



DEPT. COMM. NO. 475

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

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

June 1, 2020

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President
and Members of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki, Speaker
and Members of the House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Saiki, and Members of the Legislature:

For your information and consideration, I am transmitting a copy of the Hawaii State Department of Education's report on its status on the plan for the reopening of schools in Fall 2020 based on guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, pursuant to Senate Resolution 144, S.D. 1 (2020). The report may also be viewed electronically at <http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/VisionForSuccess/SchoolDataAndReports/StateReports/Pages/Legislative-reports.aspx>.

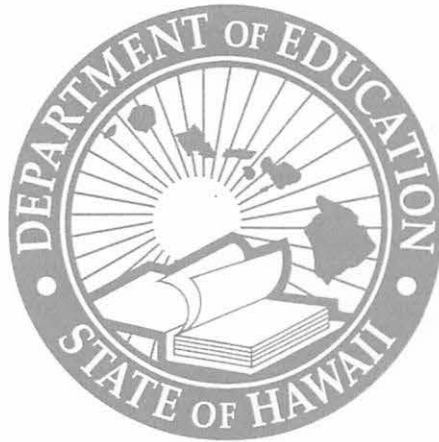
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Christina M. Kishimoto".

Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto
Superintendent

CMK:sg
Enclosures

c: Legislative Reference Bureau
Office of Strategy, Innovation, and Performance



State of Hawaii
Department of Education

Status on the Plan for the Reopening of Schools in Fall 2020

June 2020

Senate Resolution 144, S.D. 1 (2020), requests that the Hawaii State Department of Education report on its strategy to implement a reopening plan for the upcoming school year based on guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Legislative Report
Senate Resolution 144, S.D. 1
Status on the Plan for the Reopening of Schools in Fall 2020
June 1, 2020

Background

On March 4, 2020, Governor David Ige issued an emergency proclamation declaring a disaster emergency relief period until April 29, 2020 in response to the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. On March 13, 2020, a national emergency was declared in the United States concerning this pandemic.

On March 17, 2020, Governor Ige initiated the “15 days to slow the spread of COVID-19” mandate in Hawaii which directed all departments to immediately analyze and implement telework for all eligible employees. The Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE) quickly determined key personnel that needed to continue to report to work to perform essential functions and directed all other employees to begin to work remotely in order to practice social distancing for 15 days commencing on March 20, 2020 and ending on April 3, 2020.

On March 23, 2020, Governor Ige issued a supplemental proclamation which initiated a statewide “stay-at-home” directive. This proclamation ordered the entire state to stay at home and work from home from March 25, 2020 through April 30, 2020.

On March 24, 2020, HIDOE announced its school facilities would remain closed to students through April 30, based on guidance and information from health officials and elected leaders. Traditional in-school instruction was placed on hold until schools reopened.

On April 2, 2020, the Board of Education unanimously approved HIDOE’s request to modify high school graduation and commencement requirements for the graduating class of 2020. This approval in part helped finalize plans to utilize grades from the third quarter to determine the final grade for student courses.

On April 17, 2020, HIDOE announced the continuation of enrichment and distance learning through May 28, 2020, the last day of the 2019-20 school year for students. The decision was made based on the guidance and information from health officials and elected leaders.

During April and May 2020, HIDOE rolled out a robust menu of expanded summer programming primarily via distance learning, with face-to-face options where deemed necessary to best support students.

While school facilities were closed to students since March 19, 2020, the public education system remained open. All HIDOE employees continued to work remotely with the exception of those who are considered essential and must perform their duties at a campus or office. The last day for teachers and other 10-month employees was Friday, May 29, 2020.

School Year 2020-21

In April 2020, HIDOE shifted its focus towards creating a reopening plan for school year 2020-21, taking into account the changing parameters for social distancing, travel, and opening of commerce, alongside its rollout of summer 2020 programs.

On May 18, 2020, Governor Ige outlined his plan to initiate a phased reopening of Hawaii and signed an [eighth supplemental emergency proclamation](#) in response to COVID-19. This proclamation included the State Reopening Strategy for Businesses and Operations (Attachment G of the proclamation), which identifies “education facilities (K-12, higher)” as one of the businesses and operations that are allowed to open with physical distancing and safe practices during the “Act with Care” phase. The state’s transition from the “Safer at Home” phase to the new “Act with

Care” phase came at a time when our complex areas and schools were preparing for blended summer learning programs. This proclamation provided guidance for schools and opened the doors for summer learning and the upcoming school year.

During this summer, schools and offices will be strategically implementing social distancing models and solidifying school facilities’ per-person capacities in various spaces, including classrooms, offices, cafeterias, playgrounds, and meeting rooms, in preparation for the 2020-21 school year. Various instructional models, such as face-to-face, blended, and distance learning, lend themselves to each school’s optimal environment for students and employees. Schools will consider the guidance of health officials and factors such as building and classroom configurations, student grade levels, bell schedules, recess, meal service, student bus transportation, and existing health conditions of adults and students as they plan for the upcoming school year. Further, the summer usage of personal protective equipment (PPE) and sanitization supplies will allow for forecasting on-demand needs when the school year begins in the fall. HIDOE schools and offices will continue to implement timely adjustments to the continuously changing conditions driven by health and safety needs.

The superintendent has led the charge to ensure HIDOE addresses pertinent factors and issues related to the opening of schools including federal and state laws, Board of Education policies, administrative rules, collective bargaining agreements, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, and standard department practices related to various focus areas (see attached list).

Each complex area superintendent met with their principals and reported on their feedback and recommendations for the reopening of schools on May 28, 2020. The superintendent, deputy superintendent, assistant superintendents, and complex area superintendents will now begin the process of collaboratively reviewing gathered input and compiling their findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, for further action. HIDOE is also anticipating guidance for the reopening of schools from the Board of Education which will be drafted with input from members of the Board, education stakeholders, and the public. This anticipated guidance will be a [discussion item](#) at the Board’s June 4, 2020 General Business Meeting.

As HIDOE approached the end of the 2019-20 school year and eight weeks of teaching, public television programming, providing meals to children, supporting our HIDOE ohana, designing a summer learning program, graduating 11,000 students, and standing up a telehealth system for public school students, HIDOE launched a multi-phase approach to collecting data on distance learning. HIDOE designed three surveys – a student, teacher, and family survey – to better understand the impact of remote teaching and learning and the supports needed to ensure student success. HIDOE also designed a data collection tool for principals to input data about their schools’ devices, device utilization, and future needs in a standardized manner for state-level reporting. The data collected will allow HIDOE to hone its continuous services and design throughout the 2020-21 school year, which will inevitably require HIDOE to be agile in what is being projected by CDC as an unknown and ever-changing health situation until a vaccine is both developed and ubiquitous.

Closing

“COVID-19 has touched families in every part of America – with communities across the country experiencing the pandemic in different ways. As many communities are strategically reopening, it is important for everyone to work together to continue efforts to prevent community spread of COVID-19. We ask that all Americans continue to follow the guidance of their state and local health authorities and to do their part to embrace prevention strategies, including social distancing, practicing good hand hygiene on a regular basis, improved sanitation, and wearing a cloth face covering in public where the situation suggests, so as to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and protect the most vulnerable such as the frail and elderly with co-morbid health conditions and those with compromised immune systems.” – CDC (May 28, 2020).

As our nation and the State of Hawaii navigate our way through the COVID-19 pandemic, HIDOE acknowledges the resiliency of its educators and workforce, parents, community, and our haumana. We extend our mahalo and appreciation to the Legislature and state officials for their ongoing support and collaborative leadership as we all rise to the challenge of seeking innovative ways to move our public school system forward during these uncharted times.

A significant step in moving our public system forward is ensuring equity of access to internet connectivity for all public school students and their families. HIDOE appreciates our legislators' direct involvement in the Hawaii Broadband Hui to address our communities' broadband needs. While HIDOE has maximized the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds awarded to support the transition of schools from a historically in-person, in-school model to a flexible mixed-delivery model, HIDOE will need the continued support of our legislators and the Hawaii Broadband Hui to resolve connectivity challenges and raise funds to support our most vulnerable families in accessing connectivity, devices, and family training. HIDOE looks forward to partnering with the Legislature in engaging business and industry to address the statewide goal of providing true equity of technology access.

As we move ahead with our plans for reopening schools for the upcoming school year, HIDOE looks forward to working collaboratively with the Legislature to address the budget challenges and strategically design financial models for optimal flexibility to safeguard student success and community stabilization.

**Opening of Schools for School Year 2020-21
HIDOE Focus Areas under review**

<p>Access to equipment and supplies</p> <p>Adult Education</p> <p>Afterschool care and activities</p> <p>Afterschool programs</p> <p>Alternative educational programs</p> <p>Assessments</p> <p>Athletics</p> <p>Attendance</p> <p>Bathrooms</p> <p>Breakfast and lunch programs</p> <p>Calendar (work year)</p> <p>Certification programs</p> <p>Classroom walkthroughs</p> <p>Cleaning classrooms and offices</p> <p>Continuity of learning and engagement</p> <p>Contract agreements during teleworking</p> <p>Counseling</p> <p>Department of Health/Department of Education protocols</p> <p>Early College</p> <p>Employee evaluations</p> <p>Facilities use</p> <p>Faculty and staff meetings</p> <p>Hawaiian Language Immersion program</p> <p>Internships and internship portal</p> <p>Learning management system</p> <p>Library services</p> <p>Maintenance of and access to student records</p> <p>Micro learning hubs</p> <p>Military families</p> <p>Multitrack schools</p>	<p>Parent help desk</p> <p>Parent-teacher conferences</p> <p>Performance evaluation</p> <p>Professional development</p> <p>Project-based/Aina-based learning</p> <p>Repair and Maintenance/Capital Improvement Projects</p> <p>Recess and transition of students between classes</p> <p>Registration and enrollment</p> <p>Safety procedures</p> <p>School schedules</p> <p>School supply lists</p> <p>Screening and health room procedures</p> <p>Security</p> <p>Special Education</p> <p>Staff time and attendance</p> <p>Student activities and government</p> <p>Student attendance</p> <p>Student competitions</p> <p>Student discipline</p> <p>Student transportation</p> <p>Student travel</p> <p>Substitutes</p> <p>Teacher candidates</p> <p>Technology training for families</p> <p>Teleworking</p> <p>Tri-level meetings and communications</p> <p>Visitors</p> <p>Volunteers</p>
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