



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 04/19/2023

**Time:** 10:45 AM

**Location:** CR 225 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Resolution:** HCR 0116 URGING THE COMMITTEE ON WEIGHTS TO RECOMMEND, AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT, A WEIGHTED STUDENT FORMULA THAT GIVES GREATER CONSIDERATION TO SMALL AND REMOTE SCHOOLS.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) offers comments on HCR 116.

The Reinventing Education Act of 2004 (Act 51) called for the Department to use a new methodology to provide basic operating funding to public schools known as a Weighted Student Formula (WSF). This funding methodology allocates approximately half of the Department's general fund budget to schools based primarily on weighted student units determined by student enrollment and student characteristics at any given school. The Department, Committee on Weights (COW), and the Hawaii State Board of Education have understood that economies of scale do play a part in how effectively and efficiently those funds can be spent to support student learning. As a result, approximately ten percent of the WSF budget is allocated as base funding, providing a set dollar amount per school based on the type of school (elementary, middle, high, combination, etc), intended to help overcome lower school enrollments and the resulting relatively smaller budgets.

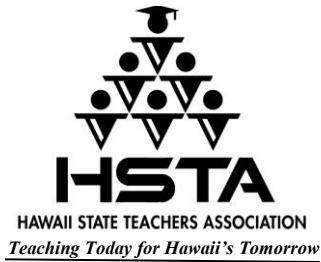
Nevertheless, smaller schools, especially those schools that have geographic limitations, may lack the ability to leverage economies of scale or redraw district boundaries to overcome their low enrollments. The number of students enrolled at these smaller and/or remote schools sometimes may not provide the amount of funding necessary to maintain basic operations, or provide comparable course offerings (for secondary schools). In addition, the students at these remote schools may not have

other choices available to them when it comes to selecting a school. Hana High and Elementary, Lanai High and Elementary (both K-12 schools), and all the schools on Molokai are the only schools available to students residing in those areas.

The COW has attempted to tackle this issue year after year and has tried to develop modifications to the formula to assist these schools. However, finding agreement on adjustments to the formula to equitably assist the handful of small and/or remote schools has proven elusive, particularly as any change to the formula to direct additional resources to small and/or remote schools reduces the amount distributed to all schools on a per-pupil basis.

With or without the additional language proposed in this measure, the Department anticipates that the COW will continue to struggle with the challenge of providing sufficient funding for all schools statewide.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819  
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Osa Tui, Jr.  
President  
Logan Okita  
Vice President  
Lisa Morrison  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Ann Mahi  
Executive Director

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: HCR 116 - URGING THE COMMITTEE ON WEIGHTS TO RECOMMEND, AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT, A WEIGHTED STUDENT FORMULA THAT GIVES GREATER CONSIDERATION TO SMALL AND REMOTE SCHOOLS.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023

OSA TUI, JR., PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association supports HCR 116, urging the committee on weights to recommend, and the Board of Education to adopt, a weighted student formula that gives greater consideration to small and remote schools.

Since the passage of Act 51 in 2004, Hawai'i has experimented with a weighted student formula (WSF) to equalize school funding, intended to make funding for public education more equitable, transparent, and decentralized. WSF had the unintended consequence of limiting academic programming for children in small and rural schools with limited student enrollment, thus limited funds received through the weighted student formula. **A report commissioned by the Hawai'i Department of Education and completed by the American Institutes of Research reveals that "small or isolated schools do not have adequate funding under WSF and that the formula does not account adequately for diseconomies of scale associated with small schools or for additional costs due to geographic isolation."**

Small and geographically remote schools sometimes lack sufficient funds to cover programming and positions beyond basic operations, and not even enough teachers for each grade level many times. Isolated communities lack the economic breadth available to their urban counterparts, while experiencing distance from essential services and less access to technology. **The AIR, therefore, suggested that "extra support" be provided to schools that are small or isolated, including a**



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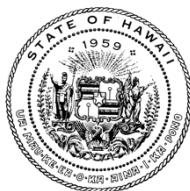
Lisa Morrison  
Secretary-Treasurer

Ann Mahi  
Executive Director

**recalculation of WSF to “accurately account for the differential costs of providing an equal opportunity for all students to achieve, regardless of their individual needs or circumstances (such as geographic location).”**

Because student populations at remote and small schools vary dramatically from year to year, funding for positions at such schools also changes annually, creating turbulence in staff requirements and course offerings. Challenges faced by small and remote schools because of inadequate WSF funding include staffing shortages, cutbacks to courses, a lack of certified librarians, and more. At times, such schools do not have teachers to staff every grade level, if the school is an elementary school, or all core classes, if the school is a secondary school, presenting problems in the provision of minimum educational requirements to students. We cannot allow these schools to continue to struggle because of enrollment and geographical factors beyond their control.

To provide all of the keiki in Hawai‘i access to a quality education, the Hawai‘i State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this resolution.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
WAI AHOLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
48-215 WAI AHOLE VALLEY RD.  
KANE OHE, HI 96744

March 17, 2023

Department: Education  
Person Testifyin: Alexandra Obra, Principal of Waiāhole Elementary  
Regarding: HCR 116  
Resolution Title: Urging the committee to recommend, and the board of education to adopt, a weighted student formula that gives greater consideration to small and remote schools.

I am writing to express my strong support of HCR116, which urges the Department of Education to reevaluate and revise the current weighted student formula to account for the diseconomies of scales associated with small schools.

Waiāhole Elementary and Ka'a'awa Elementary are small, rural schools in windward O'ahu. Yet, because our schools have smaller budgets from smaller enrollments, our teachers and administrators must take on multiple jobs and responsibilities. They do so tirelessly and without complaint because that is what is necessary to keep the school running smoothly, and to keep the campus welcoming to community and families.

Unfortunately, for small schools in Hawai'i, this is not an isolated reality. Many neighbor island schools, especially in rural communities, are also small schools. And this set-up is not sustainable.

Every one of our schools needs an operating budget that makes them whole. Without one, administrators are forced to choose between positions or opportunities for students. Our schools cannot maintain a steady course and direction when their budgets are in flux.

Small schools are absolutely cherished by their communities. They serve a critical and vital role in the well-being of their respective communities. Sustainable, stable funding is what these schools need. It is also what our students deserve.

Ensuring all of our small schools in Hawai'i will have the funding they need is an important step towards ensuring that every child in Hawai'i has equitable access to a quality public school education. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony

Sincerely,

*Alexandra Obra*

Ms. Alexandra Obra  
Waiāhole Elementary School Principal

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/15/2023 12:23:52 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Linda Morgan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a voter and former teacher at both Ka'u High and Pahala Elementary School and Na'alehu Elementary School, I strongly support HCR116.

The two schools in Ka'u are extremely remote, being an hour and a half drive to Hilo and two hours to Kailua-Kona. Students at our Ka'u schools are disadvantaged for several reasons:

1. Our families suffer from deep poverty, as evidenced by 95% of students qualifying for free or reduced price meals. Many studies confirm the negative effect of poverty on student achievement.
2. Our student population has 25% English Language Learners, another impediment to learning. A large portion of our ELL students are Marshallese, here due to testing nuclear bombs on their islands.
3. The remote geographical location of our schools creates difficulty finding qualified teachers. Consequently we have frequent turn-over of teachers. Many first year teachers commute to our schools until securing tenure, then transfer to schools closer to their homes.
4. Our students were heavily, negatively impacted by the pandemic. Many students did not even have electricity, let alone Wifi, limiting their access to distance learning. Additionally many students did not have an adult available to facilitate learning by computer.
5. Our students are adequately intelligent to have average academic achievement, but year after year fall behind state and national achievement averages due to conditions outlined above.

With additional funding, as proposed in HCR116, new programs could be established, like small group instruction by additional staff, individual tutoring during or after school, the adoption of new, relevant curriculum,

HCR116 would be a step forward to help create social justice for the disadvantaged students living in Ka'u. At a time when our state has a budget surplus, what could be more important than providing all of our children with the education they deserve?

Please support HCR116.

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/16/2023 12:45:37 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kameleonalani richardson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Our 'ohana is in full support of small school and keeping Waiahole Elementary School open for all my children to attend. We maybe a small school but a tight knit community believe in preserving the rural authentic community and school as long as we possibly can! Please please please my children love this school and all the staff is so wonderful with so much aloha!

mahalo,

Kameleonalani Richardson

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/17/2023 11:13:22 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Angela Huntemer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Education Committee memers and Chair,

I am a teacher in a small school on windward Oahu. It is critical that the weighted student average oulned in HCR 1116 be adopted so that small, rural schools can deliver the services they are expected to. Our students deserve, must have the resources they need to function and should not be discriminated against becuase they happen to attend a school that is small.

Mahalo,

Angela Huntemer MEd.



**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/17/2023 11:40:04 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joseph Wat	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Every one of our schools needs an operating budget that makes them whole. Without one, administrators are forced to choose between positions or opportunities for students. Our schools cannot maintain a steady course and direction when their budgets are in flux.**

**Small schools are absolutely cherished by their communities. They serve a critical and vital role in the well-being of their respective communities.**

**Sustainable, stable funding is what these schools need. It is also what our students deserve.**

**Ensuring all of our small schools in Hawai‘i will have the funding they need is an important step towards ensuring that every child in Hawai‘i has equitable access to a quality public school education.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.**

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/17/2023 11:49:45 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mark Hines	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I am writing to express my strong support of HCR116, which urges the Department of Education to reevaluate and revise the current weighted student formula to account for the diseconomies of scales associated with small schools.**

**Waiāhole Elementary and Ka‘a‘awa Elementary are small, rural schools in windward O‘ahu. Yet, because the schools have smaller budgets from smaller enrollments, our teachers and administrators must take on multiple jobs and responsibilities. They do so tirelessly and without complaint because that is what is necessary to keep the school running smoothly, and to keep the campus welcoming to community and families.**

**Unfortunately, for small schools in Hawai‘i, this is not an isolated reality. Many neighbor island schools, especially in rural communities, are also small schools. And this set-up is not sustainable.**

**Every one of our schools needs an operating budget that makes them whole. Without one, administrators are forced to choose between positions or opportunities for students. Our schools cannot maintain a steady course and direction when their budgets are in flux.**

**Small schools are absolutely cherished by their communities. They serve a critical and vital role in the well-being of their respective communities.**

**Sustainable, stable funding is what these schools need. It is also what our students deserve.**

**Ensuring all of our small schools in Hawai‘i will have the funding they need is an important step towards ensuring that every child in Hawai‘i has equitable access to a quality public school education.**

**I have worked closely with Waiahole and Ka'a'awa over the past years and I see the passion, commitment, and impact these schools make. Better funding support will make their hard work have a greater impact.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.**

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Malia Pimentel  
Community member, Waiāhole/Ka‘a‘awa

Regarding: H.C.R. 116

Resolution Title: Urging the committee to recommend, and the board of education to adopt, a weighted student formula that gives greater consideration to small and remote schools.

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Ensuring all of our small schools in Hawai‘i will have the funding they need is an important step towards ensuring that every child in Hawai‘i has equitable access to a quality public school education.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/17/2023 1:06:52 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John L Reppun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawai'i Senate Committee on Education

Public Hearing for [HCR 116](#) for Wednesday, April 19, 2023 at 10:45 am.

Aloha Chair/Committe members:

Please accept my strong support for this measure. I stand on my past position expressed as this measure moved through the House Committee on Education. I encourage Senate concurrence with this resolution.

"Testimony in Support of HCR 116

House Committee on Education; Hearing of 3/23/23, 2 pm, Conference Rm. 309 - URGING THE "COMMITTEE ON WEIGHTS TO RECOMMEND, AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT, A WEIGHTED STUDENT FORMULA THAT GIVES GREATER CONSIDERATION TO SMALL AND REMOTE SCHOOLS."

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Marten & Committee Members,

Please accept my testimony in strong support of the above-referenced measure. Two schools, Waiahole Elementary in Northern Ko`olaupoko and Ka`a`awa Elementary School in the adjacent moku of Ko`olauloa, are excellent examples of schools that will benefit from this measure if "greater consideration" is supported. The two schools support rural and somewhat remote areas on the long Windward Coast with each providing a unique perspective on education. The former is embedded in a vibrant agrarian community; the latter with strong affiliations with the coastal and marine environment. Facing their financial challenges squarely, they are – together – collaborating to maximize the different experiences that each can offer, to each other and to other schools in the Kahuku/Castle Complex and beyond."

Mahalo, John L. Reppun

Lifetime Windward resident; Agricultural Lot tenant in Waiahole jreppun@keyproject.org  
(808)277-8686

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/17/2023 1:53:24 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kathryn Hurd	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn Hurd

Business Owner/Community Memeber (Waiahole Valley), Hawaii Gifted Association President, Mom of two at Waiahole Elm.

Regarding: H.C.R. 116

Resolution Title: Urging the committee to recommend, and the board of education to adopt, a weighted student formula that gives greater consideration to small and remote schools.

I am writing to express my strong support of HCR116, which urges the Department of Education to reevaluate and revise the current weighted student formula to account for the diseconomies of scales associated with small schools.

Waiāhole Elementary and Ka‘a‘awa Elementary are small, rural schools in underprivileged parts of windward O‘ahu. These small schools are a major part of our community- including the only shelter available, during natural disaster. These schools have a rich history and a lot of support from their respective communities. Yet, because our schools have smaller budgets due to lower enrollments (smaller rural communities), our teachers and administrators must take on multiple jobs and responsibilities. They do so tirelessly and without complaint because that is what is necessary to keep the school running smoothly, and to keep the campus welcoming to community and families.

Unfortunately, for small schools in Hawai‘i, this is not an isolated issue. Many neighbor island schools, especially in rural communities, are also small schools. And this set-up is not sustainable. The principals must choose weather to have a librarian or a custodian or a full-time IISC, etc. There is often no budget for a Vice Principal, which is so important for the keiki and

the families, and even worse when they often cannot afford a full-time guidance counselor. Imagine being the principal of these small schools and having to decide between these essential faculty positions! Then imagine asking your teachers to also help fill the rolls of janitors and other positions that they can "pitch in" to cover. Teachers are already overworked and underpaid. It is a MIRACLE that these committed DOE employees are able to keep schools in our community funded and running without the proper support for the very BASICS to run a school. These schools are not asking for "extra" or a handout- they are asking to be able to fully staff their school so that the staff do not have to constantly burn themselves out wearing multiple hats.

Every one of our schools needs an operating budget that makes them whole. Without one, administrators are forced to choose between positions or opportunities for students. Our schools cannot maintain a steady course and direction when their budgets are in flux. Enrollment goes up and down and when enrollment is low one year, it is almost impossible to sustain the bills when the following year, the enrollment is significantly higher.

Small schools are absolutely cherished by their communities. They serve a critical and vital role in the well-being of their respective communities. These small schools can do wonderful things for the people of these communities. They need to be respected and coveted and given the tools they need to help the communities thrive.

Sustainable, stable funding is what these schools need. It is also what the students deserve.

Ensuring all of our small schools in Hawai'i will have the funding they need is an important step towards ensuring that every child in Hawai'i has equitable access to a quality public school education. Please help provide these schools with the very BASICS that they have been lacking, year after year, due to the current division of funds.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Kathryn Hurd (M.S., B.S., Microbiology).

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/17/2023 2:57:56 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kristel Yoshimura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have included other testimonies from other citizens as well in the community

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kanoelani Rillamas  
Teacher, Ka‘a‘awa

Regarding: H.C.R. 116

Resolution Title: Urging the committee to recommend, and the board of education to adopt, a weighted student formula that gives greater consideration to small and remote schools.

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Kanoelani Rillamas



**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/17/2023 4:03:17 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joy Shlachter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Joy Shlachter

Teacher, Ka'a'awa

Regarding: H.C.R. 116

Resolution Title: Urging the committee to recommend, and the board of education to adopt, a weighted student formula that gives greater consideration to small and remote schools.

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Joy Shlachter

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/17/2023 4:03:27 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Patricia J Dukes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Person Testifying: Patricia J Dukes, PhD.

Business Owner/Community Memeber (Waiahole Valley).

Regarding: H.C.R. 116

Resolution Title: Urging the committee to recommend, and the board of education to adopt, a weighted student formula that gives greater consideration to small and remote schools.

I am writing to express my strong support of HCR116, which urges the Department of Education to reevaluate and revise the current weighted student formula to account for the diseconomies of scales associated with small schools.

Waiahole and Kaawa Elementary schools are important to each of their respective communities. My grandchildren attend Waiahole Elementary, but I, and other community members, also benefit from the school's presence in our community.

We are isolated and rural and the school gives us a place to volunteer, to participate in community functions (fairs, farm markets, holiday parties, etc.) that we, as elderly community members, may not otherwise have the opportunity to attend. We want, and need, our small community school to thrive and remain a viable part of our community.

As a University professor and educator as well as a director of schools and rehab centers for over 55 years, I know that every one of our schools needs an operating budget that makes them whole. There are certain fundamental positions that are not filled at small and rural schools, simply due to a lack of budget. These small schools do an amazing job at sourcing their own funding

through grant writing, and fundraising, but this also takes away from other required duties. It is never enough, but somehow these small schools pull through, with grit and determination.

Waiahole and Kaaawa currently have amazing principals who literally bend over backwards to make a tight budget work. It takes a skilled and dedicated principal to pull this off. My concern is that these principals are completely burnt out having to “hustle” to keep their small schools alive. Waiahole’s principal is AWARD winning- she has had such great success with this school, but she needs your support, or our community will risk losing her.

Sustainable, stable funding is what these schools need. It is also what our students deserve. Every child in Hawai‘i deserves to have equitable access to a quality public school education. Please help provide these schools with the very BASICS that they have been lacking, year after year, due to the current division of funds.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Patricia J. Duke, PhD.

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/17/2023 6:45:37 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Zhizi Xiong	Testifying for CARES	Support	In Person

Comments:

CARES testifies in strong support.

841 Bishop St., Suite 301  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Telephone: 808 926-1530  
Contact@HEECoalition.org

Committee on Education  
Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

April 19, 2023

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, and Members of the Committee,

We support HCR 116, urging the Committee on Weights (COW) to recommend, and the Board of Education (BOE) to adopt a Weighted Student Formula (WSF) that gives greater consideration to small and remote schools.

As educational equity advocates, we are deeply concerned about the insufficiency of resources at our small schools, which are largely in rural areas that have a disproportionate number of economically-disadvantaged students. We are specifically concerned about the smaller elementary schools that have populations of less than 150 students. Elementary schools is where the foundation is built for our students and if resources are insufficient, the schools are not able to provide quality services to build a strong foundation for students. We hear that there are cases in which there is not enough resources to have a teacher per grade, which is a must for standards-based education, or a counselor, which in these times after the pandemic, is needed to help our students deal with social-emotional stresses.

We urge the COW to clearly define small schools and increase the base funding for just these schools so that they can deliver quality education to our students.

Hui for Excellence in Education, or "HE'E," promotes a child-centered and strength-based public education system in which families, communities and schools are valued and empowered to help every student succeed. HE'E works to bring diverse stakeholders together to harness collective energy, share resources, and identify opportunities for progressive action in education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support represents at least a 75% consensus of our voting membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura  
HE'E Coalition Director



Academy 21  
American Civil Liberties Union  
Alliance for Place Based Learning  
Castle Complex Community Council  
Coalition for Children with Special Needs  
Education Institute of Hawai'i  
\*Faith Action for Community Equity  
Fresh Leadership LLC  
Girl Scouts Hawaii  
\*HawaiiKidsCAN  
\*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance  
\*Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
\*Hawai'i Association of School Psychologists  
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars  
\*Hawai'i Children's Action Network  
Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition  
Hawai'i Scholars for Education and Social Justice  
\* Hawai'i State PTSA  
Hawai'i State Student Council  
Hawai'i State Teachers Association  
Hawai'i 3Rs  
Head Start Collaboration Office  
It's All About Kids  
\*INPEACE  
Joint Venture Education Forum  
Junior Achievement of Hawaii  
Kamehameha Schools  
Kanu Hawai'i  
Kaua'i Ho'okele Council  
Keiki to Career Kaua'i

Kupu A'e

\*Leaders for the Next Generation  
Learning First  
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds  
Native Hawaiian Education Council  
Our Public School  
\*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning  
\*Parents and Children Together  
\*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i  
Special Education Provider Alliance  
\*Teach for America  
The Learning Coalition  
US PACOM  
University of Hawai'i College of Education  
\*Youth Service Hawai'i

*Voting Members (\*) Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/17/2023 7:22:12 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Grace	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of any measures that benefits small schools. Every student matters even students in small schools. We have children in both a big school at Kapunahala and a small school in Waiahole. They all receive a quality education from both schools. Honestly, there is something just special about the small school in Waiahole that we love; and with better support from the government it can only get better.

Please support this measure and take care of all students including those at small schools.

thank you

grace



**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/18/2023 4:33:49 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kristin Hamada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Small schools provide good Union jobs to our communities which allow students to develop a sense of place and learn close to home. It's imperative to ensure they get adequate funding to create a more fairer education system for all. Students and faculty at smaller schools shouldn't be at a loss because their school is small and/or in a rural community. Changing the weighted student formula to support small schools would help create a better system so schools can get the resources they need to run and support student learning.

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/18/2023 8:51:06 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Vivien Lee and Charlie Reppun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We strongly support HCR 116. Waiahole Elementary School has been a small school for many years. Our two children attended K-Gr. 6 there three decades ago. Back then the school was the hub of the valley community; it still is today. Smallness has many advantages: everyone knew our children, everyone knew us; the school had an intimacy and closeness which benefited students, parents, teachers and staff. This is an essential part of education.

But the threats of closure, reduced teaching positions, and uncertain budgets have always been and continue to be issues for the school. The DOE needs to acknowledge the benefits of small schools and find a way to support them and the communities that they are an integral part of.

Vivien Lee and Charlie Reppun

Waiahole, Oahu

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Carrie Caruso  
Parent, Waiahole

Regarding: H.C.R. 116

Resolution Title: Urging the committee to recommend, and the board of education to adopt, a weighted student formula that gives greater consideration to small and remote schools.

I am writing to express my strong support of HCR116, which urges the Department of Education to reevaluate and revise the current weighted student formula to account for the diseconomies of scales associated with small schools.

Waiāhole Elementary and Ka‘a‘awa Elementary are small, rural schools in windward O‘ahu. Yet, because our schools have smaller budgets from smaller enrollments, our teachers and administrators must take on multiple jobs and responsibilities. They do so tirelessly and without complaint because that is what is necessary to keep the school running smoothly, and to keep the campus welcoming to community and families.

Unfortunately, for small schools in Hawai‘i, this is not an isolated reality.

Every student in the State of Hawaii should have access to equitable public education opportunities.

The culture of local communities - rural and urban alike - should be celebrated; and the infrastructure that is essential to their vitality should be protected. Small schools are a weight-bearing pillar in each small community.

While attending Waiahole Elementary school, my daughters grew in a close community where every teacher and staff member knew their name. They benefited from place-based and project-based education: tending lo‘i in the valley, sailing wa‘a in the bay, beginning each school day chanting oli to request knowledge and wisdom from those who came before.

The administrators, teachers, neighbors and parents provided my children with this invaluable experience, often relying on non-profit grants funding and volunteer efforts.

Meanwhile the state government failed to provide enough funding for my children’s school simply to have a teacher for each grade.

As a parent, a taxpayer and a former educator, I often wonder. . .

Is the State of Hawaii purposely undermining our small community schools in a campaign of planned obsolescence? Is the State’s goal to establish the most base of educational constructs: herding our children into warehouse schools that teach generic curriculum; sanitized of cultural and community influence?

Every student in the State of Hawaii should have access to equitable public education opportunities. Please reconsider the weighting formula that, currently, fails to provide a basic level of funding to educate our keiki in the communities in which they live.

Carrie Spinelli Caruso

**LATE**

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/18/2023 2:12:24 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alysha Helm	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Alysha Helm

Community member, Waiāhole/Ka‘a‘awa

Regarding: H.C.R. 116

Resolution Title: Urging the committee to recommend, and the board of education to adopt, a weighted student formula that gives greater consideration to small and remote schools.

I am writing to express my strong support of HCR116, which urges the Department of Education to reevaluate and revise the current weighted student formula to account for the diseconomies of scales associated with small schools.

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Unfortunately, for small schools in Hawai‘i, this is not an isolated reality. Many neighbor island schools, especially in rural communities, are also small schools. And this set-up is not sustainable.

Every one of our schools needs an operating budget that makes them whole. Without one, administrators are forced to choose between positions or opportunities for students. Our schools cannot maintain a steady course and direction when their budgets are in flux.

Small schools are absolutely cherished by their communities. They serve a critical and vital role in the well-being of their respective communities.

Sustainable, stable funding is what these schools need. It is also what our students deserve.

Ensuring all of our small schools in Hawai'i will have the funding they need is an important step towards ensuring that every child in Hawai'i has equitable access to a quality public school education.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Aloha,

Alysha Helm

**LATE**

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF [HCR 116](#) URGING THE COMMITTEE ON WEIGHTS TO RECOMMEND, AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT, A WEIGHTED STUDENT FORMULA THAT GIVES GREATER CONSIDERATION TO SMALL AND REMOTE SCHOOLS.

Board of Education; Committee on Weights; Weighted Student Formula; Small and Remote Schools

UPCOMING HEARING APRIL 19, 2023

- **INTRODUCTION:**

Aloha, my name is Kaile Wilson. I am submitting testimony IN SUPPORT OF [HCR 116](#), legislation that would support small and rural schools across Hawai'i.

- **MY SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER COUNSELOR AND TREATMENT PROVIDER PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND:**

I am a 34 year old, mother of one and in May 2023, will be a graduate of University of Hawai'i at Manoa's Thompson School of Social Work. While I currently reside on the Wai'anae Coast, my ohana on my dad's side is from Kaua'i. I also currently work for the OD2A-C3 (Overdose Data to Action- Care Coordination and Capacity Building) program funded by the CDC but run in combination by the Hawai'i State Department of Health and the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. This year we are running a Work Force Development program with students and community members of Moloka'i. Between my family in rural Kaua'i and my newfound work with the community in Moloka'i, I understand the importance of supporting small and/or rural schools.

- **THE STATE OF SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION IN RURAL COMMUNITIES TODAY**

Thirty years ago everyone across Hawai'i understood the reality of education far detached from other communities. Today the internet and other technology has decreased this gap and made international news and the benefits of interacting with communities across the world almost instantaneous here in Honolulu. Unfortunately it's easy with that ease to forget that even in 2023 this isn't the reality for rural communities.

We've really struggled connecting our Moloka'i community to basic internet resources. Many have never used Zoom. Some of the younger students who are connected to the University of Hawai'i system have been given MyFis but unfortunately you have to be a paying student to get one, and furthermore they are dependent on cell phone service which is spotty across Moloka'i.

- **ENCOURAGING SUSTAINABILITY AND SELF RELIANCE**

Our rural communities are battling many of the same ills that urban Honolulu is, from substance use to health care accessibility to poverty. However they also have the asset of an engaged and caring community who want to learn to be able to help their communities thrive. But when they are cut off from the same education that urban schools on O'ahu have, be it preschool or university, they are dependent on limited outsiders who don't understand the communities they come to. The residents in our rural communities desire the education they have limited access to in compassion to our urban students and communities. By encouraging and funding educational growth in our rural areas, we are helping our fellow Hawaiians take charge in their communities with the same education to get there that urban Hawaiians have had access to. There is no deficit to this proposal.

- **Mahalo nui loa to the legislature for allowing me to share both my professional experience and my personal story today.**



**LATE**

**HCR-116**

Submitted on: 4/19/2023 9:47:49 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/19/2023 10:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joanie Tanabe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I AM IN SUPPORT OF HCR116, URGING THE COMMITTEE ON WEIGHTS TO RECOMMEND, AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT, A WEIGHTED STUDENT FORMULA THAT GIVES GREATER CONSIDERATION TO SMALL AND REMOTE SCHOOLS.