



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

Testimony of
David Y. Ige
Governor, State of Hawai'i
Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

February 24, 2021
3:00 p.m., Conference Room 229

In consideration of
Governor's Message 550
Submitted for consideration and confirmation as a member of the School Facilities
Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, Chad Farias

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and committee members:

I respectfully request your support in confirming the appointment of Chad Farias to serve as a member of the School Facilities Board.

Mr. Farias earned a Bachelor in Arts History and Education from Loyola Marymount University and Masters in Arts EDEA in Education Administration from the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa.

Mr. Farias worked for Hawai'i public schools for 28 years. He served as a teacher, counselor, activities coordinator, athletics coach, vice-principal, principal, and complex area superintendent. As a complex area superintendent for Kau-Keaau-Pahoa, he implemented the State Strategic Plan and has brought stability through natural disasters and continued operation of schools in the area. He was recognized as an outstanding public school principal and earned the Island Insurance Masayuki Tokioka Excellence in School Leadership Award in 2014.

I'm confident that Chad Farias' breadth of education and experience will benefit the School Facilities Board as well as the students of Hawai'i.

This administration is committed to transforming the culture of government by embracing and accelerating change. Together, we can build a better home for our keiki, kupuna, and all the residents of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration.



TESTIMONY BY:

JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors
LYNN A.S. ARAKI-REGAN
DEREK J. CHOW
ROSS M. HIGASHI
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN

LATE

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

February 24, 2021
3:00 P.M.
State Capitol, Teleconference

G.M. 550

**Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the School Facilities Board,
Governatorial Nominee, CHAD FARIAS, for a term to expire 06-30-2024.**

Senate Committee on Education

As the Administration's lead for setting up the School Facilities Agency (SFA), the Department of Transportation (DOT), Highways Division, **supports** the appointment of Chad Farias as a Board member of the SFA.

Mr. Farias is the Complex Area Superintendent for the Kau-Keeau-Pahoia complex on Hawaii Island, where his leadership drives improvements and sets standards of excellence in the public school system in academics, operations, facilities, human resources, technology, and more. Prior to his career as superintendent for the complex, Mr. Farias was the Keaau Elementary Principal from 2008, and under his leadership, Keaau Elementary was one of the pioneers in digital learning among its staff and students, boosting student achievement and lowering chronic absenteeism. Mr. Farias will be a valuable SFA Board member due to his expertise.

The SFA will provide the state a significant opportunity to support students and teachers with new facilities and resources. Mr. Farias' passion and experience will be tremendous assets to the board.

For these reasons, the DOT requests your favorable consideration for the nomination of Chad Farias as an SFA Board member.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HAWAII DISTRICT OFFICE
75 AUPUNI STREET
HILO< HAWAII 96720

February 22, 2021

To whom it may concern:

It is my pleasure to write this testimony in support of Keaau/Kau/Pahoa Complex Area Superintendent Chad K. Farias appointment to serve on the Inaugural School Facilities Agency Board.

I have known CAS Farias for over 35 years, as a young child, to teenager, and now a responsible adult, CAS Farias is a determined leader with a positive mindset. I have personally witnessed CAS Farias provide guidance and expertise to his students, staff, and principals consistently and effectively.

As the Classified Personnel Regional Officer for Hawaii Island, I have worked closely with CAS Farias in making decisions related to personnel matters in his complex. CAS Farias is an open-minded leader who is not afraid to make the difficult decision when the outcome creates positive change for his complex area. Compassionate but firm, CAS Farias will make informed decisions based on factual information and do what is necessary to improve his schools and the communities they serve.

His global approach to caring for "all" Keiki on Hawaii Island was clearly demonstrated when he voluntarily agreed to be the CAS in charge of both the Hilo/Waiakea Complex and the Keaau/Kau/Pahoa Complex when the Hilo/Waiakea Complex was temporarily without a CAS. Juggling the two complexes was a daunting task, but CAS Farias "hit the ground running" and immediately engulfed himself into the day to day operations of each school and provided support and guidance when needed.

It is without hesitation that I support Mr. Chad K. Farias appointment to serve on the Inaugural School Facilities Agency Board. CAS Farias will bring a fresh perspective and new ideas to your newly created panel and he will certainly bring positive change for the betterment of the Department. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me via phone 808-974-6614 or email kurt.kawachi@k12.hi.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kurt Kawachi".

Kurt Kawachi,
Department of Education
Personnel Regional Officer, Hawaii Island.

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 3:49:19 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rory Souza	Testifying for Honoka'a Elementary School	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I would like to state my support for Chad Farias to serve on the School Facilities Agency Board. I believe that Chad embodies the skills, knowledge and disposition to serve this position well. Chad has spent nearly 30 years in the education field and has experienced every leadership facet available on our island. His ability to relate to all levels has afforded him the ability to realize growth no matter what the task may be. I am confident that Chad will be an asset to the School Facilities Agency Board.

With Aloha,

R. Souza; Principal

Senator Michelle Kidani
Senate Committee on Education

Bryan Arbles
Hilo Union, Principal
506 Waianuenue Ave.
Hilo, HI 96720

February 23, 2021

Support for GM 550 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the School's Facilities Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, Chad Farias, for a term to expire 6-30-24

Thank you for considering this testimony in support of Chad "Keone" Farias. In his professional capacity, I have worked with Keone when he served as a Vice Principal at Hilo High School, and again during his short tenure supporting two Complex Areas (HW & KKP) as a Complex Area Superintendent on the Big Island.

Throughout his professional career Keone has been much more than a colleague or a supervisor. Keone is the friend you can count on when a job is near impossible or faces the toughest of challenges, not unlike the challenge facing school facilities and the multitude of complicated decisions surrounding progress in this area. When dealing with challenges, or providing leadership in difficult situations it is important to be grounded, understand where you come from, and be fair and consistent in the approach and process applied to the challenge. Whether it is facing the challenge of a volcanic eruption and evacuation, taking a leadership role in two complex areas at the same time, providing access to health care and internet service in hard to reach rural communities, or providing leadership in partnership with community groups to get vaccination started for DOE employees on the Big Island during COVID-19, Keone has been there standing side by side with his team of dedicated staff addressing need areas and communicating throughout. In many cases, it is Keone and his people that are serviced last as the effort and focus is consistently on improving others around them. Our complex area and my school staff have benefited directly as a result, and progress has been achieved in a collaborative way where both Complex Area Superintendent's Snelling and Kanehailua were a part of the process together. In Government today, it is difficult to find truly collaborative leadership, everyone wants to take the credit and pass the blame when trouble hits. It is during those times, that you need a friend who will stand by you and apply a fair and equitable process aimed at finding effective solutions and maintaining clear and consistent communication. Keone Farias is that kind of leader...and most importantly, that kind of friend.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 10:13:55 AM

Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kelcy Koga	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To: Senator Michelle Kidani/Senate Committee on Education

From: Mr. Kelcy Koga, Principal Waiakea High School

Subject: Support for GM550 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the School's Facilities Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, Chad Farias, for a term to expire 6/30/24.

It with great pleasure that I submit testimony in support of Mr. Chad "Keone" Farias. I have personally known Mr. Farias for over 45 years. During that time time, he has served as a friend, colleague, and supervisor. As an educator, Mr. Farias has always advocated for students and student acheivement. He has always championed minority students and those of at risk backgrounds.

As he gained expereince in his career, I have seen Mr. Farias' passion flourish to leadership positions, first as a Principal, and later as a Complex Area Superintendent. His positive and proactive leadership enabled our complex area to move forward and progress through "troubled waters" when the current superintendent needed to be replaced.

Weather making policy decisions that directly affects instruction or working for the betterment of the Department of Education, it is without a doubt that including Mr. Farias on this board will benefit all who are involved.

Much appreciation for the opportunity to testify.

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 1:30:01 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Darlene Javar	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have worked with Chad “Keone” Farias for over a decade in different capacities and currently as principal of Na’alehu Elementary School. Keone has always been an exemplar of both forward thinking and meeting the practical needs of “now”, or even the urgent-- regarding his experiences in managing and coordinating HIDOE facilities, non-HIDOE agencies, and safety during natural/health events such as lava, SO2, storms, and COVID-19. He has a clear understanding of the need to merge the instructional environment, the culture of place, and the demographics of a community to maximize student achievement. Keone will provide this agency with clarity on the challenges of equity of this island State, with real experience in the most struggling communities of HIDOE. Keone will push a sense of “urgency” because even if he knows that we can teach and learn under a tent (literally done in KKP) ALL of our students of Hawaii deserve appropriate facilities to thrive, now and into the future.

I Harris Testimony for GM 550

Aloha Honorable Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, ladies and gentlemen of the Senate Education Committee,

I appreciate the time to share my testimony in support of Mr. Chad Keone Farias' appointment to the School Facilities Agency. I am an educator and has served the Ka'ū-Kea'au-Pāhoa Complex Area for almost thirty years. Throughout my years of service, I have experienced teaching in facilities that were over a hundred years old as well as a brand new, state-of-the-art facility. And throughout these years my students and I have felt both the challenges and the benefits of how the environment truly impacts the ability to learn and concentrate.

The Ka'ū-Kea'au-Pāhoa Complex Area has been so fortunate to have Mr. Farias as a dedicated, passionate, and innovative leader throughout his career and now as the Complex Area Superintendent. As I'm certain you know that the Eastside of Hawai'i island has faced many challenges from hurricanes, to lava inundation. All with the backdrop of socio-economic, systemic poverty. And through this all, Mr. Farias has worked with our school leaders, faculty/staff, Hawai'i County and State officials, community organizations & business leaders for one common purpose - ***Mohala i ka wai ka maka o ka pua*** - to improve the living conditions in order for our 'pua' (keiki & ohana) can thrive! Mr. Farias has not only rolled up his sleeves and got to work in Ka'ū-Kea'au-Pāhoa but across all of Hawai'i island. He has demonstrated that there are NO borders. Mr. Farias's appointment to the inaugural School Facilities Agency will broaden his reach to serve all haumāna and their ohana across the State of Hawai'i. He will join the other appointed members on this board to commit to learning about innovative designs to inspire learning both in and outside of the class building. ***'A 'ohe hana nui ke alu 'ia*** - No task is too big when done together by all!

It's for these reasons and more that I support Mr. Chad Keone Farias's appointment to the School Facilities Agency the keiki & ohana of Moku o Keawe and beyond. Mahalo for your time.

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 10:45:51 AM

Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joy Hohnstine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

I support the appointment of Chad Farias to the School Facilities Board. I believe his experiences in and commitment to our Hawai'i Island community will bring a unique perspective to the important work of this Board. In particular, his long history as an educator will help ground his understanding of how schools serve as the heart of a community just as his deep knowledge of the communities and land of Hawai'i Island will allow him to recognize the unique opportunities of serving rural areas with limited infrastructure statewide.

Sincerely,

Joy C. Hohnstine

District Educational Specialist

Ka'u-Kea'au-PÄ• hoa Complex Area
16-586 Keaau-Pahoa Road
Keaau, Hawaii 96749

Senator Michelle Kidani
Senate Committee on Education

Brandon K. Respicio
Hilo High School, School Administrative Services Assistant
556 Waianuenu Ave.
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Testimony in support of GM550 - Submitted for consideration and confirmation to the School's Facilities Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, Chad Farias, for a term to expire June 30, 2024

February 23, 2021

Mahalo for your consideration of this testimony presented in support of Chad Keone Farias. I have worked with Keone in a professional capacity at Hilo High School, where he served as a Vice Principal; at Kalaniana'ole Elementary & Intermediate School as a TA-Principal; and most recently as he served as the Complex Area Superintendent (CAS) for both the KKP and HW Complex Areas (East Hawaii) on the Big Island.

Throughout the years of working with Keone, it is apparent to me that an integral part of his professional mission is the insurance of the safety, well-being, and the education of the students, staff, and community he serves. His commitment to clear communication and his focus on working collaboratively, amongst all constituents, is evident in his daily operations. As a Vice Principal at Hilo High School, Keone regularly assisted custodial staff and service club students with weekend campus improvement & beautification projects, exhibiting his dedication & empathy toward our school ohana and facility. As our Interim-Complex Area Superintendent, Keone was able to steer the ships of two complex areas, taking the time to visit all schools under his charge to speak with students and staff, all while coordinating projects such as technology hubs in rural communities and emergency shelters during an impending lava flow emergency. At recent COVID-19 vaccination clinics, Keone was visible, working alongside his team of devoted staff and other organizations to ensure vaccinations were effectively & safely delivered to educators within our community. More noticeable, however, was Keone's ability to spark conversations with those he knew and those he didn't, building relationships and understanding the concerns and needs of others. For these reasons and more, I feel Keone is an exemplary leader, a compassionate educator, and a dedicated friend when you need him the most.

I am confident in stating that the condition of some of our state's school facilities is of top priority for many school officials statewide. I am even more confident in asserting that Chad Keone Farias would effectively serve on the School Facilities Board with the best interests of our keiki and communities-at-large, in heart and mind.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 3:27:55 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sharon Beck	Testifying for Ka'u High and Pahala Elementary School	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of CAS Farias's nomination to serve on the Inaugural School Facilities Agency Board. CAS Farias has the education knowledge and engineering background needed to represent our schools and communities with the development, planning, and construction projects related to Capital Improvements. CAS Farias has the love for all children and strives to break down barriers to ensure equitable access to high quality education for all. I am confident that CAS Farias will represent our schools, families and communities passionately with his experience and expertise.

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 10:04:52 AM

Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Trini Hironaga	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 23, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

I have served as Chad Farias' School Renewal Specialist for the last seven years but have known him as a person and educator for 13 years. Chad has been a public school teacher, administrator, and Complex Area Superintendent for almost 30 years, serving in the three complex areas of the Big Island. He knows the area well and is personally connected to many people and places around the island. As a Complex Area Superintendent, Chad has brought charter and public schools to the table during lava flows and this pandemic to open communication, share community resources, and form partnerships. I am confident that he will contribute this strength to the Agency as public and private partnership formations are necessary for success. Chad also has strength in facilities management as he was a long time operational administrator in East Hawaii. His working knowledge of facilities combined with his personal activities in construction, make him an excellent Gubernatorial Nominee for the School Facilities Board.

Sincerely,

Trini Hironaga

School Renewal Specialist

Kau Keaau Pahoia Complex Area

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 10:12:34 AM

Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anne Kauhi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 23, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

I have served as Chad Farias' School Renewal Specialist for the last seven years but have known him as a person, my teacher, and an educator for over 30 years. Chad has been a public school teacher, administrator, and Complex Area Superintendent for almost 30 years. He has served in the three complex areas of the Big Island. Chad knows the area well and is personally connected to many people and places around the island. As a Complex Area Superintendent, Chad has brought charter and public schools to the table during lava flows and this pandemic to open communication, share community resources, and form partnerships. I am confident that he will contribute this strength to the Board as public and private partnership formations are necessary for success. Chad also has strength in facilities management as he was a long time operational administrator in East Hawaii. His working knowledge of facilities combined with his personal activities in construction, make him an excellent Gubernatorial Nominee for the School Facilities Board.

Sincerely,

Anne Kauhi

School Renewal Specialist

Kau Keaau Pahoa Complex Area

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 1:16:17 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathleen Dimino	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, I fully support Chas Farias's appointment to the School Facilities Board. His expertise in this area will be valuable, not only to the Board, but to everyone in our community.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Dimino

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 8:30:29 AM

Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elaine Higa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the nomination of Chad Farias to serve on the Inaugural School Facilities Agency Board. Chad would do a great job representing our schools, keiki, and communities of Hawaii Island. Chad has been able to navigate and support schools during this COVID pandemic and natural disasters. He always puts keiki interest first, no matter the situation, and would continue to do so when serving on the board.

I am writing today in support of Governor Ige's decision to appoint Chad Keone Farias to the School Facilities Board. As complex area superintendent for the Ka'u Kea'au Pahoia complex area, Mr. Farias has sought to care for and improve the lives of the people of Hawaii Island. Even in times of crisis, such as the 2018 Puna lava flow that impacted so many, his leadership ensured the continuity of services and education for our families. Mr. Farias has devoted his career to the ideal that we work together for all our keiki, forever and ever. With his knowledge of the fiscal, operational, and facilities systems of the Department of Education he is the right fit for the School Facilities Board.

Respectfully,

Andrew Scott
Kurtistown, Hawaii

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 12:41:19 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brandon Tanabe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

CAS Farias has been a highly effective leader for the KKP complex, and at times, the entire east side of the island. He has the ability to help us navigate through difficult situations and bring people together during the most challenging times. He's overcome multiple lava flows, earthquakes, and hurricanes by unifying our schools and always focusing on doing what is best for our students. He is also an advocate for our economically challenged schools and communities. Despite these challenges, we do not make excuses and find ways to support our students and their families.

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 2:23:37 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bob Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support Chad Farias for this position. Thank you

LATE

GM-550

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 7:09:12 PM
Testimony for EDU on 2/24/2021 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Beth Custer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I would like to submit testimony in support of Chad Farais to the School Facilities Board.

Mr. Farais has demonstrated his unwaivering committment to children, families and educators throughout the years. Combined with his background in areas of engineering and construction, he will bring a unique understanding of prioritized needs, business perspective, and educational implications to this position. It will benefit the children and families of the Island of Hawaii to have such a knowledgeable and committed advocate in this position, one who understands the diverse needs and challenges, and can appropriately address those challenges.

It is with conviction that I support Mr. Farais for the School Facilities Board.