



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

**Date:** 02/06/2019  
**Time:** 02:55 PM  
**Location:** 229  
**Committee:** Senate Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 0937 RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS.

**Purpose of Bill:** Appropriates funds to the public charter school commission to allocate to charter schools for meal service costs.

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (DOE) supports SB 0937 and is not opposed to funds being appropriated to provide meal subsidiaries for charter school students. The DOE feels that all students in the State of Hawai'i should have access to nutritious meals at school, especially if students meet the poverty threshold for free or reduced meals.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).



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

Corey Rosenlee  
President

Osa Tui Jr.  
Vice President

Logan Okita  
Secretary-Treasurer

Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: SB 937 - RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2019

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SB 937**, relating to charter schools.

The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) is the exclusive representative of the state's 13,700 public school teachers as the local affiliate of the 2.2 million member National Education Association. This measure would appropriate funds to the public charter school commission to allocate to charter schools for meal service costs.

In Hawai'i, food insecurity is one of the most pressing manifestations of overall socioeconomic inequality. Over 70,000 public school students eat free or reduced-price meals in our state, though only 40 percent eat school breakfasts. Hawai'i ranks 47<sup>th</sup> in school breakfast participation rates among qualifying students.

Congress established the National School Lunch Program, in 1946, and School Breakfast Program, fully implemented in 1975, to ensure that low-income students are properly nourished. Yet, many local families struggle to provide nutritious meals for their children. According the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, in Hawai'i, 15.3 percent of families experience food insecurity, meaning that "they do not always know how they will afford their next meal." An additional 3.9 percent are "very low food secure" families that have significantly reduced food consumption because of economic hardship.



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At the same time, 47 percent of all public school students qualify for the Department of Education's free and reduced lunch program, a number that has risen by 20 percent since 2007 because of economic decline and cost of living increases. Low-income students are, again, less likely to receive adequate meals at home, leaving them without the calories necessary to perform basic academic tasks. Cases of chronic hunger can lead to achievement gaps, concentration loss, illness, increased absenteeism, behavioral problems, depression, and misdiagnosed learning disabilities. Thus, providing a decent meal for our impoverished children—or in this case, ensuring that those meals aren't unnecessarily taken away—is a moral and educational imperative.

Hungry students cannot focus. To ensure that our students are well-fed and ready to learn, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** SB 937.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



JOHN S.S. KIM  
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII  
**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**  
**(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)**

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>  
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

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FOR: SB 937 RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS  
DATE: February 6, 2019  
TIME: 2:55 P.M.  
COMMITTEE: Committee on Education  
ROOM: Conference Room 229  
FROM: Sione Thompson, Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Kidani, Vice-Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **SUPPORT of SB 937**, which provides funds to the Commission to allocate to charter schools for student meal service costs.

The majority of charter schools provide food service at various levels from a variety of sources which include the Department of Education (DOE) and private, contracted vendors. Approximately 20 charter schools participate in the various federally funded food service programs, such as the National School Lunch and Fresh Fruit and Vegetables programs.

The Commission appreciates the support for public charter schools shown by this committee and looks forward to collaborating with the Senate, public charter schools, and other interested stakeholders in advancing this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



# HAWAII APPLESEED

## CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
Supporting SB 937 – Relating to Charter Schools  
Senate Committee on Education  
Scheduled for hearing at Monday, February 6, 2019, 2:55PM, in conference room 229

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Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT** of **SB 937**, which would allocate funds to support charter school meal service programs.

Nearly 15,000 Hawai'i children attend public charter schools, and of these, nearly three-quarters meet the poverty threshold to qualify for free or reduced lunch. Unfortunately, the USDA reimbursement rate is not nearly sufficient to cover the cost of meal service in Hawai'i. In fact, a 2015 analysis by our organization estimates that the reimbursement rates are anywhere between 17% and 47% too low, and the additional cost must be subsidized in order to provide a reimbursable meal that includes the components required for compliance with the federal Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act.

While the legislature has generously opted to subsidize this cost for students at public non-charter schools, the State's 37 public charter schools are left to scramble for grant funds (or dip into their non-facility general funds) in order to feed lunch to their students each day. In some communities, there simply aren't any food service companies that are able to provide daily meals for the price, so children are told to bring lunch from home, or go hungry.

A hungry child cannot learn. Our charter school students deserve to have healthy meals just as much as our public school students. This subsidy is necessary to help alleviate some of the cost-burden of each individual charter school's meal programs, thereby ensuring that the programs are financially sustainable and able to reach the students whose health, well-being, and academic achievement depend on access to healthy food during the school day.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. Please pass SB 937 to make sure that all our children have access to wholesome meals at school.

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*The Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice is committed to a more socially just Hawai'i, where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. We change systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice through policy development, advocacy, and coalition building.*



Ho'okāko'o  
Corporation

THE SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

**LATE**

**Testimony In Support of S.B. 937**  
**Relating to Charter Schools**  
Wednesday, February 6, 2019, 2:55 PM  
Conference Room 229, Hawai'i State Capitol

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

Ho'okāko'o Corporation is in **STRONG SUPPORT of S.B. 937**, which appropriates funds to the public charter school commission to allocate to charter schools for meal service costs.

We believe that school breakfast and lunch programs are critical to student health and academic performance, especially for low-income students. Students who eat healthy breakfasts and lunches demonstrate improved concentration, increased energy and better test scores. And for many students, school meals are their primary and most consistent source of nourishment.

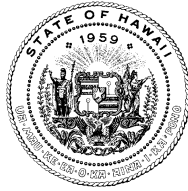
Our schools, Kamaile Academy in Wai'anae, Kualapu'u School on Moloka'i, and Waimea Middle School on Hawai'i Island, collectively serve over 1,500 children in Pre-K through 12th grade, 86% of whom are from low-income families. To ensure our students have access to nutritious meals at school, we participate in the federal Community Eligibility Provision meal program allowing all of our students to receive free breakfast and lunch daily regardless of their income status. However, there is a financial cost to our schools.

To maintain this program, we contribute nearly \$300,000 annually to subsidize the true cost of providing free breakfasts and lunches for our 1,500 students. Our children deserve every opportunity to succeed in school and in life. However, each year, we must reevaluate our ability to maintain this commitment due to competing school priorities.

Ho'okāko'o respectfully requests the Senate Committee on Education's support of S.B. 937.

Thank you,

David Y. Gibson, Executive Director  
Ho'okāko'o Corporation  
(808) 983-3835



**LATE**

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**Kualapu'u School**  
**Public Conversion Charter**  
P O Box 260  
Kualapu'u, Molokai, Hawaii 96757  
Phone: (808) 567-6900, Fax: (808) 567-6906

**THE SENATE**  
**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

**Testimony In Support of S.B. 937**  
**Relating to Charter Schools**  
Wednesday, February 6, 2019, 2:55 PM  
Conference Room 229, Hawai'i State Capitol

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

Kualapu`u Public Conversion Charter School is in **STRONG SUPPORT of S.B. 937**, which appropriates funds to the public charter school commission to allocate to charter schools for meal service costs.

We believe that school breakfast and lunch programs are critical to student health and academic performance, especially for low-income students. Students who eat healthy breakfasts and lunches demonstrate improved concentration, increased energy and better test scores. And for many students, school meals are their primary and most consistent source of nourishment.

Along with our sister Ho'okako'o Charter schools, Kamaile Academy in Wai'anae and Waimea Middle School on Hawai'i Island, we collectively serve over 1,500 children in Pre-K through 12th grade, 86% of whom are from low-income families. To ensure our students have access to nutritious meals at school, we participate in the federal Community Eligibility Provision meal program allowing all of our students to receive free breakfast and lunch daily regardless of their income status. However, there is a financial cost to our schools.

To maintain this program, we contribute nearly \$300,000 annually to subsidize the true cost of providing free breakfasts and lunches for our 1,500 students. Our children deserve every opportunity to succeed in school and in life. However, each year, we must reevaluate our ability to maintain this commitment due to competing school priorities.

Kualapu`u PCCS respectfully requests the Senate Committee on Education's support of S.B. 937.

Sincerely,

Lydia Trinidad  
Principal

**LATE**

**SB-937**

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 9:16:23 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/6/2019 2:55:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kim Johnston	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



**LATE**

**SB-937**

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 9:51:09 AM

Testimony for EDU on 2/6/2019 2:55:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lisa Omalsa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support this bill to provide funding support for breakfast and lunch meals at charter schools in Hawaii. A nutritious meal is vital to the growth, development, and learning experience of our children. Unfortunately, many go without or with very little. No pointing fingers because we are a village and we take care without judgement.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**LATE**

**SB-937**

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 11:04:15 AM

Testimony for EDU on 2/6/2019 2:55:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dara Makaiwi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill in hopes that it will relieve charter schools from having to spend per pupil funds on student meals.

**LATE**

**SB-937**

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 12:59:31 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/6/2019 2:55:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Patricia Cook	Testifying for Waimea Middle School	Support	No

Comments: