



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

**Date:** 04/14/2022

**Time:** 02:00 PM

**Location:** 309 Via Videoconference

**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Interim Superintendent of Education

**Title of Resolution:** SCR 0171 URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO PRIORITIZE THE HIRING OF DEDICATED STAFF TO MANAGE FEDERAL SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) provides comments on SCR 171.

The Department recognizes that additional funding to operate the program is needed to support the schools to sufficiently utilize federal school meal program benefits.

Charter schools who participate in the National School Lunch Program are their own School Food Authority managed by the Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs. The Department defers to the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission in regards to their needs for additional positions for their schools and providing their own report to the Legislature.

The Department wishes to clarify that staff at schools do not manage federal meal programs, the School Food Services Branch manages the federal meal programs, and additional staff hired under the School Food Services Manager (Cafeteria Manager) is calculated through a staffing formula based on meal participation. The Department would need time to revisit this staffing formula and work together with the Hawaii Government Employees Association and United Public Workers unions to update applicable current contracts.

The Department believes that use of federal funds, although an option, may not be the ideal source of funds to sufficiently support the federal meals programs as the funding

may not be permanent nor consistent. Another solution may come from the creation of a centralized kitchen that would create efficiencies in our school meals programs and assist with providing foods to schools located in geographically isolated areas. Centralized kitchens may provide another model to support current food service operations and federal meal programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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>  
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FOR: SCR 171 URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO PRIORITIZE THE HIRING OF DEDICATED STAFF TO MANAGE FEDERAL SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS

DATE: April 14, 2022 2:00 PM

COMMITTEE: Committee on Education

ROOM: Conference Room 309 & Videoconference

FROM: Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director  
State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Kapela, and members of the Committees:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to provide **COMMENTS on SCR 171** which urges the Department of Education and the State Public Charter School Commission to prioritize the hiring of dedicated staff to manage federal school meal programs.

The Commission appreciates the recognition of our public charter school students as public school students but not all public charter school students currently enjoy access to school lunch under the federal school meal program.

Unlike the Hawaii Department of Education, the Commission is statutorily unable to represent all public charter schools in the federal school meal program, as each public charter school is its own independent state entity. Due to federal regulations that requires each individual public charter school to be its own independent school food authority, many public charter schools simply cannot afford to financially access the program and to meet all of the federal regulatory requirements. Additionally, many public charter schools do not have the facilities to provide meals nor do the costs of procuring such meals through commercial vendors afford them to provide these meals as well.

If public charter schools could provide meals through the Hawaii Department of Education, this would address many of the equity issues for our public charter school students, however, the federal regulations remain the barrier.

The Commission is available to work with this committee, the DOE and public charter schools in addressing this on-going issue. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.