the Common Core math standards with those of top-achieving nations. He found striking differences in emphasis across grade levels. At the eighth grade, for example, 75 percent of the curriculum standards in high-achieving countries address the “doing” of math—such things as solving word problems or equations. At the same grade level, only 38 percent of the Common Core standards addressed “doing” math; instead, Common Core placed much greater emphasis on such things as talking about math. Common Core is not consistent with international standards.

The bottom line is that these critical curricular differences are at the core of what schools do: both what is taught and how. Schools must be able

to differentiate in these crucial areas, offer parents a meaningful choice, and compete to see which best serves the needs of each student.

Instead of states mandating a single curricular approach within their geographic boundaries—much less a single national approach such as Common Core—states should empower local school systems and other educational providers to select quality standards and aligned tests that fit their instructional philosophy, while also empowering parents to choose from among different schools the one which best meets the needs of their children.

—Theodor Rebarber

Curriculum Constriction: Common Core and the Advanced Placement Program

Americans today are divided about the meaning of our history. This division appears to be growing, and represents a significant challenge for our society. Yet, the genius of the Founders was to devise a system that grants citizens at the levels of the state, the school district, and the classroom the freedom to teach not only history, but also every other subject as they see fit. So America's constitutional system is adept at accommodating our divisions over the meaning of our history, but only for as long as we cherish and protect the principles of federalism, local control, and freedom they embody.

Sadly, these great principles now face a challenge. Until recently, debate over the creeping nationalization of the school curriculum has focused on Common Core. In the fall of 2014, however, the College Board, the nonprofit entity that creates and administers the SAT and Advanced Placement (AP) tests, released a detailed, controversial, and highly directive "framework" for the teaching of AP U.S. History. Prior to this, AP U.S. history teachers were able to follow a brief topical outline that allowed our national story to be taught from a wide range of perspectives.

The release of the new AP U.S. History framework stirred up a national debate. Traditionalists and conservatives criticized the framework for giving short shrift to both the Founding and our fundamental constitutional principles, for highlighting America's foibles and failings at the expense of our strengths, and for downplaying America's distinctive characteristics.

Let us first consider the question of which subjects fall under the purview of Common Core. While Common Core is meant to have implications for the

teaching of reading and writing in the sciences, in social studies, and in technical classes, for the most part, Common Core is about English and math.

Common Core's architect, David Coleman, has become president of the College Board. Under Coleman's leadership, the College Board has begun to radically redesign all of its Advanced Placement exams, not just AP U.S. History. Ultimately, this transformation will also include subjects such as Physics, World History, European History, U.S. Government and Politics, and Art History. So in effect, Common Core covers English and math, while the College Board's AP subjects cover the rest of the curriculum.

It is important that we do not lose sight of what is happening here in a haze of semantics. No doubt we will be told that AP U.S. History is not formally part of Common Core. That is merely an evasion, like all the other evasions Common Core advocates have thrown up to obscure the federal power grab that has been driving Common Core.

We need to bring the College Board and the AP redesign process into the center of the debate over Common Core. The distinction between Common Core and the AP redesign effort is artificial and only serves to insulate the College Board from public accountability.

We also need to take steps on both the state and federal levels to break the College Board's monopoly on Advanced Placement testing. After all, even Common Core, which is far too nationalized as it is, has two testing consortia. Yet the College Board is the only company to offer AP testing. And as of now, state and federal governments channel tens of millions of dollars to the College Board, making it in effect a government-supported monopoly.

Congress needs to see to it that its AP testing subsidies are distributed in a way that encourages competition rather than preventing it. Furthermore, states need to consider authorizing the development of alternative AP tests that can compete with those developed by the College Board.

It is time to wake up and realize that Common Core has radically expanded its reach, capturing the entire spectrum of the curriculum, not in name, but in fact. If we are ever to restore local control and public accountability to America's education system, the College Board's recent power grab must be a central component of the debate over Common Core.

—Stanley Kurtz

Common Core Even Impacts Those Who Have Chosen Something Different Than Government Schooling

Common Core is good for homeschooling.

In 1999, the National Center for Education Statistics found that there were 850,000 homeschooled students in the United States. Thirteen years later in 2012, the National Center for Education Statistics (an arm of the Department of Education) found that there were 1.8 million homeschool students in the United States.² Now homeschooling is growing, and, as those of us who have been fighting Common Core know, 2012 is about the time when Common Core began to be implemented. All of a sudden, Common Core was being foisted upon kids and families in the public schools of states that had adopted the standards.

Homeschooling is skyrocketing. In Alabama, for example, it was reported that growing numbers of families are choosing to homeschool their children in part because of concerns about Common Core in their states.³ Genevieve Wood reported at *The Daily Signal* that in North Carolina, where numbers are starting to come out for the 2013–2014 school year, they have seen a massive increase in the number of students who are being homeschooled over the previous year. There were 60,950 homeschoolers in North Carolina in the 2013–2014 school year, a 14.3 percent increase from the prior year. There are now almost 100,000 homeschooled students in North Carolina.⁴

In a recent article in *Politico* about moms winning the battle of Common Core, there appeared the following great first sentence: “The millions have proven no match for the moms.”⁵ Moms and dads—whether in public schools, in private schools, or in homeschools—are frustrated. Parents are losing local control over the education of their children. They are losing the ability to do something as simple as homework with their kids. And now, they are voting with their feet.

The playful opening sentence of this article—that Common Core is great for homeschooling—is true on one level: Yes, homeschool numbers are increasing. But Common Core also threatens the foundation of homeschooling.⁶

Specifically, there is language in federal law—the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—that says that nothing in the act will apply to homeschoolers and private schools that do not receive federal funds.⁷ The current Common Core effort has applied solely to the public schools thus far, but if

proponents are successful at establishing a nationalized one-size-fits-all approach to education, policymakers will likely inquire as to why homeschoolers and private-schoolers are not taking the same tests. How do we know, the argument will go, that these children are receiving a good education?

Some of the other concerns that we are seeing are tests (SAT, ACT, PSAT) being re-aligned to Common Core.⁸ Will homeschoolers be disadvantaged even though they have received an excellent education?

Then there is the concern from school districts misinterpreting these policies. Westfield, New Jersey, for example, tried to force homeschoolers (who are independent of the public school system) to follow Common Core. The Home School Legal Defense Association intervened, and Westfield backed off its outrageous demand. This incident, however, is but a preview of what homeschoolers will face in a truly nationalized education system.⁹ Finally, there is also the issue of student databases.¹⁰ Many of the same people who were concerned about Common Core are also concerned about this parallel rise of the loss of control over students’ private information.

In an actual slide presented at a conference in Orlando, Florida, in 2011, the Counsel of Chief State School Officers, which was heavily involved, along with the National Governors Association and Achieve Inc., in pushing Common Core, discussed their recommendations for how to improve their statewide databases with the goal of having national databases. The slide read: “Include student groups not now included, e.g. homeschooled, in the data system.”¹¹ There is a push, when it comes to centralized education, to include all students (homeschool, public school, and private school) in these databases.

In an effort to be free from Common Core and its onerous mandates, more and more parents are removing their children from America’s public schools. But this battle against Common Core does not just concern homeschoolers—all families, no matter whether their children attend a public school, a private school, or a home school, must work together in this struggle against the standardization of education. As the Supreme Court held in *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, the right of parents to direct the education and upbringing of their children is a fundamental right. If we lose control over what our children are being taught, then we have lost that fundamental right.

—William A. Estrada

Common Core: Blocking “Exit” and Stifling “Voice”

One of the most influential and most cited books in social science in the past 50 years is economist Albert Hirschman’s *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*.¹²

Hirschman’s book discusses how individuals respond to a situation in which the services on which they rely are deteriorating. The book provides valuable conceptual tools for analyzing the design of the Common Core national curriculum-content standards.

Hirschman points out that the two basic responses to deteriorating services are “exit” and “voice,” where exit means turning to a different provider or leaving the territory, while voice means political participation.¹³

Exit usually has lower costs than voice for the individual. But here we should add the limiting case: Exit can have high costs when individuals are loyal to institutions—thus the third component in Hirschman’s trio of “exit,” “voice,” and “loyalty.”¹⁴

With exit, you can simply turn to a different provider or move to a different place (sometimes quite nearby, sometimes afar). Such a move is sometimes called “voting with your feet.”

Loyalty can be strong in politics, but it can also be lost.¹⁵ Think of the American Revolution and the breaking away of the United States from the British Empire.

In the 1830s, when Alexis de Tocqueville visited America from France, he found Americans intensely loyal to, and participating in, their public schools. These Americans saw the public schools as extensions of their families and neighborhoods. They viewed public schools—even though public schools in those days usually charged a fee—as akin to voluntarily supported charities and as part of what Tocqueville then, and social scientists today, call “civil society.”¹⁶ The public in those days saw public schools as something quite separate from distant political elites in faraway state and federal capitals.

Tocqueville feared that if ever Americans neglected their participation in associations or local government entities like school committees, the tendency would be toward a loss of liberty and a surrender to what Tocqueville called a “mild despotism.”¹⁷

Today, many years after Tocqueville, public sentiment about the public schools still retains much of the feeling of “loyalty” that people had in Tocqueville’s day, a feeling that fuels the current passion

for local control. Yet—not surprisingly, given the public school monopoly—parents and taxpayers view the public schools as an unresponsive, declining bureaucracy carrying out edicts from distant capitals.¹⁸

This monopoly problem in public school education was precisely why economist Milton Friedman called for opportunity scholarships (also known as vouchers) to create a powerful exit option.¹⁹ But even in the absence of opportunity scholarships and charter schools, competitive federalism has, in the past, created exit options.²⁰

Common Core undermines the exit option and undermines competitive federalism. Indeed, in part, it was designed to do so. It likewise evaded and negated the voice option during the adherence process—and continues to do so. The designers of Common Core wanted nationwide uniformity. States have to adhere to the Common Core *in toto* because of boilerplate memorandums of understanding. A few topics can be added, but none can be subtracted or moved to a different grade.

There is no feedback loop and no process to consider and implement proposed changes.²¹ Any proposed nationwide fixes would have to be negotiated between the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers jointly, as well as each of the adhering states. Such a process is prohibitively difficult to put into practice. Therefore, frustrated constituents who have complaints about the merits of Common Core have no place to exercise their voice in a way that would lead to repair or what Hirschman would call “recuperation.” Instead, critics are driven to oppose the curriculum content of Common Core as a whole.

But as Lenore T. Ealy writes, “regardless of the merit” of the Common Core national standards, “it still matters...whether there are rights of exit.”²² The policymakers of this malign utopia forgot a few things. They forgot that the desire for voice—the desire for political action—can become particularly intense when people are faced with the prospect of “nowhere to exit to.”²³ They forgot that hemming in parents and teachers would create a demand for political change, alternatives, and escape routes.²⁴

Alternatives to the national tests have arisen. Organized parents are pressing for repeal of Common Core and the dropping of the national tests that support it. Some states are already rejecting the national tests.²⁵ States are also struggling to escape

the Common Core cartel itself.²⁶ Parents are opting out of the Common Core tests.²⁷ Indeed, what Hirschman calls an “intimate fusion of exit and voice is already underway.”²⁸

Ultimately, public response to the imposition of Common Core may bring about what Hirschman calls “a joint grave-digging act.” As of this writing, exit and voice are working hand in glove against Common Core. Perhaps, to use another of Hirschman’s metaphors, “exit” and “voice” will “explode jointly” and “bring down the whole edifice.”²⁹

—Williamson M. Evers

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"All efforts made in support of children are worthwhile."

How a Grassroots Revolt Against Testing May Change Education

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Submitted by Elizabeth Kunze on Fri, 03/25/2016 - 11:37am

Photo by [Greg Dunkel](http://nymag.com/news/features/anti-testing-2013-12/) (<http://nymag.com/news/features/anti-testing-2013-12/>) [3]

A revolt involving hundreds of thousands of Americans against the federal and state government has been brewing over the past couple of years. What caused this grassroots revolt? Parents and students have had

enough of high-stakes testing required by federal law and implemented by the states and have chosen to “opt out” of the tests.

High-stakes tests swept the nation with the passage of No Child Left Behind during the presidency of George W. Bush. Politicians told the public that the tests were a bold new education reform.

Actually, high-stakes testing has a long, dark history. High-stakes tests were born in China to sort their society more than 1500 years [4] ago. In the United States, for the last 100 years, standardized tests have been used to sort and track children. Contrary to current rhetoric, they were not created for civil rights purposes.

The NAACP recognized the negative impact on minority students as high-stakes tests decades ago. In 1979, the NAACP filed *Debra P. v. Turlington*, a lawsuit against the state of Florida, challenging the state’s high-stakes examination based on the negative impact on minority students’ opportunity to learn and graduate from high school.

The Fifth Circuit Court disagreed with the NAACP and ruled in favor of Florida. The court even erroneously stated (<http://cloakinginequity.com/2014/0%205/22/scotus-on-high-stakes-tests-they-eradicate-insidious-racism/>) [5] that tests actually “eradicate racism.” This framing of high-stakes tests is the essence of a policy makeover that transformed them from a thousand-year-old sorting mechanism into a civil-rights cause. Never mind that high-stakes exit tests have had a clearly disparate impact (<http://cloakinginequity.com/2013/12/09/high-stakes-decisions-the-legal-landscape-of-exit-exams-required-to-graduate/>) [6] on students of color, compounding the effects of severe inequality and underfunding of schools.

Now that the federal government is requiring high-stakes testing, some civil rights organizations in Washington D.C.— spurred on by The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (<http://cloakinginequity.com/2015/05/06/whos-the-william-wallace-of-testing-jessedhagopian-or-liz-king/>) [7]— have supported them, tests have been politically retread as “social justice.”

In fact, recent research (<http://cepa.stanford.edu/content/left-behind-effect-no-child-left-behind-academic-achievement-gaps>) [8] from Center for Education Policy Analysis at Stanford University demonstrates that high-stakes testing has actually slowed our nation’s progress towards closing the academic achievement gap. Stanford researchers calculated that at the new slower pace experienced under No Child Left Behind, it will take eighty more years to close the achievement gap.

No Child Left Behind required that schools that do not raise their scores fast enough could be closed or turned over to private operators. A decade of research (<http://cloakinginequity.com/2015/11/20/drinking-charter-kool-aid-here-is-evidence/>) [9] has shown that the privatization approach to education spurred by testing has not only deprived communities of publicly controlled anchor institutions, it has usually failed to improve educational outcomes while increasing segregation. Test-driven “accountability” has also led to (<http://cloakinginequity.com/2013/03/26/mouth-agape-what-the-data-tells-us-about-school-closure-in-chicago-2/>) [10] mass firings of teachers of color in cities such as Chicago.

Unfortunately, there has not been much difference between the Obama administration and the previous Bush administration on education policy. Obama’s Race to the Top required states to evaluate teachers “in significant part” based on student test scores in so-called “valued added measurement” and “growth” models if they were to win grants or obtain a waiver from No Child Left Behind requirements. The American Educational Research Association (AERA) and many other research organizations have concluded (<http://www.era.net/Newsroom/NewsReleasesandStatements/AERAIssuesStatementontheUseofValue->

[Added Models in Evaluation of Educators and Educator Preparation Programs / tabid / 16120 / Default.aspx](#)) [11] that the required measures are unreliable and as a result unfair to teachers and principals.

For the past decade, because of our nation's emphasis on test scores, schools have dramatically increased the time students spend on testing and test preparation. One [study indicated](#) (<http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/4/Testing%20Report.pdf>) [12] urban students are subjected to an average of 112 standardized tests during their school years. Moreover, [research shows](#) (<http://cloakinginequity.com/2012/07/30/from-dewey-to-no-child-left-behind-the-evolution-and-devolution-of-public-arts-education/>) [13] that time spent on testing has diminished time for science, social studies, art, second language studies, and recess.

The good news is that a new day may be dawning. The [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#) (<http://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn>) [14], which is the latest re-authorization of the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), allows states to introduce a dashboard approaches to evaluate the success of states, districts, schools, teachers and students, with standardized test results used as just a single factor in these evaluations.

ESSA could usher in a new era, in which communities will be able to use high quality assessments including student performances, portfolios, and presentations instead of high stakes standardized tests.

The new ESSA law could be a game changer and quell the ongoing revolt against over-testing. States can now use data on school climate, engagement and other factors that are important to communities as they evaluate schools.

For the first time in this current era of accountability, communities have the ability to advocate and implement [multiple measures dashboards](#) (<http://cloakinginequity.com/category/community-based-accountability/>) [15] in our states to understand the successes and failures of our schools.

If students, parents, and school officials seize the opportunity to use this power, they can remake schools.

Julian Vasquez Heilig is The Progressive's Westcoast Regional Education Fellow. He blogs about education and social justice at [Cloaking Inequity](#) [16].

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3/27/2016

- [2] <http://www.progressive.org/authors/julian-vasquez-heilig>
- [3] <http://nymag.com/news/features/anti-testing-2013-12/>
- [4] <https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/21886773/Chinese>
- [5] <http://cloakinginequity.com/2014/0%205/22/scotus-on-high-stakes-tests-they-eradicate-insidious-racism/>
- [6] <http://cloakinginequity.com/2013/12/09/high-stakes-decisions-the-legal-landscape-of-exit-exams-required-to-graduate/>
- [7] <http://cloakinginequity.com/2015/05/06/whos-the-william-wallace-of-testing-jessedhagopian-or-liz-king/>
- [8] <http://cepa.stanford.edu/content/left-behind-effect-no-child-left-behind-academic-achievement-gaps>
- [9] <http://cloakinginequity.com/2015/11/20/drinking-charter-kool-aid-here-is-evidence/>
- [10] <http://cloakinginequity.com/2013/03/26/mouth-agape-what-the-data-tells-us-about-school-closure-in-chicago-2/>
- [11] <http://www.era.net/Newsroom/NewsReleasesandStatements/AERAIssuesStatementontheUseofValue-AddedModelsInEvaluationofEducatorsandEducatorPreparationPrograms/tabid/16120/Default.aspx>
- [12] <http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/4/Testing%20Report.pdf>
- [13] <http://cloakinginequity.com/2012/07/30/from-dewey-to-no-child-left-behind-the-evolution-and-devolution-of-public-arts-education/>
- [14] <http://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn>
- [15] <http://cloakinginequity.com/category/community-based-accountability/>
- [16] <https://twitter.com/ProfessorJVH>
- [17] <http://www.progressive.org/section/public-school-shakedown-project-progressive>
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- [19] <http://www.progressive.org/topics/education>
- [20] <http://www.progressive.org/topics/public-school-shakedown>

From: [Judy Ryan](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Sunday, March 27, 2016 11:44:01 AM

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Judith Ryan and I am a teacher at Kekaha Elementary School. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, effective evaluations provide information pertinent to professional improvement in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose is not served by high stakes teacher evaluation models, such as EES.

There are many student-centered reasons to oppose the use of high-stakes teacher evaluations. The use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher ratings fail to determine effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Moreover, the current legally unnecessary linkage between student scores and standardized tests, codified in BOE Policy 2055, overemphasizes standardized tests and erodes actual teaching and learning time.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the EES. Instead, we need an evaluation system that provide supports teachers and students by replacing fear with faith in the professionals tasked with crafting our children's future.

Sincerely,

Judith Ryan

PO Box 290

Kalaheo, HI 96741

ph. 808-651-2548

From: [Justin Hughey](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Monday, March 28, 2016 2:35:15 AM

Hearing at 1:20PM in conference room 229
RE: SCR 155/SR117 -REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ABOLISH
HIGH-STAKES TEACHER EVALUATIONS.

Testimony in **support** of SCR 155 / SR117

Chair Kidani and Members of the committee:

As a Special Education Teacher I have witnessed the love of teaching ripped away from teachers and a love of learning ripped away from students. High Stakes Testing has reduced students and teachers to a dehumanizing number.

The over-reliance on high-stakes standardized testing in state and federal accountability systems is undermining educational quality and equity in U.S. public schools by hampering educator's efforts to focus on the broad range of learning experiences that promote the innovation, creativity, problem solving, collaboration, communication, critical thinking and deep subject-matter knowledge that will allow students to thrive in a democracy and an increasingly global economy. It is widely recognized that standardized testing is an inadequate and often unreliable measure of both student learning and educator effectiveness. The over-emphasis on standardized testing has caused considerable collateral damage in too many school, including narrowing the curriculum, teaching to the test, reducing love of learning, pushing students out of school, driving excellent teachers out of the profession, and undermining school climate. High-stakes standardized testing has negative effects for students from all backgrounds, and especially for low-income students, English language learners, children of color, and those with disabilities.

The culture and structure of the systems in which students learn must change in order to foster engaging schools experiences that promote joy in learning, depth of thought and breadth of knowledge for students.

Senator Jim Jeffords produced a congressional Research study in 2009 that stated, "Estimated aggregated state level expenditures for assessment programs in FY 2001 are 422.8 million." George W. Bush made a million dollar testing industry into a billion dollar one virtually overnight. NCLB was about corporate profit not accountability.

I believe the failures of High Stake Testing in the No Child Left Behind Act, forced congress to pass the Every Child Succeeds Act. This now eliminates No Child Left Behind's punitive approach to accountability and allows states to craft their own systems. Under the new law, states will be able to set their own academic standards and create teacher evaluations as they see fit.

Please support SCR 155 / SR117. It is a major step in the right direction!

Respectfully,

Justin Hughey
2nd Grade Special Education Teacher
King Kamehameha III Elementary

From: [Kit Brizuela](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: [Bea; amyperusso@gmail.com](mailto:amyperusso@gmail.com)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2016 10:52:37 AM

Aloha e Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Kathleen Brizuela and I am a teacher at Kahuku High and Intermediate School. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, both basic brain research such as Carol Dweck's work on growth mindset, as well as research into what works well in school systems worldwide, the most effective evaluation provides information pertinent to professional improvement that increases teachers' effectiveness in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose does not combine well with the use of evaluation results for employment decisions since everyone focuses more on the latter use to the detriment of the more important purpose.

Moreover, the use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher and principal and school ratings fail to determine teaching effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity, according to the American Statistical Association. Also, a 2014 study published in the American Educational Research Association's journal Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis showed that value-added measures are not able to detect differences in the content or quality of classroom instruction.

Another reason to avoid the use of test scores for evaluating is the burden of testing on students, schools, and the corresponding depletion of teaching time taken away by testing time. It's a no-win tradeoff: to get more reliable test data we must test more, but that means we teach less so our scores are lower. Less testing gives less reliable data. Teachers also must briefly assess their students daily to determine needed refinements to their lessons, in a process called formative assessment or formative instruction.

Please vote to pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request the Hawai'i Board of Education to amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the current evaluation system implemented by the Department of Education. An evaluation system whose true purpose is to provide information and supports toward improving teaching, learning and schools will help our students grow much more and with better quality. Mahalo for your time and for your help!

Sincerely,
Kathleen Brizuela
44-006 Malukai Place
Kaneohe, Hawai'i 96744
[808-927-3523](tel:808-927-3523)

From: [laura walker](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Friday, March 25, 2016 12:03:08 PM

Dear Chair Person Kidani and Committee Members,
I am a High School Counselor on the Big Island of Hawai`i. I have worked for the past fifteen years with the Department of Education and am a member of the Hawaii State Teacher's Association.

The purpose of this letter is to request that the Board of Education abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations.

While I do agree that it is best practices for teachers and staff to collaborate with our administrators, I feel that the current system does not make sense or improvements in the schools. It was not well thought out and does not build a better school or smarter students.

The one thing I find the most despicable about this weak system is that it is not a fair gauge of performance. At my school it is no secret that one of our administrators regularly gives out high scores and one does not. If you are lucky enough to get the "easy/fair" administrator, you know you will do well. If not, brace yourself for low scores and the response that, "there is always room for improvement".

Additionally, this system was not created with non-classroom teachers in mind. We were an after thought. I have never found samples of write-ups that were designed for a person who does my job. Unfair!

Please take this system away and replace it with somethings that is well thought out and FAIR to all stake holders.

Aloha,
Laura Walker MSCP
Counselor at Ka`u High & Pahala Elementary School.

From: [LL Tanner](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#); [laurie_tannerkiheihidoe](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support of SCR 155/SCR 117
Date: Saturday, March 26, 2016 6:50:54 PM

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SCR 155/SCR 117

Aloha Chair Kidani and all Committee Members,

It is critical that all caring policymakers, concerned and dedicated to educating Hawaii's astonishing children, make the necessary adjustments now in regard to teacher evaluations being tied to high-stakes testing and other time-consuming, unproven administrative protocols. As a 15-year elementary school teacher and former healthcare educator/author for ten years, I have witnessed first-hand the detrimental effects that high stakes teacher evaluations had in my personal life, job relationships, and career endeavors. Please know I have always welcomed observations, job evaluations, collegial discussions, and up-to-date professional supervision by individuals knowledgeable in the field of 'how we learn'--scholastic motivation, brain development, etc.-- and 'how best to teach' multi-subject educational standards. The current dictates of EES on teachers, their principal-evaluators, and on our students, do not generate quality in any way, misses the mark, and **I know this damages our human services educational system.**

Following five+ years of college preparation, student teaching with a supervisory master teacher, and then two-years of university graduate level "teacher support and assessment" classes while teaching full-time (with excellent results), it became demoralizing, redundant and insulting to follow evaluative procedures which clearly do not positively impact students, their achievement, my teaching expertise, nor allow for wise professional time-management. I clearly recall feeling demoralized and unmotivated many times since it seemed obvious that many stakeholders did not truly understand what teachers do in the classroom on behalf of the State of Hawaii for the benefit of its children and families, or these EES demands would not have been accepted. For example, children often have a 'bad day' from people or things that are out of their control, struggling with attention issues, or are absent altogether during days of testing. When I am working everyday against barriers such as these to improve student achievement, I should have been contacting families, perhaps to pick up remedial homework, creating effective lesson plans to target the gaps in these children's knowledge base, and looking at best intervention strategies. Instead, I factor in EES mandated time-consuming, energy depleting, questionable activities, and it is almost unbearable, personally and professionally.

Tying my salary, employment status and my employee evaluation to childrens'

test scores does NOT facilitate my growth as a professional, nor does it create or reinforce a learning atmosphere of encouragement, unconditional positive regard and targeted motivation in the classroom for consistent student learning. Give me a team of talented 'O.J. Simpson' football players, and I will give you a winning Super Bowl team. But Mr. Simpson did not prove to be a well-rounded, caring and contributory citizen, as teachers also need to teach and reinforce, every minute of every school day, the character traits of real 'winners' within a functioning society. I was less able to give my best demonstration of desirable character traits in the classroom, on the playground, in the halls and cafeteria, if hours and hours of my time, my energy and my best efforts were dedicated to following exhausting protocols of EES with the resultant High Stakes testing and evaluation looming as a menace above me.

Being a teacher requires me to give my best every minute, everyday, because what I do and how I do it determines the culture of learning in my classroom, and our students need and deserve the best support WE can give them--WE being administrators at all levels of government services, including teachers.

Furthermore, public schools welcome and ACCEPT every child in need of an education. My public elementary school has an inordinate amount of special needs students, special learners and low SES families, since Hawaii's private schools and public charter schools do not admit these needy future citizens.

Why penalize the teachers, whose student classes, and resultant childrens' TEST SCORES, are created by the principal (at my school) and assigned to specific teachers, when not all children are 'created equal'? Nor are teachers--and there are numerous academic, supportive programs proven to help teachers become more proficient. Therefore, amending all board policies that abolish the use of teacher evaluations that impact teacher pay or employment status is the only progressive and appropriate thing to do.

Please, Senate Education Committee Members, let's work together now, making intelligent revisions of our prior policies of high-stakes teacher evaluation, so that useful requirements will be in place sooner, not later, and a fundamentally sound, academically proven system of effectiveness, fairness and equality will replace it.

Mahalo for your time, and for having the spirit and the power to improve our schools!

Very truly yours,
Laurie Tanner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: lisa.m.galloway@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SCR155 on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM*
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2016 7:56:52 AM

SCR155

Submitted on: 3/24/2016

Testimony for EDU on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Galloway, PhD	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: [Lisa Morrison](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155/ SR117
Date: Monday, March 28, 2016 6:26:40 AM

Honorable Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

Thank you so much for agreeing to hear testimony on this very important resolution. I am an 8th grade teacher at Maui Waena Intermediate School. I have witnessed up close the devastating effects of the Educator Effectiveness System (EES) that was adopted two and a half years ago by Hawai'i. Every aspect of this deeply flawed system has problems, but the one I will focus on here is the aspect that ties test scores to teacher ratings. The American Statistical Association has condemned the use of student test scores to calculate teacher effectiveness, because there is no formula that can validly measure the effect a teacher has on student scores. The ASA statement from April 8, 2014, declared "that teachers account for about 1% to 14% of the variability in test scores," (Strauss, 2014) meaning that over 85% of what determines a student's score has to do with everything else about the student: their socio-economic status, geographic location, current language proficiency, disability status, family support, etc. So much of what is actually measured by standardized tests has nothing to do with what happens inside a school or a particular classroom. It is simply wrong to tie scores to an evaluation of whether a teacher is doing a good job.

The intentions were completely different, but what the Board of Education policy 2055 and the EES have done is demoralize Hawai'i teachers, unfairly attach blame to them for testing outcomes, discourage veteran teachers from staying in our public schools and new teachers from coming in to fill vacant positions, and create an environment of stress and fear of punishment for those who remain. This issue effects all teachers, and their ratings, not just those in tested subjects. Please end this by urging the BOE to amend its policy to delink test scores from teacher evaluations.

Sincerely,
Lisa Morrison

Strauss, Valerie. "Statisticians Slam Popular Teacher Evaluation Method." Washington Post. The Washington Post, 13 Apr. 2014. Web. 14 Jan. 2016.

From: [Lorraine Ishikawa](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Saturday, March 26, 2016 10:05:34 PM

I have been teaching for over 2 decades, and every year I feel more stressed than the year before. There are a few reasons for this, but the main reason is the fact that more and more 'things' are being placed on our plates, with less time to do these things AND to do what we were hired to do,...TEACH our children!

I realize the importance of a great educator & that evaluations are helpful, to determine a great educator, a good one, & one that is below expectations. I understand that evaluations are essential for being awarded needed monies from the Race to the Top grant program. But as Senate Resolution #117 states, there are a few flaws in the EES:

The American Statistical Assn. states that "value-added measurement formulas fail to determine teaching effectiveness with sufficient reliability & validity".

A 2014 study that was published showed that "value-added measures are not able to detect differences in the content or quality of classroom instruction".

HSTA surveys show that majority of Hawaii's public school teachers are frustrated with these evaluations. It limits our professional choices of how we should teach, what we need to teach, but more so, how to make learning fun for all.

Evaluations have their merits, however, they still could be subjective. I have heard of teachers who received poor evaluations from their administrators for what may have seemed like personal reasons. There were no constructive suggestions on improvement or helpful advice given to these teachers.

I was extremely fortunate to have had 2 different evaluations done with different administrators who conducted themselves very professionally. Both were done a couple of years apart & I was grateful for their positive feedback, focused observation, and the time they spent with me.

Which brings me to another point. An administrator once calculated roughly for me, how much time she would spend for one teacher-observation, complete her written portion, then meet with the teacher she observed when both are available. It came out to be 2-3 hours per teacher! She was responsible for 1/2 of our teachers. That's very draining. EES needs to be restructured if it has to exist.

When administrators suffer, teachers suffer. When teachers suffer, students

suffer. When our students suffer, our future suffers!!

Do politicians get evaluated and have their pay determined by their evaluation?

Please help teachers get back to teaching our students. Pass SR #117.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Lynn Otaguro
150 Halemaumau St.
Honolulu, Hawaii 96821

The Honorable Michele Kidani, Chair
The Honorable Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair
Senate Education Committee
Hearing: Monday, March 28, 2016, 1:20 p.m.
Conference Room 229

Supporting SCR 155/SR 117 – Requesting the Board of Education to Abolish High-Stakes Teacher Evaluation

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

My name is Lynn Otaguro and I am a teacher at Lincoln Elementary School. I am writing in support of SCR 155/SR 117, to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations.

With adoption of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Hawaii is presented with the opportunity to restructure its teacher evaluation system in a manner that better serves its students and schools. As with all systems within our public school, the evaluation system should be structured to improve our teaching and best serve our students. If this is our guiding principle, however, our present evaluation system, with its high stakes testing and consequences, is not working.

As stated in the resolution, the tests used to evaluate teachers are not a reliable reflection of teacher competence. They are not statistically reliable and they do not take into account issues such as the high amount of transiency in many of our schools. In addition, the reliance on high stakes testing results in a narrowing of the curriculum and takes away time from the kind of instruction that helps to build the well-rounded, independent thinkers and problem solvers we want our students to become. Our high stakes evaluation system, with its increased need for documentation, also takes a lot of time when many other concerns require the attention of principals and teachers.

While accountability is important, the present evaluation system just is not the best use of our limited resources. If the goal of evaluation is to improve the teaching in our schools, then the present system does not achieve this. Personally, for me, a more effective means for improving my teaching has been the time we spend in school on collaborating, planning, and learning together as a staff. We reflect on our teaching, ask questions of each other, and share solutions to common problems. The present evaluation system does not provide the kind of thoughtful feedback that might result in improving teaching. Resources spent on this system could be better used elsewhere. However, by making the evaluations high stakes and tying them to compensation, the present system ensures that resources will be inefficiently spent on the evaluation process.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the present EES. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Lynn M. Otaguro

From: [Michael Kline](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155/SR117
Date: Sunday, March 27, 2016 11:34:57 AM

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Michael Kline and I am a teacher at Kilauea Elementary School. I am a National Board Certified Teacher and a Hope Street Group Fellow. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, effective evaluations provide information pertinent to professional improvement in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose is not served by high stakes teacher evaluation models, such as EES.

There are many student-centered reasons to oppose the use of high-stakes teacher evaluations. The use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher ratings fail to determine effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Moreover, the current legally unnecessary linkage between student scores and standardized tests, codified in BOE Policy 2055, overemphasizes standardized tests and erodes actual teaching and learning time.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the EES. Instead, we need an evaluation system that provide supports teachers and students by replacing fear with faith in the professionals tasked with crafting our children's future.

Sincerely,

Michael Kline

P.O. Box 1201

Kilauea, HI. 96754

808-651-9992

From: [Mike Wooten](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Sunday, March 27, 2016 3:44:28 PM

Aloha Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

I am a former Hawaii teacher writing from Lima, Peru. I accepted a position and moved here two months ago because I could no longer bear the burdens created by the continuous onslaught of bad policies being handed down from the Hawaii State Department of Education, one of these being the implementation of testing as a measure of teacher performance. I now work at a private school that was recently on a list of Top 10 international schools in the world. I teach the children of national leaders, corporate CEO's of international companies, and celebrities. I feel that this is significant for two reasons. The first is that when Hawaii lost me, an 8-year veteran teacher who loved his students and took on leadership roles in the school, they lost exactly the type of teacher that they claim to want to create more of. The second reason this is significant is that I now work in the most prestigious school in this country, and there are no tests evaluating teachers here. That is because the leadership within my current school work to create a culture of leadership, collaboration, and high standards that is reflected in the whole being of our students - their social consciousness, community engagement, extracurricular participation, and academic prowess - and not through the administration of a standardized exam. There are schools like this in Hawaii: Punahou, Iolani, and Kamehameha. The testing obsession within the DOE is motivated by their inability to demonstrate real instructional leadership systemwide and its failure to engage and empower teachers - or to leverage their strengths to the benefit of students. Instead, they have abandoned their responsibility to address adaptive problems with adaptive leadership and have hidden behind a wall of tests and list of standards. If you look at the systemic culture under which the teachers of Hawaii work, you will see an onerous system that distrusts teachers, limits their reach and scope, and disenfranchises many of it's strongest. It is unable to attract and retain talent. The DOE regularly treats teachers like DMV employees, who administer a pre-prescribed, bureaucratic process to everyone who walks through the door. And that is what our students - your children - are getting in their classrooms. Linking testing to teacher evaluation has no research-based support. In fact, many pieces of research have completely debunked the supposed benefits that its supporters still incessantly and falsely claim. Linking testing to evaluations is evidence of poor leadership because it supplants the ability to create a culture and lead a body in favor of a multiple choice test. Imagine if we started evaluating legislators based only on how many of the laws they touched passed - regardless of importance, impact, size, timing, cultural fit, or need for further investigation. Finally, linking testing to evaluations is exactly the opposite direction that the DOE needs to be headed in. The DOE needs to find more ways to get in touch with the realities of the classrooms and lives of its students, not treat

everyone and everything, increasingly, like a number on a spreadsheet. I would love to return to Hawaii one day and work again in the classroom of a public school. But I can never justify doing so as long as this is the culture of its leadership, and the system to which I would be subjecting my own children.

Mahalo for your time and attention,
Michael Wooten

--

Michael B. Wooten
808-224-6057

"It's not that I'm so smart, I just stay with problems longer."

- Einstein

From: [Mike Landes](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR 117
Date: Friday, March 25, 2016 1:51:09 PM

Aloha Senators,

I write to you today asking you to support SCR 155 / SR 117, which would abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As a public school teacher, I have seen first-hand the damage done to our teaching profession by the new EES teacher evaluation system. For years, teachers asked for an evaluation system that relied on multiple measures that were valid and reliable, and that gave us feedback we could use to enhance and improve the instruction of our students. What we got instead was a system with multiple measures, the backbone of which was a dependence on standardized test scores. Numerous studies have shown that standardized tests and other value-added measures are neither valid nor reliable indicators of a teacher's impact on students. Including these as a part of the EES may have been a requirement of the Race To The Top grant, and it may have given the DOE a way to make it seem that they were creating the evaluation system for which teachers had been lobbying, but all that it has accomplished is further demoralization and feelings of disrespect among my fellow teachers. Now that federal law has changes, and high-stakes teacher evaluations are no longer mandated, I implore you to do the right thing and support SCR 155 / SR 117. Hopefully we can move our public education system in the right direction to give our keiki the schools they deserve!

Mahalo for your time,

- Mike Landes
Kihei, HI

TESTIMONY in support of SCR/SB117

Hearing: Monday, March 28, 2016

Rm. 229; 1:20 pm

Aloha Chair Kidani and Committee members,

My name is Mireille Ellsworth, an English teacher for nearly 12 years at Waiakea High School in Hilo on the Big Island. I am submitting here written testimony that provides specific links to research, and I urge you to look into these documents before opposing SCR155/SB117.

As a professional, I do my very best to stay at the cutting edge of issues in education, and through my research, I have found that using the Student Growth Model as 50% of teachers' evaluation is not only invalid and unreliable, but it is contributing to the chronic teacher shortage in Hawai'i by overtaxing teachers with time-consuming and often meaningless data-collection. It is demeaning to our very best educators and making them either retire earlier than they had planned, to leave the state, or just to leave the teaching profession altogether.

Board Policy 2055 included a mandate to use standardized tests in teacher evaluations in order to win the Race to the Top grant, but those days are over. With ESSA, we as a state have the freedom to stop this practice and put in place ways to nurture our teacher workforce and encourage collaboration. Therefore, NOW is the time to change this policy to delink student test scores from teacher evaluations.

If teachers are deemed unsatisfactory under the EES, what is our alternative? Fire that teacher and replace him or her with a full-time substitute or emergency hire who is not even going to be evaluated at all? It's not like we have a waiting list of people clamoring for teaching jobs in Hawai'i. We have a SHORTAGE!

Research backs up what I'm saying:

RESEARCH & WEBSITE LINKS	WHAT IT TELLS US
<p>"Problems with the Use of Student Test Scores to Evaluate Teachers" August 27, 2010</p> <p>written by 10 top-notch education experts including Linda Darling-Hammond and Diane Ravitch</p> <p>Link:</p> <p>www.epi.org/publication/bp278</p>	<p>Teacher evaluation ratings using VAM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• show inconsistency from year-to-year for same teacher• can easily identify average or lower quality teachers as effective• do not account for class size nor presence of an EA or co-teacher• do not provide incentives for better teaching• contribute to teacher attrition and demoralization

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevent people from entering the teaching profession • emphasize quantitative measures instead of qualitative measures (which are used in most other industries, especially for professionals) • must consider the quality of the tests themselves*
<p>"Statisticians slam popular teacher evaluation method"</p> <p><i>Washington Post</i> April 13, 2014</p> <p>Link: http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2014/04/13/statisticians-slam-popular-teacher-evaluation-method/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are statistical problems with VAM's reliability and validity according to the American Statistical Association, the largest organization in the United States representing statisticians and related professionals • ratings are being attributed to individual teachers who have not necessarily taught students tested on skills outside of their subject areas • VAM can only indicate correlation, not causation
<p>"Use and Validity of Test-Based Teacher Evaluations"</p> <p>put out by the National Education Policy Center, June 2012</p> <p>Link: http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/analysis-la-times-2011</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concerns with factors out of a teacher's control • notes disparity between teaching assignments** • "may reflect (and perhaps encourage) teaching to the test rather than high-quality, comprehensive instruction" • tests only assess a fraction of the content taught • major year-to-year fluctuations in the same teacher's ratings • same teacher's ratings change significantly when teacher moves from one school to another • strong evidence that students are not randomly assigned in schools *** • teacher evaluation ratings using student test scores therefore are not reliable for comparison or prediction of teacher performance
<p>Review of the literature on Student Learning Objectives commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education released in Sept. 2013</p>	<p>On VAM (or what Hawaii calls SGP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pg. i "Little is known about growth/value-added models based on locally-developed, curriculum-based assessments"

<p>By Brian Gill, Julie Bruch, and Kevin Booker of Mathematica Policy</p> <p>(National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences and REL Mid-Atlantic, Regional Educational Laboratory and ICF International also put their names on this report)</p> <p>Link: http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED544205.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pg. ii "More research is needed to inform the decisions of states and districts as they expand growth models to teachers" <p>On SLOs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "no studies have looked at SLO reliability...More research is needed as states roll out SLOs as teacher evaluation measures...Until some of the research gaps are filled, districts that intend to use SLOs may want to roll them out for instructional planning before using them in high-stakes teacher evaluations...SLOs are difficult to make valid and reliable."
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* The Smarter Balanced Test is brand new and was never field-tested using accepted methods to assure validity and reliability. As Dr. Roxana Marachi, education professor and researcher at San Jose State University, writes, "It is important to consider that unless assessments are independently verified to adhere to basic standards of test development regarding *validity, reliability, security, accessibility, and fairness in administration*, **resulting scores will be meaningless.**" Throughout the country, people have reported errors on these tests as well as shown how the Smarter Balanced test is not developmentally appropriate, especially for younger students.

** When one considers how test scores in high school are counted for teachers of all subject areas and are merely based on one grade level's scores. Many teachers are being held accountable for the scores of students they have never taught.

*** This is particularly true for special education teachers and teachers of honors and Advanced Placement Tests.

I urge this committee to make decisions for our students taking into consideration the latest in educational research. Let's seize this opportunity to work together not to chase teachers away from the profession but to embrace what we know -- Students are MORE than a score! Teachers are teaching WAY more than reading, writing, and math. You can't improve education by merely continuing to measure and collect data. We can do better.

Thank you,

Mireille Ellsworth

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: foodsovereigntynow@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR155 on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM
Date: Wednesday, March 23, 2016 10:02:15 PM

SCR155

Submitted on: 3/23/2016

Testimony for EDU on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mitsuko Hayakawa	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: Aloha Senators of the Education Committee, I appreciate your holding a hearing on this important measure. I am in strong support of SCR155 to request the Board of Education to abolish high stakes testing. As a mother of three teenagers, I have been concerned about the affect of over testing and teaching to the test. Over the years, the emphasis on tests have been increasing. As a result, I feel that my children's education has been shortchanged. These assessments do not provide specifics on how to improve learning. They provide no feedback on student strengths or weaknesses. They penalize students who think out of the box. They penalize students who simply are not great test takers. They fail to recognize each students talents and potential contributions they could make for society. They reduce creativity. They lead to an unbalanced form of education where the merits of art, music, recess, athletics, culture and hand-on learning are devalued. They rank, compare and penalize teachers for tests that may not reflect the quality work they truly provide. They certainly do not measure the qualities that I value as a human being: compassion, empathy, kindness, resilience, adaptability, and so on. As a former foreign language teacher and as a concerned parent, I humbly request that you vote in favor of this measure.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: [Natalie Gaspar](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Please pass SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Saturday, March 26, 2016 4:13:38 PM

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Natalie Gaspar and I am a teacher at Mokapu Elementary School. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, effective evaluations provide information pertinent to professional improvement in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose is not served by high stakes teacher evaluation models, such as EES.

There are many student-centered reasons to oppose the use of high-stakes teacher evaluations. The use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher ratings fail to determine effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Moreover, the current legally unnecessary linkage between student scores and standardized tests, codified in BOE Policy 2055, overemphasizes standardized tests and erodes actual teaching and learning time.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the EES. Instead, we need an evaluation system that provide supports teachers and students by replacing fear with faith in the professionals tasked with crafting our children's future.

Sincerely,

Natalie Gaspar

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Randi Brennon](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Saturday, March 26, 2016 10:25:55 AM

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Randi Wold-Brennon and I am a teacher at Hawaii Academy of Arts & Science PCS. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, effective evaluations provide information pertinent to professional improvement in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose is not served by high stakes teacher evaluation models, such as EES.

There are many student-centered reasons to oppose the use of high-stakes teacher evaluations. The use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher ratings fail to determine effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Moreover, the current legally unnecessary linkage between student scores and standardized tests, codified in BOE Policy 2055, overemphasizes standardized tests and erodes actual teaching and learning time.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the EES. Instead, we need an evaluation system that provide supports teachers and students by replacing fear with faith in the professionals tasked with crafting our children's future.

Sincerely,

Randi Wold-Brennon

PO Box 1072, Paho, HI 96778

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Randi Brennon
Hui Malama na Mea a Kane, project-based learning for middle school students
Hawaii Academy of Arts & Sciences
Puna, Hawaii
<http://randiwoldbrennon.weebly.com/>
<http://huilaau.weebly.com>
<http://huimalama.weebly.com/>
<http://ukrainianeggart.weebly.com/>

From: roeleno@juno.com
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Re: Testimony in support of SCR 155/ SR 117
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2016 3:43:46 PM

Dear Senator Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Romeo Eleno and I am writing to ask for your support of SCR 155/ SR 117. The Educator Effectiveness System as it stands truly puts teachers in a "No win situation." It is never ok to use student test scores to see how effective teachers are in the classroom. This type of system is invalid and ineffective in providing our students quality education they deserve; and not to mention, teacher morale is at its lowest at our school.

What I would like to see is the PEP-T evaluation system brought back and modified to meet DOE/BOE needs. This evaluation system was never broken but definitely needed to be adjusted.

Mahalo,
Romeo Eleno
Lanai High & Elementary School

From: [Serena Lynn](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Friday, March 25, 2016 8:32:32 AM

Dear Legislators,

I teach elementary school on Hawaii island. Upon my return to Hawaii, I was teaching Kindergarten. Mid year the children were given a "Tripod survey" where they were asked to answer questions about their school experience and my performance as their teacher. Their answers would count as part of my evaluation/pay/employment status!! I was shocked that the answers of 5 year olds held such weight over my career! I later heard from my students that there was a question that asked if "their teacher liked them," they answered "No, because my teacher loves me." Cute, but that ambiguity didn't help my evaluation

From: [Sheryl Ogawa](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155/SR117
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2016 8:31:06 PM

Aloha Chair Kidani and Committee Members:

I have been teaching for over 25 years and the current evaluation system is seriously flawed. I have no objection to being evaluated, but relying on student test scores that has data to support its ineffectiveness should be stopped.

I had a recent incident in my English Language Arts classroom regarding a practice Smarter Balance Practice Test. My student was so frustrated with the practice test, he acted out and was sent out of the classroom to have a cool down time with the Vice Principal. Later when we talked about his outburst, he said, he had had a bad night before and couldn't concentrate. If this had been the real test, his score would have affected my evaluation. I am teaching in a school with effects of poverty and "bad nights" are common where parents fight or are under the influence. Not only did this student affect his scores, but other students in the classroom were rattled and unable to focus after his outburst.

In the past students were able to take the test three times. This is ridiculous, as it takes too much time out of the school year, but a one-time snapshot is even worse.

We all take drivers license test to be able to drive. But accidents happen. Like students who take high stakes test, "off-days" happen. I don't think my reputation as a teacher should have to rely on student test scores.

Thank you for allowing this testimony. Please support of SCR 155/SR117

Sheryl S. Ogawa
HC2 Box 6056
Keaau, HI. 96749
Sent from my iPad

From: [Terry Low](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support of SCR 155/SR 117
Date: Saturday, March 26, 2016 10:05:55 AM

Chair Kidani and Committee Members:

Nothing has hurt the morale of Hawaii's teacher more than the implementation of the EES and its demands for tying teacher evaluation to testing. Worse, it has focused an inordinate amount of time on testing children, deflating their interest in school and denying the real help they need to grow as life-long learners.

As a teacher in Hawaii for the last 22 years, I have seen a decline in student interest and ability since this program started in order to meet the demands of the "Race to the Top" grant. Those demands may have been well intended, but the results were terrible in my view.

Now that the "Every Student Succeeds Act" has been passed, Hawaii has the opportunity to make changes that will benefit both teachers and students. Please support SCR 155/ SR 117 to help make that happen.

Mahalo,
Terry Low
Kauai High School

From: [Terry J Walker](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Sunday, March 27, 2016 9:03:32 PM

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

My name is Terry J Walker and I am a teacher at Hawaii Academy of Arts & Sciences Public Charter School. I am writing to support passage of the resolution to abolish high-stakes teacher evaluations. As stated in the teacher contract and as supported by the most recent research, effective evaluations provide information pertinent to professional improvement in facilitating student learning and growth. This purpose is not served by high stakes teacher evaluation models, such as EES.

There are many student-centered reasons to oppose the use of high-stakes teacher evaluations. The use of value-added formulas and standardized test scores in teacher ratings fail to determine effectiveness with sufficient reliability and validity. Moreover, the current legally unnecessary linkage between student scores and standardized tests, codified in BOE Policy 2055, overemphasizes standardized tests and erodes actual teaching and learning time.

Please pass SCR 155 / SR117 and request that the Hawai'i Board of Education amend Board Policy 2055 to abolish the EES. Instead, we need an evaluation system that provide supports teachers and students by replacing fear with faith in the professionals tasked with crafting our children's future.

Sincerely,

Terry J Walker

From: [Tracy Monroe](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2016 8:41:07 PM

Aloha Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 155. We should take action now that we have options under ESSA to create teacher evaluations that aren't high stakes and will, if chosen thoughtfully, actually encourage teachers to take ownership of the process and evaluate and improve their practice rather than relying on the discredited value added method we currently use. I can attest that the current Educator Effectiveness System has not helped teachers or students at all. What I have seen happen is that administrators are locked-in to an endless cycle of pre-meetings, observations, and post observation meetings. Teachers are being goaded into creating dog-and-pony shows in order to pass evaluation. As a mentor teacher, I would like to tell new teachers to just teach and don't worry about the rating, but they can't. There is an atmosphere of fear among them because the fact is that administrators who haven't taught, aren't familiar with the content or the students, and even some who might have grudges against teachers, are expected to sit in the classroom and type a record of everything the teacher says and does and everything the students say and do. Is this even possible to do well? I think not. So much is missed or artificial. Teachers are stressed, admin are stressed, and both have to complete lots of paperwork which takes up time and energy but does not guarantee better teaching or learning.

My first eval was done by a VP who didn't like me just days after my brother was mortally injured in an accident. I was told that, "If we don't see it, you aren't doing it." Was that observation productive and realistic? No. My second eval was conducted by an admin who had never taught or worked in education in any capacity. Well, you can be sure that I created a lesson with every single element from the administrator's rubric and a script to follow so that the admin wouldn't miss a thing. Was it taught in a way that I would normally? No. I packed too many things into that period and ran the kids ragged, but it got me a highly effective rating. Could we all get real? Let's just admit the system we chose was bad and let's find something meaningful for everyone.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tracy Monroe

--

Tracy Monroe

Ilima Intermediate Social Studies

2015 Hawaii Hope Street Group Fellow

“Those who know, do. Those that understand, teach.”

— [Aristotle](#)

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Cc: msvott@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SR117 on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM*
Date: Sunday, March 27, 2016 8:53:17 PM

SR117

Submitted on: 3/27/2016

Testimony for EDU on Mar 28, 2016 13:20PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Vanessa Ott	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: [Wendy Nickl](#)
To: [EDU Testimony](#)
Subject: Testimony in support of SCR 155 / SR117
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2016 1:43:36 PM

Honorable Members of the Senate:

March 24, 2016

My name is Wendy Nickl. I am a teacher at Kohala Middle School on the island of Hawaii. As a teacher of 30 years in Hawai'i, I support SCR155/SR117 "REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ABOLISH HIGH-STAKES TEACHER EVALUATIONS." The federal Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 prohibits the federal government from mandating any aspect of a state teacher evaluation system, including the use of standardized tests in conducting teacher evaluations, and allows states to revise or repeal teacher evaluation systems implemented under previous federal requirements. So please repeal Effective Educator System (EES) to keep in compliance with the ESSA.

The EES system has been a really onerous burden on our teachers. We welcome being evaluated, but the requirements of EES necessitate huge amounts of time that could be better used planning and implementing effective lessons for our students. As our school's curriculum coordinator, I witnessed so many skilled and compassionate teachers feeling demoralized because of this system.

Last year, our school lost an excellent math teacher to a private school. This teacher was highly respected in our small rural community, had great rapport with our middle school students, and worked and lived in our town. He left because under the EES, he was rated as a "Proficient" instead of "Distinguished" teacher, due to standardized test scores and a capricious administrator observation. This caring teacher was disgusted and discouraged. After working with public school students for over 15 years with great success, he got a lower rating than another colleague who benefited from this teacher's previous students excellent test scores. The EES has compromised professional autonomy, failed to improve professional practice, and overemphasized standardized testing. It doesn't make better teachers.

Hawaii's public school teachers are smart and hard working. Please help us continue supporting our students. We hope we can count on you for your support for SCR155/SR117.

Thank you,

WendyAnn H. Nickl
Kohala Middle School
wendyfivec@gmail.com