
HOUSE RESOLUTION

CONGRATULATING THE 2023 HAWAII STATE TEACHER OF THE YEAR AND THE
2023 TEACHERS OF THE YEAR FOR SCHOOL COMPLEXES IN THE
LEEWARD DISTRICT AND HONOLULU DISTRICT.

1 WHEREAS, MICHAEL IDA was recently named the 2023 Hawai'i
2 State Teacher of the Year; and

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4 WHEREAS, a National Board-Certified Teacher, MICHAEL IDA
5 holds a master's and doctorate degree in applied mathematics
6 from Northwestern University, a master's degree in secondary
7 education from Boston College, and an undergraduate degree in
8 applied mathematics from the California Institute of Technology;
9 and

10
11 WHEREAS, MICHAEL IDA has been a teacher at Kalani High
12 School for nearly three decades; he is committed to serving the
13 needs and interests of the school community by assisting in the
14 launch of the computer science program and providing innovative
15 technology-related professional development sessions to faculty;
16 and

17
18 WHEREAS, an alumnus of the Hawai'i State Teacher Fellows
19 program, MICHAEL IDA is committed to uplifting the teaching
20 profession by supporting fellow teachers to be leaders and
21 agents of change; he is a member of the Hawai'i Department of
22 Education's Hawai'i Teacher Leader Academy and serves on the
23 leadership teams of the Hawai'i Council of Teachers of
24 Mathematics and Hawai'i Chapter of the Computer Science Teachers
25 Association; and

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27 WHEREAS, distinguished by his extraordinary teaching career
28 and well-deserved merits, MICHAEL IDA is held in high regard by



1 his school community as the epitome of a selfless servant
2 leader; and

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4 WHEREAS, NUIKALĀ KOERTE was recently named the 2023 Teacher
5 of the Year for the Leeward District Nānākuli-Wai‘anae Complex;
6 and

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8 WHEREAS, NUIKALĀ KOERTE has been a dedicated early educator
9 for over two decades, eight of which she has served as a
10 kindergarten and first grade teacher at Wai‘anae Elementary
11 School; she began her educational journey by earning a Bachelor
12 of Arts degree in Elementary Education from the University of
13 Hawai‘i at Mānoa and Masters of Education degree with an emphasis
14 in Child Development from Chaminade University of Honolulu; and

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16 WHEREAS, a proud Native Hawaiian educator, NUIKALĀ KOERTE
17 looks to indigenous knowledge to guide her teaching and educates
18 with a child-first focus; she cites the ‘ōlelo no‘eau, *‘A‘ohe pau
19 ka ‘ike i ka hālau ho‘okahi*, as an invaluable cultural principle
20 that acknowledges that one can learn from many sources and
21 believes cultural traditions and methods that turn to nature and
22 community as resources can yield valuable lessons; and

23

24 WHEREAS, constantly caring for the social and emotional
25 needs of her students, NUIKALĀ KOERTE created a student-friendly
26 website to help those feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or in need
27 of a brain break to nurture their personal development and is
28 most proud of the hands-on learning experiences that she has
29 established with community partners Papahana Kuaola and Mālama
30 Loko Ea, whose support provides her students with experiences in
31 ‘āina-based learning and working firsthand in lo‘i kalo and loko
32 i‘a; and

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34 WHEREAS, LEEANN MANUEL was recently named the 2023 Teacher
35 of the Year for the Leeward District Campbell-Kapolei Complex;
36 and

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38 WHEREAS, licensed as a math and Teaching English to
39 Speakers of Other Languages instructor, LEEANN MANUEL began her
40 teaching career as a math teacher, curriculum coach, and OC16



1 teacher at Wai'anae High School and transitioned to 'Ewa Makai
2 Middle School in 2016; and

3
4 WHEREAS, LEEANN MANUEL has been the induction and mentoring
5 lead at 'Ewa Makai Middle School for the past six years and
6 currently serves as the curriculum coach for math, English
7 language arts, and social studies; and

8
9 WHEREAS, an exceptional educator, LEEANN MANUEL is
10 committed to furthering educational resources within 'Ewa Makai
11 Middle School and has been an AVID program staff developer for
12 the past nine years, aiming to close the achievement gap and
13 increase the college-going rate for students from low-income and
14 minority families; she also utilizes Smarter Balanced
15 Assessments math and creates lessons and activities for Tools
16 for Teachers as a State Network of Educators Smarter Balance
17 teacher; and

18
19 WHEREAS, KEEVAN MATSUMOTO was recently named the 2023
20 Teacher of the Year for the Honolulu District Kaimukī-McKinley-
21 Roosevelt Complex; and

22
23 WHEREAS, as a Konawaena graduate and second-generation
24 special education teacher, KEEVAN MATSUMOTO understands the
25 value of a quality public school education and followed in the
26 footsteps of his mother, a Konawaena High School teacher for 34
27 years, specializing in students with moderate to profound
28 disabilities, who inspired him to pursue a career in education;
29 and

30
31 WHEREAS, KEEVAN MATSUMOTO received a Bachelor of Business
32 Administration degree in Finance and Human Resources Management
33 from the University of Hawai'i College of Business
34 Administration, Masters of Human Resources Management degree
35 from the University of Hawai'i College of Business
36 Administration, Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Special
37 Education from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa College of
38 Education, and Master's degree from the University of Hawai'i
39 Shidler College of Business; he is also a National Board
40 Certified Teacher and the Founder and President of the non-



1 profit Kaimukī Youth Development Organization that provides
2 vocational and community engagement opportunities for children
3 with disabilities; and

4
5 WHEREAS, currently the Special Education Student Services
6 Coordinator at Kaimukī High School, KEEVAN MATSUMOTO is
7 committed to the success and personal growth of his students,
8 with a focus on supporting students beyond the classroom; he is
9 also the school's head of delegation and the head coach for the
10 Special Olympics team, for which he was awarded the Outstanding
11 School Delegation award by Special Olympics Hawai'i; and

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13 WHEREAS, DAPHNE OKUNAGA was recently named the 2023 Teacher
14 of the Year for the Leeward District Pearl City-Waipahu Complex;
15 and

16
17 WHEREAS, DAPHNE OKUNAGA began her remarkable educational
18 journey by earning a Bachelor of Arts degree, cum laude, in
19 Business Administration from Oregon State University, Master of
20 Business Administration degree, summa cum laude, from Hawai'i
21 Pacific University, and Master of Education degree, summa cum
22 laude, from the University of Phoenix and is certified in
23 secondary mathematics; and

24
25 WHEREAS, DAPHNE OKUNAGA strives for excellence in all that
26 she pursues and has been a dedicated educator at her alma mater,
27 Pearl City High School, for the past 18 years, serving in
28 numerous positions, such as a math and business teacher,
29 mathematics department chairperson, school community council
30 chairperson, International Business and Design Academy lead
31 teacher, Introduction to College Mathematics state trainer,
32 graduation coordinator, class advisor, and assistant football
33 and soccer coach; and

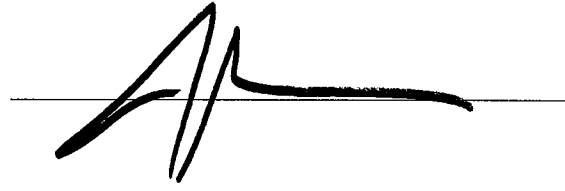
34
35 WHEREAS, DAPHNE OKUNAGA has also served in numerous
36 leadership positions, including as a former Hawai'i State Teacher
37 Fellow, Hawai'i representative for the Smarter Balanced
38 Performance and Practice Committee, and member of the Patsy T.
39 Mink Leadership Alliance; and



1 WHEREAS, in recognition of her outstanding accomplishments,
2 DAPHNE OKUNAGA received the Presidential Award for Excellence in
3 Mathematics and Science Teaching in 2017, Hawaii Education
4 Association's Centennial Award in 2022, and National Career
5 Academy Coalition's Career Academy Teacher of the Year award in
6 2022; now, therefore,
7

8 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
9 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular
10 Session of 2023, that this body hereby congratulates MICHAEL
11 IDA, NUIKALĀ KOERTE, LEEANN MANUEL, KEEVAN MATSUMOTO, and DAPHNE
12 OKUNAGA for their outstanding accomplishments and much-deserved
13 recognition as 2023 Teachers of the Year, and extends to them
14 its warmest aloha and best wishes for continued success in all
15 their future endeavors.
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OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'M' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

MAR 13 2023

