



MidWeek

This column by Senator Michelle Kidani was published in the MidWeek **WEST VOICE** section on Wednesday, February 1, 2017.



Waipahu High a model for the state

One of the delights of opening day at the legislature is the opportunity to meet and greet so many people who visit my office during our post-session open house. I was pleased to welcome DOE Area Superintendent **Rodney Luke** and Waipahu High School Principal **Keith Hayashi** and several of his colleagues from WHS who were making the rounds with much to brag about in the way of accomplishments for students at this legacy campus.

The two gentlemen on my left are Rodney Luke—DOE Complex Area Superintendent for the area that includes Waipahu High School—and Keith Hayashi, WHS Principal.



Waipahu High has become the leader in enrolling its students in early college classes through UH West Oahu and Leeward Community College, serving in many ways as a model for other campuses statewide. I was heartened by items in Governor Ige's budget that request some \$9 million over the next two years for expansion of the Early College program to all public high schools. About two dozen schools offered students on their campuses the opportunity to earn college credit last year – with the cost of tuition and books covered – giving graduating seniors a real advantage as they head off to college.

You can participate

While the public mainly sees the entertainment programs and other activities around the Capitol from our opening session, much work is being done behind the scenes. Hundreds of bills have been introduced in the first two weeks of our session, and hearings on dozens of them are underway. Many bills are important measures that did not pass last year for one reason or another, others are introduced at the request of constituents, and I have my own set of bills that I have originated.

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For summaries, please visit the Legislature's extremely useful website at <http://capitol.hawaii.gov>. Click on Senate, then on members to find my web page where I have listed those bills that I will be focusing on during the next several weeks. You'll also find useful information here about how you can participate in the lawmaking process by following the progress of bills, and even submitting testimony for public hearings. Your ideas and your participation are important to the success of the work we do.



News you can use!

The Hawaii Chapter of the American Red Cross is reminding us about their life saving home fire preparedness campaign. The Red Cross, Honolulu Fire Department and other partner organizations will arrange to install free smoke alarms in the homes of Hawaii seniors and educate them in basic fire safety. If you qualify, call 739-8111 to leave a message for a call-back to schedule an installation.



The Department of Health and the Department of Education are again sponsoring the "Stop Flu at School" program to administer flu shots for students in Hawaii elementary and middle schools. Teams will be at Waipahu Intermediate on February 2 and at Waipahu Elementary on February 9 to cover students who have turned in their parent-permission forms. Kaleiopuu Elementary is on the list for inoculations on February 14. Incidents of flu are being reported on the mainland in higher numbers than in the recent past. The vaccination program is a great way to help stop its spread here in Hawaii before it becomes a problem.