

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

House Committee on Education

Thursday, January 30, 2025

2:00 p.m.

Hawaii State Capitol, Room 309

Measure: House Bill 1496, Relating to Education

Purpose of Measure:

Establishes the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent. Requires that at least one at-large member of the Board of Education be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language, to be selected from a list of three nominees submitted by the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Clarifies the purpose and objective of the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program. Appropriates funds.

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee:

The Board of Education (Board) respectfully offers **comments** on House Bill 1496, in regards to the composition of the Board.

The composition of the Board is the prerogative of the Legislature.

The Board recognizes the importance of kaiapuni education, as evidenced by the constitutional and statutory provisions that support it. We endeavor to provide relevant information to assist the Legislature with making its decision:

1. The Board, pursuant to section 302A-121, Hawaii Revised Statutes, currently consists of nine members: one from the County of Hawaii, one from the County of Maui, one from the County of Kauai, three from the City and County of Honolulu, and three at-large members. The Board also has two nonvoting representatives – a student representative and military representative.
2. There are numerous stakeholders with specific educational interests who may also be interested in dedicated seats on the Board.
3. This legislation, if passed, will create precedent that may affect Board representation in other ways.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Board.



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

Date: 01/30/2025

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Bill Title: HB 1496 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Establishes the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent. Requires that at least one at-large member of the Board of Education be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language, to be selected from a list of three nominees submitted by the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Clarifies the purpose and objective of the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program. Appropriates funds.

Department's Position:

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of HB 1496, which appropriates funds to establish the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent (CAS) and a secretary for the Kaiapuni CAS. It also requires that at least one at-large member of the Board of Education be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language, to be selected from a list of three nominees submitted by the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. It also clarifies the purpose and objective of the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program.

The Department appreciates the intent of the bill to support Kaiapuni education. The number of schools offering a Kaiapuni program and number of students participating in Kaiapuni education have grown over the years. Currently, the Department operates Kaiapuni schools in 9 of the 15 complex areas and schools in 3 additional complex areas are planned for the 2025-26 School Year. The Department is in the process of completing a Kaiapuni Strategic Plan to improve the support for current programs and to support future expansion. The plan is scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2025.

Section 2 of HB 1496 proposes to define Ka Papahana Kaiapuni as a "complete education experience through the medium of the Hawaiian language." The Department supports providing education in the medium of Hawaiian language. The Department recommends clarification of the term "complete education experience."

Section 3 of HB 1496 proposes changes to the selection and composition of Board of Education members to require that “at least one member shall be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language, who shall be selected from a list of three nominees submitted by the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Office of Hawaiian Affairs; provided that the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Office of Hawaiian Affairs shall each nominate one Hawaiian immersion expert for selection.” The Department supports a Board of Education that is “highly functioning and well-balanced,” as described in Section 302A-126 of the Hawai‘i Revised Statutes. A well-balanced Board includes experience and perspectives regarding Hawaiian culture and language. Over the years, significant members within the Kaiapuni and Hawaiian community have been appointed and confirmed as members of the Board of Education without direction by law.

Section 4 of HB 1496 proposes to require a complex area superintendent be designated for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni schools. Supervision and support for current and future Kaiapuni programs—including potential for a Complex Area Superintendent to lead Kaiapuni schools—is being discussed as part of the Kaiapuni strategic plan. The Department anticipates requesting resources to implement Kaiapuni plan implementation in future years. The Department respectfully requests time to complete the Kaiapuni strategic plan and implementation plan.

We request the legislature’s support for future actions needed to implement the Kaiapuni strategic plan which is in development. The Department welcomes strong support for collaboration among the Department of Education, educators, community members, higher education institutions, and legislators for successful implementation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 • Fax: (808) 839-7106 • Web: www.hsta.org

Osa Tui, Jr.
President

Logan Okita
Vice President

Cheney Kaku
Secretary-Treasurer

Ann Mahi
Executive Director

TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Item: HB 1496 – Relating to Education

Position: Support

Hearing: Thursday, January 30, 2025, 2:00 pm, Room 309

Submitter: Osa Tui, Jr., President - Hawai'i State Teachers Association

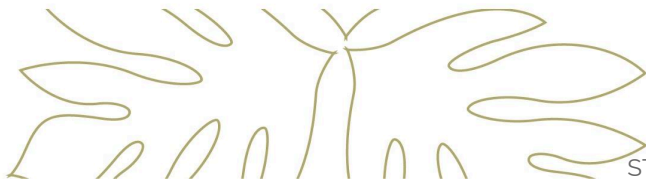
Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports** HB 1496, which recognizes the importance of Kaiapuni educators. These dedicated teachers work tirelessly to revitalize 'Ōlelo Hawai'i and foster a strong cultural identity among their students. HB 1496 provides crucial support for these educators by establishing a dedicated complex area superintendent and allocating funds for essential positions.

Furthermore, by establishing a dedicated complex area superintendent for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni, it helps ensure support and a consistent implementation of policies and resources. HB 1496 also mandates that a member of the Board of Education be a Hawaiian language and culture expert, giving Kaiapuni a voice at one of the highest decision-making levels. This provision is crucial for advocating for policies and resources that support Kaiapuni's growth and success.

The HSTA urges the committee to pass HB 1496 to demonstrate a commitment to Kaiapuni educators and the students they serve. This bill represents a significant step forward in supporting and expanding Ka Papahana Kaiapuni.

Mahalo.



TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Kananinohea Māka‘imoku, Vice Chair
‘Aha Kauleo Statewide Council for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

The ‘Aha Kauleo is in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496** which seeks to:

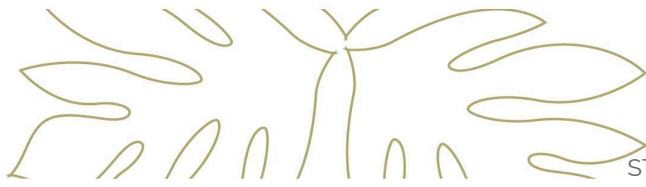
- 1. Establish a Complex Area Superintendent for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni, and**
- 2. Require that at least one at-large Board of Education (BOE) member be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language.**

The ‘Aha Kauleo (AKL) is the statewide council for the Papahana Kaiapuni, which provides proactive leadership, direction, and advocacy for the development and growth of its Hawaiian medium schools and advises directly through the Office of Hawaiian Education (OHE) of the Department of Education (DOE). AKL consists of parent and teacher representatives per elementary (K-6), secondary grades (6-12) and/or from each Hawaiian medium education site, and a principal representative, along with representatives from the University of Hawaii Hilo and Manoa, Brigham Young University-Hawaii, University of Hawaii-Maui College, Aha Punana Leo, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Kamehameha Schools/Bishop Estate, and the Queen Liliuokalani Children's Center.

Hawai‘i’s public education system is built upon two official language pathways: **English and Hawaiian**. However, while English-medium education benefits from established leadership structures and systemic support, **Hawaiian medium education remains critically underrepresented at the BOE and DOE levels**. This lack of representation impacts policy decisions, resource allocation, and program sustainability.

Despite the significant role of the **Papahana Kaiapuni program** in the revitalization of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, it continues to face longstanding systemic challenges, including:

- **Insufficient capacity and resources,**
- **Teacher shortages and lack of specialized support,**
- **Inconsistent administrative oversight, and**
- **Systemic inequities in areas such as special education, transportation, and facilities.**



HB1496 proposes the creation of a **Complex Area Superintendent for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni**, ensuring that Hawaiian medium education receives more equitable leadership and systemic oversight comparable to that of English-medium education. This dedicated superintendent will provide a strong foundation for Kaiapuni learning communities by fostering shared training, leveraging collective resources, centralizing expertise, and creating pathways that support a unified and successful approach to Kaiapuni education.

HB1496 also mandates that **at least one at-large BOE member be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language**. Historically, most BOE members have extensive experience in English-medium education, while expertise in Hawaiian-medium education is often absent from decision-making processes. This gap results in policies that disproportionately benefit English-medium education, often overlooking the unique needs of Papahana Kaiapuni which can have detrimental effects.

Ensuring at least one at-large BOE member with this unique expertise will help the BOE and DOE fulfill their strategic goal of equity and meet their constitutional mandate to provide access to Hawaiian medium education. A perspective shaped by lived experience in Hawaiian language, culture, and advocacy is essential for making responsible, informed decisions that support Kaiapuni education and strengthen the vitality of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i.

A BOE member with Hawaiian language and culture expertise will:

- Bring an informed perspective to decisions impacting Hawaiian medium education,
- Ensure BOE policies align with the state's constitutional and statutory obligations,
- Strengthen the DOE's ability to support the growth and sustainability of Kaiapuni programs, and
- Safeguard the vitality of the Hawaiian language

The Papahana Kaiapuni is not simply a language program— it is essential to the future vitality of the Hawaiian language, directly impacting the well-being of our communities, particularly the most at-risk populations, including Native Hawaiians.

We strongly urge the Committee to **PASS HB1496**, which will provide the necessary structural support to ensure equity, sustainability, and long-term success for Hawaiian medium education. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA 'ŌLELO HAWAI'I!!!



96 Pu'uhonu Place
 Hilo, HI 96720
 (808) 935-4304
 (808) 969-7512
 ahapunanaleo.org

Ka Papa Alaka'i
Board of Directors

Kauano'e Kamanā
Pelekikena

Larry Kimura

William H. Wilson

Ki'ope Raymond

Huilau Wilson

Keawe Lopes

Ka Luna Ho'okele
Chief Executive Officer

Ka'iulani J.K.N. Laehā

Ka Luna Ho'okō
Chief Operating Officer

K. Sean Kekina

Nā Papahana
Pūnana Leo
Pūnana Leo Programs

Aukukūl

Ne'epapa

Kula Kamall'i

Pūnana Leo o Hilo

Pūnana Leo o Kaua'i

Pūnana Leo o Maui

Pūnana Leo o Moloka'i

Pūnana Leo o Wai'anae

Pūnana Leo o Kona

Pūnana Leo o Waimea

Pūnana Leo o Mānoa

Pūnana Leo o Ko'olau Poko

Pūnana Leo o Lahaina

Pūnana Leo o Hāna

Pūnana Leo o Nu'uauu

Pūnana Leo o Waiālua

Committee on Education
 Representative Woodson
 Representative La Chica
 Wednesday, January 30, 2025
 TIME: 2:00p
 Conference Room 309

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica and members of the Committee on Education,

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo would like to **support with comments on HB1496** relating to education.

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo was founded on the desire to save our 'ōlelo Hawai'i and opened its early learning child care centers 40 years ago. The Pūnana Leo is internationally renowned and is the base from which the state DOE and Charter Hawaiian language medium and Hawaiian language immersion programs have grown. When we began there were less than 50 children who spoke the Hawaiian language. It is through our traditional beliefs, knowledge and practices and dedicated kumu, that the Pūnana Leo movement continues. Today we have 13 child care centers, 2 infant toddler programs. We serve over 300 Hawaiian language speaking keiki each year in various communities throughout the state.

As an organization deeply involved in Hawaiian language medium education, we are acutely aware of the challenges faced by these programs. The bill correctly identifies issues such as insufficient capacity, teacher shortages, inadequate facilities and curricula, lack of special education services, inequities in busing and geographic exemptions, and inconsistent administrative support. These challenges have indeed hindered the programs' ability to meet their goals as outlined in Board of Education Policy No. 105-8.

We strongly support the following key purposes of this bill:

1. The establishment of a dedicated Ka Papahana Kaiapuni program complex area superintendent. This centralized administrative oversight will address many of the challenges faced by Kaiapuni programs and strengthen their implementation.

2. The requirement to include at least one Hawaiian language educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language as an at-large member of the Board of Education.
3. The appropriation of funds for the establishment of the Ka Papahana Kaiapuni program complex area superintendent position and a supporting secretary position. This financial commitment is crucial for the effective implementation of the proposed changes.

We would like to propose amendments on the following provisions of this bill:

1. Amend Section 3– “Of the at-large members appointed pursuant to paragraph (5), at least one member shall be a proficient Hawaiian speaking educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies (or) and the Hawaiian language, who shall be selected from a list of three nominees submitted by the president of the senate, speaker of the house of representatives, and office of Hawaiian affairs; provided that the president of the senate, speaker of the house of representatives, and office of Hawaiian affairs shall each nominate one Hawaiian immersion expert for selection...”
2. Amend Section 4– “...The superintendent of education, with the approval of the board, shall appoint complex area superintendents for schools[-], including a proficient Hawaiian language speaking complex area superintendent for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni schools.
3. REMOVE Section 5– “The Hawaiian language medium education program shall provide a complete educational experience through the Hawaiian language. The program's objectives shall integrate Hawaiian language and culture curricula from preschool to college levels and fulfill unique program goals.”

While the bill proposes to clarify the definition, purpose and objective of the Hawaiian language medium education program, it's worth considering that the current language in the law has been sufficient for many years. The existing statute already defines the program as "a complete educational program or schooling experience provided to students in the medium of the Hawaiian language." The proposed change may not be necessary, as it doesn't significantly alter the program's core definition.

Furthermore, it's important to note that within language revitalization there are key differentiating factors between Hawaiian immersion and Hawaiian language medium schools. The immersion model is focused

on introducing Hawaiian language to a broader audience. Hawaiian language medium schools aim to create comprehensive Hawaiian language environments, prioritizing families already speaking Hawaiian at home, and identify its primary purpose as revitalizing the Hawaiian language beyond the classroom and educational methodology.

We urge the legislature to pass this bill with amendments, as it will not only help ensure that Hawai'i's keiki and future generations have high-quality education through the medium of Hawaiian language, but also help progress efforts in the ongoing, 40+ year movement, to revitalize Hawaiian language. Mahalo for your consideration of this important legislation.

Mahalo nui,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ka'iulani Laehā', written over a vertical line that serves as a separator between the signature and the typed name below.

Ka'iulani Laehā
Luna Ho'okele (CEO)
'Aha Pūnana Leo, Inc.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 6:51:13 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Christopher Sanita | Hana High and Elementary School | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Support of HB1496

Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent & Hawaiian Language Representation on the Board of Education

Aloha e nā Luna Ho‘omalua a me nā Lālā o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Chris Sanita, and I am the principal at Hāna High and Elementary School, I and advocate for Hawaiian language medium education. I write today in **strong support** of HB1496, which seeks to establish a **Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent** and ensure the representation of a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar on the **Board of Education**.

Hawaiian language immersion education, or Ka Papahana Kaiapuni, is more than just a program—it is a **critical part of the revitalization and perpetuation of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i**, the language of this land. Despite the success of our Kaiapuni schools in fostering academic excellence, cultural identity, and bilingual proficiency, our program continues to face systemic challenges due to a lack of specialized leadership at the highest levels of education governance.

The Need for a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent

Currently, Hawaiian immersion programs exist across multiple complex areas, each operating under leadership that may not fully understand the unique needs of Kaiapuni education. The establishment of a **Kaipuni Complex Area Superintendent** would provide:

- **Consistent and culturally grounded leadership** to advocate for and oversee the development of Kaiapuni programs statewide.
- **A direct voice in decision-making** regarding policies, curriculum development, and teacher support for Hawaiian immersion schools.
- **Stronger support structures** for Kaiapuni educators, students, and families ensure Hawaiian language education's sustainability and growth.

A dedicated superintendent would address long-standing concerns such as **high-quality Hawaiian language curriculum availability, equitable assessment practices, and recruitment and retention of qualified immersion teachers**.

Representation on the Board of Education

Ensuring that at least one at-large member of the **Board of Education** is a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar is equally crucial. Decisions affecting our Hawaiian immersion programs are often made without an adequate understanding of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i or Hawaiian culture.

Representation on the Board will:

- **Bring expertise and lived experience** in Hawaiian language education to policy discussions.
- **Ensure that Hawaiian language immersion schools are not an afterthought** in the broader education system.
- **Uphold the State’s constitutional responsibility** to support and promote Hawaiian language education (Article X, Section 4 of the Hawai‘i State Constitution).

Conclusion

HB1496 is a necessary step toward strengthening and protecting Hawaiian immersion education. A dedicated Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent and an appointed Hawaiian language expert on the Board of Education will ensure that Kaiapuni schools receive the leadership, advocacy, and resources they deserve. **Our keiki have the right to learn in their ancestral language, and we have a collective kuleana to ensure its survival for generations to come.**

I urge you to pass HB1496 and uphold the State of Hawai‘i’s commitment to Hawaiian language medium education.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,
Christopher Sanita
Principal

Hana High and Elementary School

Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education
Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Ashley Foumai, Parent, Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waiiau

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni
Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Ashley Foumai and I am a parent of Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waiiau. I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy.

BOE currently has Hawaiian immersion advocates who understand the pedagogy and methodology of Hawaiian immersion education. We would like to secure such an advocate in a leadership role as a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent.

Schools like Waiiau (immersion within an English school) have principals who are not educated in Hawaiian language or Hawaiian education. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent would have clear expectations and a solid model for supporting Kaiapuni schools, ensuring consistent alignment with the unique needs and goals of Hawaiian language immersion programs.

In conclusion, creating this dedicated leadership position is vital for the continued growth and flourishing of our Kaiapuni schools and the revitalization of the Hawaiian language. It will provide the necessary support and expertise to ensure our keiki receive the high-quality Hawaiian immersion education they deserve.

I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I!!!

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education
Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Keonilei Lealiifano
Nā Leo Kāko‘o O‘ahu (Non profit organization to support Hawaiian Language Immersion
education efforts)

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

‘O wau no ‘o Keonilei Lealiifano, ka Pelekikena o Nā Leo Kāko‘o O‘ahu.

My name is Keonilei Lealiifano and I am a the president of Nā Leo Kāko‘o O‘ahu’s Governing board.
I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success. This bill provides solutions to some of the challenges we face in Hawaiian Immersion education.

Solutions: This bill proposes several key solutions:

1. **Establish the position of a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni program complex area superintendent** to provide dedicated leadership and address the program’s administrative challenges. This will provide needed expertise to the BOE and help to stabilize its decision making and leadership.
2. **Ensure better representation on the Board of Education** by requiring that at least one at-large member be a Hawaiian educator or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language. Without this expertise, the BOE will continue to fabricate many solutions for English medium education only without consideration on how it affects Hawaiian immersion education, leaving Kaiapuni out of the equation.
3. **Clarify the objectives of the Hawaiian language medium education program**, ensuring that it integrates Hawaiian language, culture, and history across all educational levels. BOE currently has Hawaiian immersion advocates who understand the pedagogy and methodology of Hawaiian immersion education. We would like to secure such an advocate in a leadership role as a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent.
4. **Appropriate funds** to support the new superintendent position and a secretary role to assist with the Ka Papahana Kaiapuni program.

In conclusion, as the president of Nā Leo Kāko‘o O‘ahu, an organization with the mission to support the educational objectives of Hawaiian Immersion schools in O‘ahu, I strongly support HB1496.

We urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:52:10 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Kahakuhailoa Poepoe | Individual | Support | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

I support HB1496 as a product of Kula Kaia‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian Language Immersion School) at Ke Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Kualapu‘u, and as a current student in the Ka Haka ‘Ula o Ke‘elikōlani Bachelor's Hawaiian Studies program. A superintendent and BOE position that represents us as "Ke aukahi ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i" is extremely necessary so that our needs are heard and met by the state government. ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i was disproportionately negatively affected by a 1896 law that required all schools in the Territory be instructed in the English language, with Hawaiian being effectively banned in said schools, and Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian children receiving corporal punishment for speaking their language up until 1978, when State Congress made Hawaiian an official language of the state. These nuances means that our language needs more care and attention than ever, and it is extremely urgent that we receive the proper funds and assistance from the government that took away our language to effectively revitalize it in our educational systems. You, as the House of Representatives of Hawaii have a kuleana to uphold, which is ensuring that the English and Hawaiian language are held to the same standard in our state government, and to rightfully return to the Hawaiian people what we have missed out on for too many generations. Mahalo.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:29:34 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Mele Kanealii | Individual | Support | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and esteemed members of the committee,

My name is Mele Kahealani Kāneali‘i, and I am a sophomore at Hamilton College studying Public Policy and Economics. I am a proud product of the Kaiapuni program, having attended Punana Leo o Maui, Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Pā‘ia (Pā‘ia Elementary), Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Kalama (Kalama Intermediate), and ‘O Hina I Ka Malama (Molokai High School). I am here today to express my full support for HB1496, which seeks to establish a Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni (Hawaiian language immersion) schools and create a Board of Education seat for a Hawaiian education representative.

The Kaiapuni program is not simply a form of education—it is the heartbeat of our culture and the lifeline for the Hawaiian language. In the face of historical efforts to suppress our language and culture, Kaiapuni schools represent a powerful reclamation of what was once lost. They serve as the living embodiment of our heritage, offering students the chance to learn and thrive in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, our native language, while also receiving a rigorous and well-rounded education.

The investment in these schools is more than just an educational or financial investment—it is an investment in our culture, in our people, and in the future of Hawai‘i. These schools provide a critical space for our keiki to learn not only academic subjects but also the values and knowledge embedded in our language. They are the guardians of our identity.

HB1496 offers a crucial step towards ensuring that all our Kaiapuni schools, regardless of their location or size, are given equal support and oversight. For example, Molokai High School, where I attended, has faced unique challenges due to its rural setting and its distinct community needs. I have seen firsthand the disparities in resources, funding, and opportunities between our schools on Molokai and those on more populated islands. This legislation will ensure that schools like ‘O Hina I Ka Malama at Molokai High, which serve a smaller but equally dedicated group of students, are not left behind.

A Complex Area Superintendent dedicated specifically to Kaiapuni schools would provide targeted leadership and oversight, ensuring that resources, training, and educational materials are distributed equitably to all Kaiapuni schools across the islands. This means that our keiki, no matter where they live, would have an equal chance to thrive in the Kaiapuni system and to succeed both academically and culturally.

Furthermore, the creation of a Board of Education seat specifically for a Hawaiian education representative is a critical step toward ensuring that the voices of our community are heard at the highest levels of educational policymaking. Too often, the unique needs and challenges of our Kaiapuni schools are overlooked or underrepresented in statewide decision-making processes. Having a dedicated voice for Hawaiian education at the table would provide an opportunity for better-informed decisions that prioritize the needs of our Hawaiian-speaking students and the future of the Hawaiian language.

This Board seat would ensure that Hawaiian language and culture are not treated as peripheral or optional, but as essential components of our state's educational framework. It would also send a clear message to our students and our community that our language, our culture, and our educational system are valued.

HB1496 is a step in the right direction to ensure that no keiki is left behind, regardless of where they live. It is about equity, it is about access, and it is about investing in our future. We need to build systems that reflect who we are as a people, and that means giving our Kaiapuni schools the attention and resources they deserve.

In closing, I strongly urge this committee to pass HB1496. This bill is not only a step toward improving education for our students, but it is also a step toward preserving and nurturing the Hawaiian language and culture for future generations. We are worthy of this investment, our schools are worthy of this support, and our keiki are worthy of the chance to thrive.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Mele Kāneali'i

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:45:10 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Tiffany Teruya | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in full SUPPORT of this legislative bill. It's time that our keiki from Ka Papa Kaiapuni FINALLY have someone speak for us. We have been long overlooked and with the wildfire here in Maui, it was PROVEN with the lack of support we have received during that time. HELP US HELP YOU.

mahalo!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:14:55 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Curen Ohama | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in full support of this bill.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:46:17 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Tamara Paltin | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha e Chairand members,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure. After nearly eradicating ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i in Hawai‘i nei, it is making real, tangible strides in coming Back support of This measure would allow for greater support of our immersion school students especially in the face of disasters like COVID and the Lahaina fires.

mahalo,

Tamara

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:55:05 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| francine Aarona | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in support of HB1496. It's long overdue that our Hawaiian Education is recognized in creating a superintendent for Kaiapuni schools as well as having a seat as a Hawaiian Education Representative at the table of discussion.

"Ua mau ke ea o ka 'Āina I ka pono"

These words of Kanejameha III...calls upon the Life (our sovereignty) of the land that we care for (our Keleana) as we continue to perpetuate with our 'Olelo (our mother tongue) and to have righteousness (our justice).

Ke Akua pū,

Francine (Mopsy) Aarona

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:17:07 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Hope McKeen | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please support this bill in establishing a dedicated Complex Area Superintendent for our Kaiapuni schools. This program is growing so quickly that we need to support our kumu at the school level from the complex area.

Mahalo

Hope Pualani McKeen

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:47:02 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Dana Keawe | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1496

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:47:17 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Leilani Sills | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai kakou. O Leilani ko‘u inoa. I am a makua of keiki kaiapuni and I support HB 1496. In the past 4 years I have immersed myself as much as I am able to at our keiki’s kula and I grow increasingly frustrated at what can be done and what is actually being done.

It only seems reasonable that the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent is established and that at least one at-large member of the Board of Education be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language, to be selected from a list of three nominees submitted by the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

For too many years I have watched our kumu work hard to push for our keiki to grow in their olelo and culture only to face what appears to be a lack of support from administration who does not value or take on the kuleana as being a kaiapuni school. We need to do better for our keiki.

Mahalo

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:56:39 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Konaneakamahina de la Nux | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I fully support this bill that aims to establish a complex area superintendent for Kaiapuni schools. A Kaiapuni education is very unique and requires someone who is familiar with the needs of the program in order to fulfill its goals and successful student outcomes. We deserve to have a native hawaiian education representative that sits on the BOE. Mahalo nui, Kōnane de la Nux

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:20:45 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Alaka'i Iaea-Russell | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

O wau o Alaka'i Iaea-Russell, he kumu ma Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. Tadoo wau i ta pila HB1496 e hootumu ia ai ta kulana CAS o Ta Papahana Kaiapuni a me ta loa o ketahi kanaka Hawaii a olelo Hawaii ma ta Papa Hoonaaauao i mohala mai na kula o Hawaii nei.

I am Alaka'i Iaea-Russell, a teacher at Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. I support HB1496 to establish a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program CAS position and to require a Hawaiian and Hawaiian language speaker on the Board of Education so that kaiapuni schools may thrive.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:20:55 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kanani Keale | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

O wau o Kanani Keale, he haumana o Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. Tatoo wau i ta pila HB1496 e hootumu ia ai ta kulana CAS o Ta Papahana Kaiapuni a me ta loa a o ketahi kanaka Hawaii a olelo Hawaii ma ta Papa Hoonaaauao i mahala mai na kula kaiapuni o Hawaii nei.

I am Kanani Keale, a student at Ke Kula Niihau O kekaha. I support HB1496 to establish a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni program CAS position and to require a Hawaiian and Hawaiian language speaker on the Board Of Education so that Kaiapuni schools may thrive.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:20:58 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Ekolu Kanahale | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

O wau o Ekolu Kanahale,he haumana Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha, Tadoo wau i ta pila HB1496 e hootumu ia ai ta kulana CAS o TA Papahana Kaiapuni a me ta loaa o ketahi kanaka Hawaii a olelo Hawaii ma ta papa Hoonaaauao i mahala mai na kula kaiapuni o Hawaii nei.

I am Ekolu Kanahale, a student at Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha. I support HB1496 to estblish a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program CAS posistrion and to require a Hawaiian and Hawaii language speaker on the Board Of Education ao that kaiapuni schools may thrive

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:21:05 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| kinohi Mooiki-Kanahele | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

O wau o Kinohi Mooiki-Kanahele, he haumana o Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. tatau wau i ta pila HB1496 e hootumu ia ai ta kulani CAS o Ta Papahana Kaiapunia me ta loa o ketahi kanaka Hawaii A olelo Hawaii ma ta Papa Hoonauao i mahaa mai na kula kaiapuni o Hawaii nei

I am Kinohi Mooiki-Kanahele , a student at Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha I support HB1496 to establish a ksa papahana kaiaulu program CAS position and to require a Hawaiian and Hawaiian language speaker on the board Of Education so that Kaiapuni schools may thrive

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:21:21 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Maymay Kelley-Kanahele | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

O wau o keakuamana kelley-kanahele he haumana o ke kula niihau o kekaha tatoo wau i ta pila HB1496 e hootumu ia ai kulana CAS o ta papahana kaiapuni a me ta loaa o ketahi kanaka hawaii a olelo hawaii ma ta papa hoonaauao i mahalo mai na kula kaiapuni o hawaii nei.

i am lindsaymay kelley-kanahele a student at ke kula niihau o kekaha oi support HB1496 to establish a ka papahana kaiapuni hawaiian language speaker on the board of education so that kaiapuni school may thrive.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:21:49 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kalele Kanahale | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

O wau o Kalele Kanahale gerardo, he haumana o Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. Tatoo wau i ta pila HB1496 e hootumu ia ai ta kulana CAS o Ta Papahana Kaiapuni a me ta loa o ketahi kanaka Hawaii ma ta Papa Hoonauao i mohala mai na kula kaiapuni o Hawaii nei.

I am Kalele Kanahale gerardo, a student at Kekula Niihau O Kekaha. i support HB1496 to establish a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program CAS Posistion and to require a Hawaiian and Hawaiian language speaker on the board Of Education so that Kaiapuni schools may thrive.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:21:48 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Shawnsielee Aki | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

O wau o Shawnsielee Aki Jr., he haumana o Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. Tatoo wau i ta pila HB1496 e hootumu ia ai ta kulana CAS o Ta Panahana Kaiapuni a me ta loa o ketahi kanaka Hawaii a olelo Hawaii ma ta Papa Hoonaaauao i mohala mai na kula kaiapuni o Hawaii nei.

I am Shawnsielee Aki Jr., a student at Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. I support HB1496 to establish a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program CAS position and to require a Hawaiian and Hawaiian language speaker on the board of Education so that kaiapuni schools may thrive.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:23:39 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Liloa Pantohan | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

O wau o Liloa Pantohan,he haumana o Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. Tatoo wau i ta pila HB1496 e hootumu ia ai ta kulana CAS o Ta Papahana Kaiapuni a me ta loa a o ketahi kanaka Hawaii a olelo Hawaii ma ta Papa Hoonaaauao i mohala mai na kula kaiapuni o Hawaii nei.

I am Liloa Pantohan, a student at Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. I support HB1496 to establish a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program CAS position and to require a Hawaii and Hawaiian language speaker on the Board Of Education so that Kaiapuni schools may thrive.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:32:56 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Zymani Keamoai-Hall | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

O wau o Zymani Keamoai-Hall, he humana o Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. Tadoo wau i ta pila HB1496 e hootumu ia ai ta kulana CAS o Ta Papahana Kaiapuni a me ta loa o ketahi kanaka Hawaii a olelo Hawaii ma ta Papa Hoonaaauao i mohala mai na kula kaiapuni o Hawaii nei.

I am Zymani Keamoai-Hall, a student at Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. I support HB1496 to establish a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program CAS position and to require a Hawaiian and Hawaiian language speaker on the Board Of Education so that Kaiapuni schools may thrive.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:47:22 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| kawai cruz | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

O wau o Kawai cruz, he haumana o Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. Tatoo wau i ta pila HB14496 e hootumu ia ai ta kulana CAS o Ta Papahana Kaiapuni a me ta loa a o ketahi kanaka Hawai'i a olelo Hawai'i ma ta Papa Hoonaaauao i mohala mai na kula kaiapuni o Hawai'i nei.

I am Kawai cruz, a student at Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha. i support HB1496 to esablish a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program CAS posistion and to require a Hawaiian and Hawaiian language speaker on the Board Of Education so that kaiapuni schools may thrive.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 2:04:30 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Aokeaokalani West | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in support of HB1496!

As ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i is an official language of Hawai‘i, there should be more resources for ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i education programs and kaiapuni. ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and Kaiapuni schools are continuing to grow. With many students enrolling in Kula Kaiapuni, there are not enough resources and Kumu available to teach all these keiki. By passing this bill and allowing Kaiapuni schools to have their own superintendant, I hope that Kula Kaiapuni Hawai‘i receives the resources they deserve!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 2:09:43 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Hinaikawaihi?ilei Keala | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

E ola ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i. This is the language of this land. The state of Hawai'i and the department of education needs to have sufficient funding/positions such as superintendent for Kaiapuni schools.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 2:20:53 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kaehukaihaamainae Keala | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I, Kaehukaihaamainae Keala, submit this testimony to support and encourage establishing a complex area superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools. I also support and encourage creating a board of education seat for a Hawaiian education representative.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 2:59:31 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Jordan Camara | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am writing to express my strong support for two critical initiatives that would strengthen Hawaiian language immersion education in our state: the establishment of a dedicated Complex Area Superintendent position for Hawaiian immersion schools and the creation of a Board of Education seat specifically for a Hawaiian education representative.

The Hawaiian language immersion program (kaiapuni) has grown significantly since its inception in 1987, now serving thousands of students across multiple islands. This growth demonstrates both the success of and increasing demand for Hawaiian medium education. However, the current administrative structure does not adequately address the unique needs and challenges of Hawaiian immersion schools.

RATIONALE FOR COMPLEX AREA SUPERINTENDENT:

1. Specialized Leadership Needs

The Complex Area Superintendent position would provide dedicated leadership that understands the distinct pedagogical, cultural, and operational requirements of Hawaiian medium education. This includes curriculum development, teacher recruitment and training, and resource allocation specifically tailored to immersion settings.

2. Program Consistency and Quality

A dedicated superintendent would ensure consistent standards and practices across all Hawaiian immersion programs while maintaining their cultural integrity. This position would facilitate better coordination between schools and more effective sharing of resources and best practices.

3. Advocacy and Resource Management

The superintendent would serve as a strong advocate for immersion programs' needs at the administrative level, ensuring appropriate allocation of resources and support services. This includes addressing critical needs such as Hawaiian language teaching materials, qualified staff recruitment, and professional development opportunities.

RATIONALE FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVE:

1. Direct Representation

A dedicated Board seat would ensure that Hawaiian education perspectives are consistently represented in policy-making decisions. This representation is crucial for maintaining the cultural and educational integrity of Hawaiian immersion programs.

2. Policy Development

A Hawaiian education representative would contribute essential cultural and educational expertise to Board discussions, helping to shape policies that support both Hawaiian immersion schools and the integration of Hawaiian education principles across the broader public education system.

3. Cultural Perpetuation

This position would help fulfill the state's constitutional mandate to promote the study of Hawaiian culture, history, and language, ensuring that educational policies align with these constitutional obligations.

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Complex Area Superintendent position should:

- Require fluency in Hawaiian language
- Have extensive experience in Hawaiian medium education
- Possess demonstrated leadership in Hawaiian education contexts
- Understand both traditional Hawaiian educational principles and modern administrative requirements

2. The Board of Education representative should:

- Have significant experience in Hawaiian education
- Demonstrate deep understanding of Hawaiian culture and language
- Possess strong advocacy skills
- Have connections to the Hawaiian education community

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

The establishment of these positions would:

- Strengthen the quality and consistency of Hawaiian immersion education
- Improve resource allocation and support for immersion programs
- Ensure Hawaiian educational perspectives are represented in policy decisions
- Support the growth and development of Hawaiian medium education
- Help preserve and perpetuate Hawaiian language and culture
- Fulfill constitutional obligations regarding Hawaiian education

CLOSING:

The creation of these positions represents a crucial step forward in supporting and strengthening Hawaiian language immersion education. These structural changes would provide the necessary leadership and representation to ensure the continued growth and success of Hawaiian medium education in our state.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:30:37 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Danielle Espiritu | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Wilson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Representatives,

I am writing in support of HB 1496, the establishment of a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent, and the creation of a Board of Education seat for a Hawaiian education representative.

ke aloha,

Danielle Espiritu

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 2:24:05 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Chelsey Goodhue | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF:

- Establishing a Complex Area Superintendent Position for Hawaiian Immersion Schools
- Creating a Board of Education Seat for Hawaiian Education Representative

Aloha e Chair and Members of the Board of Education,

I am writing to express my strong support for two critical initiatives that would strengthen Hawaiian language immersion education in our state: the establishment of a dedicated Complex Area Superintendent position for Hawaiian immersion schools and the creation of a Board of Education seat specifically for a Hawaiian education representative.

The Hawaiian language immersion program (kaiapuni) has grown significantly since its inception in 1987, now serving thousands of students across multiple islands. This growth demonstrates both the success of and increasing demand for Hawaiian medium education. However, the current administrative structure does not adequately address the unique needs and challenges of Hawaiian immersion schools.

RATIONALE FOR COMPLEX AREA SUPERINTENDENT:

1. Specialized Leadership Needs

The Complex Area Superintendent position would provide dedicated leadership that understands the distinct pedagogical, cultural, and operational requirements of Hawaiian medium education.

This includes curriculum development, teacher recruitment and training, and resource allocation specifically tailored to immersion settings.

2. Program Consistency and Quality

A dedicated superintendent would ensure consistent standards and practices across all Hawaiian immersion programs while maintaining their cultural integrity. This position would facilitate better coordination between schools and more effective sharing of resources and best practices.

3. Advocacy and Resource Management

The superintendent would serve as a strong advocate for immersion programs' needs at the administrative level, ensuring appropriate allocation of resources and support services. This includes addressing critical needs such as Hawaiian language teaching materials, qualified staff recruitment, and professional development opportunities.

RATIONALE FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVE:

1. Direct Representation

A dedicated Board seat would ensure that Hawaiian education perspectives are consistently represented in policy-making decisions. This representation is crucial for maintaining the cultural and educational integrity of Hawaiian immersion programs.

2. Policy Development

A Hawaiian education representative would contribute essential cultural and educational expertise to Board discussions, helping to shape policies that support both Hawaiian immersion schools and the integration of Hawaiian education principles across the broader public education system.

3. Cultural Perpetuation

This position would help fulfill the state's constitutional mandate to promote the study of Hawaiian culture, history, and language, ensuring that educational policies align with these constitutional obligations.

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Complex Area Superintendent position should:

- Require fluency in Hawaiian language
- Have extensive experience in Hawaiian medium education
- Possess demonstrated leadership in Hawaiian education contexts
- Understand both traditional Hawaiian educational principles and modern administrative requirements

2. The Board of Education representative should:

- Have significant experience in Hawaiian education
- Demonstrate deep understanding of Hawaiian culture and language
- Possess strong advocacy skills
- Have connections to the Hawaiian education community

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

The establishment of these positions would:

- Strengthen the quality and consistency of Hawaiian immersion education
- Improve resource allocation and support for immersion programs
- Ensure Hawaiian educational perspectives are represented in policy decisions

- Support the growth and development of Hawaiian medium education
- Help preserve and perpetuate Hawaiian language and culture
- Fulfill constitutional obligations regarding Hawaiian education

CLOSING:

The creation of these positions represents a crucial step forward in supporting and strengthening Hawaiian language immersion education. These structural changes would provide the necessary leadership and representation to ensure the continued growth and success of Hawaiian medium education in our state.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:33:43 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kaimi | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

In support of HB1496

Aloha,

My name is Ka’imi. I am from Maui. I was once a student of Kula Kaiapuni o Lahaina. Later on as an adult I got the opportunity to provide assistance in these programs as a part time educator through a local non-profit organization after the fires.

These programs are vital in providing spaces where Hawai’i’s unique culture practices can continue to live. These programs do not follow a western pattern. This education system is heavily based on huaka’i, community engagement, hands-on learning projects, and connection to the natural environment. Things that are not traditional to western styles of education. Often the importance of these activities are not taken seriously and get heavily regulated because they do not comply with the typical western model.

The Kula Kaiapuni programs should be led by an individual who understands the values and nuances of Hawaiian cultural practices. This understanding should allow for the programs to grow and change through time according to those values. It should be led by someone who can see things through the perspective of our culture and way of life. Hopefully one day these programs can be led by an alumni of the Kapapuni programs.

Kula Kaiapuni is important for all people of Hawai’i, especially Hawaiians. Anyone raising their kids here should have the opportunity to educate them based on the unique lessons Hawai’i has to offer. Kanaka Maoli should be able to connect with their culture and their aina and their ancestors. This opportunity is being stifled quite frankly. I've seen students, teachers, and even parents get reprimanded for trying to provide educational spaces outside of the classroom. That should not be the case. It is the states responsibility to provide students with the space to make this connection within their education. That simply cannot happen in a classroom alone. The DOE should have someone who can offer a sense of understanding for both the culture and the administrative aspects of the program.

I believe this bill allowing for a superintendent just for the Kula Kaiapuni programs will allow for the programs to grow and live up to its full potential.

Mahalo,

Ka'imi

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:50:23 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Marlee Kamakaala-Miller | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support creating a complex area superintendent (CAS) for Kaiapuni schools. It's been over 30 years since Kaiapuni was established. There needs to be better oversight of the program because the program lacks a lot of support and resources. I strongly support creating a CAS for Kaiapuni as well as a position on the BOE. Thank you.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:29:25 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Keoni Shizuma | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Committee members of the House Committee on Education,

I am testifying in support of this bill.

I am a fluent ‘ōlelo hawai‘i speaker and have my Masters in Education and Teaching and did my training to become a highly qualified High School Science teacher at Ke Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Ānuenue in the early 2000s.

While I am no longer a teacher any more, I have kept close watch on the progress of Hawaiian cultural education as well as Hawaiian language education. The program continues to grow since inception and is in need of additional supports to continue its growth. It’s well known that many of our Native Hawaiian keiki sometimes struggle in the English medium school systems, understandably because they are being taught concepts that are not of their own culture or worldview. Being taught skills through a history, way of life, and philosophy that is not their own and is unnatural to them, it is understandable that many of them struggle to acquire the skills being taught to them. The Kaiapuni system, incorporating Hawaiian language, which is undoubtedly tied to Hawaiian culture, these Native Hawaiian keiki who would be struggling in the American English school system are now able to understand, learn the skills being taught to them, and thrive as adults.

The actions of this bill will support the further growth of this portion of the school system that is needed to ensure that the upcoming population of Hawaii is well educated, giving options for families to learn from either in English or Hawaiian. In these days and times, having a strong education is more important than ever. Please continue to support the growth of the Kaiapuni system by passing this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration, for the future of our keiki and the future of Hawaii.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:31:49 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Jaz Pekuna Hong | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am writing to express my strong support for two critical initiatives that would strengthen Hawaiian language immersion education in our state: the establishment of a dedicated Complex Area Superintendent position for Hawaiian immersion schools and the creation of a Board of Education seat specifically for a Hawaiian education representative.

The Hawaiian language immersion program (kaiapuni) has grown significantly since its inception in 1987, now serving thousands of students across multiple islands. This growth demonstrates both the success of and increasing demand for Hawaiian medium education. However, the current administrative structure does not adequately address the unique needs and challenges of Hawaiian immersion schools.

RATIONALE FOR COMPLEX AREA SUPERINTENDENT:

1. Specialized Leadership Needs

The Complex Area Superintendent position would provide dedicated leadership that understands the distinct pedagogical, cultural, and operational requirements of Hawaiian medium education. This includes curriculum development, teacher recruitment and training, and resource allocation specifically tailored to immersion settings.

2. Program Consistency and Quality

A dedicated superintendent would ensure consistent standards and practices across all Hawaiian immersion programs while maintaining their cultural integrity. This position would facilitate better coordination between schools and more effective sharing of resources and best practices.

3. Advocacy and Resource Management

The superintendent would serve as a strong advocate for immersion programs' needs at the administrative level, ensuring appropriate allocation of resources and support services. This includes addressing critical needs such as Hawaiian language teaching materials, qualified staff recruitment, and professional development opportunities.

RATIONALE FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVE:

1. Direct Representation

A dedicated Board seat would ensure that Hawaiian education perspectives are consistently

represented in policy-making decisions. This representation is crucial for maintaining the cultural and educational integrity of Hawaiian immersion programs.

2. Policy Development

A Hawaiian education representative would contribute essential cultural and educational expertise to Board discussions, helping to shape policies that support both Hawaiian immersion schools and the integration of Hawaiian education principles across the broader public education system.

3. Cultural Perpetuation

This position would help fulfill the state's constitutional mandate to promote the study of Hawaiian culture, history, and language, ensuring that educational policies align with these constitutional obligations.

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Complex Area Superintendent position should:

- Require fluency in Hawaiian language
- Have extensive experience in Hawaiian medium education
- Possess demonstrated leadership in Hawaiian education contexts
- Understand both traditional Hawaiian educational principles and modern administrative requirements

2. The Board of Education representative should:

- Have significant experience in Hawaiian education
- Demonstrate deep understanding of Hawaiian culture and language
- Possess strong advocacy skills
- Have connections to the Hawaiian education community

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

The establishment of these positions would:

- Strengthen the quality and consistency of Hawaiian immersion education
- Improve resource allocation and support for immersion programs
- Ensure Hawaiian educational perspectives are represented in policy decisions
- Support the growth and development of Hawaiian medium education
- Help preserve and perpetuate Hawaiian language and culture
- Fulfill constitutional obligations regarding Hawaiian education

CLOSING:

The creation of these positions represents a crucial step forward in supporting and strengthening Hawaiian language immersion education. These structural changes would provide the necessary leadership and representation to ensure the continued growth and success of Hawaiian medium education in our state.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:56:03 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Makani Barboza | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Strong Support for HB 1496

Hearing Date: January 30, 2025

Committee: House Committee on Education (EDN)

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Makani U. Barboza, and I am a Native Hawaiian, born and raised in Hawai‘i. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 1496, a bill that establishes the position of a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent, whose responsibility will be to oversee, support, and develop Hawaiian language immersion education.

I have six children, all of whom are currently or will be attending Hawaiian language immersion schools. This educational pathway will also ensure that my grandchildren and future generations of my family continue to learn and speak our mother tongue. Therefore, it is crucial that we provide the necessary leadership and structural support to uphold the integrity of this program and ensure the success of its students, teachers, and families.

By creating a Complex Area Superintendent specifically for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni, we will gain a leader dedicated to advocating for the needs of Hawaiian immersion schools, safeguarding the status of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, and expanding the reach of this program across the state.

The State of Hawai'i has a constitutional obligation to protect and promote the Hawaiian language and Indigenous education. I humbly urge you to support this bill and ensure the continued growth and success of Hawaiian language immersion for this generation and those to come.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Me ka ha'aha'a

Makani U. Barboza

Makaniua@gmail.com

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 5:15:25 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Lorena Martinez | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please accept this testimony in support of HB 1496. This is long overdue and excited for the potential growth to come for all of the Hawaiian Islands and its children, both here and those that will return home in the future.

Mahalo,
Lo Martinez - Resident of West Maui

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 5:38:53 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kaylene Sheldon | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Legislative Committee:

My name is Kauwila Sheldon and I am a life long learner of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i and a supporter of Kaiapuni Schools. I support an established position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent. I support the requirement of at least one at-large member of the Board of Education to be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language, to be selected from a list of three nominees submitted by the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Office of Hawaiian Affairs. I think this establishment could strengthen and expand 'ōlelo Hawai'i to be in every public school and could address some of the gaps.

Mahalo for you time,

Kaylene Kauwila Sheldon

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 5:50:54 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kaori-Lei Hanohano | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

‘O Kaori-Lei Ka‘imipono Hanohano ko‘u inoa. No Maui mai au a ka no na‘e noho ‘au ma Ka‘a‘awa O‘ahu.

My name is Kaori-Lei Ka‘imipono Hanohano. I‘m from the island of Maui but currently live in the district of Ka‘a‘awa O‘ahu.

I would like to acknowledge my ancestors who came before me that continued to speak ‘ōlelo Hawaii, the Hawaiian Language.

Today I submit this written testimony for my ‘ohana as they are part of the papa hana Kaiapuni. My family and I support the establishment of a complex area superintendent for Kaiapuni schools as well as a Board of Education seat for a Hawaiian Education Representative. I highly recommend encourage the seat on said board to hold genealogical connection to Hawaii as well as Hawaiian language & studies background to help the language continue into the next generations.

mahalo for listening and your time.

Na‘u no,

Kaori-Lei Ka‘imipono Hanohano

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 6:50:41 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| nikoya | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

As a makua of a Kaiapuni keiki, it is important for us to have seats at the table. I am in support of this bill.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 7:11:44 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Andrea Kekipi-Aurio | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha kakou,

My name is Andrea Lehua Kekipi-Aurio. I am a former Hawaiian immersion teacher as well as a current Hawaiian immersion parent. I support HB1496 because I believe that in order for students of the Hawaiian immersion or Papahana Kaiapuni to flourish, the program must have leaders that sit in influential positions that allow them to advocate for resources and staffing that will help to move these programs forward. The Papahana Kaiapuni is a very unique program that requires leaders that understand the specific needs and goals of the program. A Complex Area Superintendent would help to facilitate achievement of the specific goals of each school while also ensuring that the schools remain unified. I am also in support of the requirement of at least one Board of Education member to be a Hawaiian educator or practitioner. This would ensure that the goals of the Hawaiian immersion program and it's students would be top of mind and true advocacy could take place in the ongoings of the Board. I appreciate your time and consideration of passing this bill.

No ka pono o ka lahui,

A. Kekipi-Aurio

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 7:22:02 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kristen Pahukoa-Sardinh | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Kākou!

I support the position of having a member of the board of education be someone who is a Hawaiian practitioner and will advocate for Papahana Kaiapuni. Our Kaiapuni programs are growing in large numbers across the pae 'Aina and as it grows I believe these keiki should have someone that will advocate and bring forth discussions on what is needed to support this program in its entirety. The person elected should know and understand the program and what works best for it's haumana and the Kumu that teach them.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 7:22:04 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Nic Sardinha | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in support of having a Hawaiian practitioner and speaker of olelo Hawaii in the board of education. Our educational system is not set up to perpetuate our culture. Having "Hawaiian studies programs" is not enough. We need someone to speak for the true people of the this land. We absolutely need this to move forward for our keiki and generations to come.

Mahalo

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 8:42:30 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Miriam Keo | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 1496.

Kaiapuni students, teachers, and staff deserve a complex area superintendent who not only recognizes the importance of the Kaiapuni program but also has the ability to fully support it—without having to balance it with general education priorities. A dedicated leader is essential to ensuring the success and growth of Hawaiian language immersion education.

Additionally, families, students, and staff deserve an equal voice on the Board of Education. The best way to ensure this representation is by dedicating a seat specifically to a representative of Hawaiian education. This inclusion would help uphold the integrity and future of Kaiapuni education.

I urge you to support HB 1496 to advance educational equity for the Hawaiian community.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

Miriam Keo

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:11:47 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Monica Lindsey | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

As a native Hawaiian and mākuā of three haumana kaiapuni, I support this bill. Mahalo

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:28:51 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| carolyn auwelo | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Kako'o au! E Ola ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:53:42 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| mary drayer | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Kaiapuni Schools need some degree of autonomy from the DOE - the haumāna (student) base is unique on many levels, and as such Kula Kaiapuni needs to be administered and represented individually within the DOE. Perhaps one day the Kaiapuni program will have 'stand alone' status with their own campus' and administration.

Mahalo for you time

mary drayer

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:06:40 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Laura Reichhardt | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am a parent of a child enrolled in and thriving in a Kaiapuni school. This bill proposes a novel solution to the needs of our school and many of our sister Kaiapuni schools across the islands.

Laura Reichhardt / Pālolo

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:28:06 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Katherine Kealoha | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

January 28, 2025

Aloha e Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica and members of the committee,

My name is Katie Kealoha, I am an educator at Wai‘anae High School and a parent to two children enrolled in Hawaiian medium education in the Wai‘anae moku. I am writing in support of HB 1496 regarding the establishment of a Complex Area Superintendent position for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni as well as the new requirements for the Board of Education to seat an individual qualified to speak for issues affecting Native Hawaiian students.

As an educator in a predominantly Native Hawaiian community and a parent to Native Hawaiian children, I have seen first hand the importance of access to education through a culturally focused lens. I have also experienced some of the challenges that kula kaiapuni within the DOE system are facing in terms of equitable access to resources and systemic support that enable them to provide the level of education our students deserve. Indigenous students in these islands face the lowest educational outcomes of any group, and from my teaching experience I firmly believe that it has nothing to do with the students‘ actual ability and everything to do with the lack of access to a learning environment that values and perpetuates Hawaiian culture. Educators have worked for decades to address this in Hawaiian immersion schools and programs across the state and it is time for the government to match their effort through providing the necessary supports.

I believe that this bill is a step forward for Hawaiian medium education to have a true seat at the table that it has unfortunately lacked until this point. Hawaii’s public schools have long played a role in a systematic effort to suppress and erase Hawaiian language, culture and ultimately Hawaiian people from this place. This is one small step towards healing by giving our immersion schools a stronger voice within this system.

I strongly urge this committee to pass HB 1496 and provide the necessary administrative voices within the DOE system for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni.

Mahalo piha for your time and attention,

Katie Kealoha

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:53:24 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Caitlin Kaopuiki | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB1496

Hawai‘i State Legislature

House Committee on Education

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Caitlin Kanoë Kaopuiki, and I am both a **parent** and an **educator** who is deeply invested in the success of Hawaiian language immersion education. I write in **strong support** of **HB1496**, which would establish a **Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent** and a **Board of Education seat** dedicated to Kaiapuni representation.

As a parent, I see firsthand the value of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i in shaping my child’s identity, academic success, and connection to our culture. Yet, Kaiapuni schools often struggle with **inconsistent leadership, inadequate resources, and a lack of strategic support**. A **Complex Area Superintendent** dedicated to immersion education would provide the leadership necessary to ensure **equitable access to resources, curriculum development, and teacher support**.

As an educator, I know that Hawaiian immersion schools require **specialized policies and advocacy** that differ from English-medium schools. A **Kaiapuni representative on the BOE** would ensure that **our voices, needs, and concerns are heard** at the highest levels of decision-making. Without this representation, our keiki and educators remain underserved in a system that does not fully address the distinct needs of immersion education.

I urge you to pass **HB1496** to strengthen the future of Kaiapuni education and uphold the state’s commitment to ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i revitalization.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Me ka ‘oia‘i‘o,

Caitlin Kanoë Kaopuiki

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:05:19 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Michaellyn Burke | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

Mahalo to all who have joined together in support of this bill, HB1496. As a makua of a haumāna Kaiapuni, I am in total support of this bill.

In the aftermath of the Lahaina fire, our ‘ohana Kaiapuni spent long months battling the DOE on what was pono for our haumāna as we moved forward and educated our keiki in a town that was devastated, whose ‘āina was still kaumaha with all the ‘uhane still unrested. It was VERY clear that the DOE, from our CAS to the Superintendent, do not understand or empathize with our Kaiapuni schools and its values, mission, and kūlana. We are fortunate right now that there are individuals who currently sit on the Board of Education, who are also ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i speakers and Kaiapuni supporters. But that will not always be the case. It is time to stop treating Kaiapuni education as a program within the DOE or worse, an experiment within the DOE. Kaiapuni SCHOOLS (not programs) are oppressed under the DOE system in the same way that our lāhui is oppressed in this colonizer system. We are overdue a seat at the table, with both our own Kaiapuni CAS in the DOE and at least one dedicated seat on the BOE. Please support the passing of HB 1496.

Mahalo,

Michaellyn Burke

Lahaina, Maui

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:06:53 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Debra M Javar | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I fully SUPPORT HB1496

A Hawaiian education representative must be present on the board of education to ensure the needs of Hawaiian language immersion schools are heard and met. After all the Hawaiian language is an official language here. Mahalo

Mahalo

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:06:52 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Christine Chow | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support HB 1496. As a Kaiapuni parent of three children (2012–present) at Pū‘ōhala and Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waimānalo, and as an educator in the Kaiapuni system for over 12 years—as a parent, substitute, PTT, and PPT—I have firsthand experience with the challenges our schools face.

My deep involvement stems from my commitment to Hawaiian language revitalization, but also from necessity—there simply weren’t enough people to fill these roles. I worked closely with administrators to establish Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waimānalo, the first Hawaiian Immersion school in Waimānalo, because our keiki deserve access to education in their native language.

Right now, there is an unacceptable inequality. The needs of Kaiapuni schools are often misunderstood or overlooked, despite high demand in our communities. While English-medium schools have proper representation and infrastructure, Kaiapuni schools lack even a single Board member or dedicated complex area. This absence of leadership and administrative support forces our kumu and students to struggle unnecessarily.

‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i is an official language of this land, yet we cannot fully support our learners without these two critical positions. If we truly care about Hawai‘i’s future, we must act now. Without our keiki living in the language, there is no Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

Christine Chow

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:35:28 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Alexander K.D. McNicoll | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai,

I am in STRONG suport of **HB1496**.

Mahalo.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 3:37:20 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Areerat Worawongwasu | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB 1496, which seeks to establish the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent; require that at least one at-large Board of Education member be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar; and clarify the purpose of the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program. This bill represents a crucial step in furthering the state’s constitutional mandate to revitalize and normalize the Hawaiian language while ensuring equitable governance and oversight for Hawaiian immersion education.

HB 1496 is a necessary and overdue measure that strengthens the infrastructure of Hawaiian language education, ensures representation in governance, and upholds Hawai‘i’s commitment to its official language. By passing this bill, the legislature affirms its dedication to the revitalization and perpetuation of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i for generations to come.

Me ke aloha,

Areerat Worawongwasu, PhD Student, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 5:24:50 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Sayble Bissen | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

As a mākuā of a Pūnana Leo o Maui haumana, I am in full support of this bill and the impact it can have on the growth of the kaiapuni system.

Please support this measure so that the future of this program can receive the resources it deserves and grow to its full potential.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Sayble Bissen

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 5:00:25 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Brandi Cutler | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

As a makuahine to two haumāna at Ke Kula Kaiapuni O Pū‘ōhala, I support HB 1496. Having a complex area superintendent dedicated to kaiapuni and requiring a BOE seat be for a Hawaiian education representative will help Hawai‘i adhere better to its constitutional obligation to Hawaiian as an official language. It will also help the DOE better fulfill its obligations to its F.A.F.K.E.

Kaiapuni deserves dedicated structure, advocacy, and support at all levels of the BOE/DOE in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo, Brandi

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 6:43:51 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kelley Porter | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please establish a complex area superintendent for Kaiapuni schools and create a board of education seat for a Hawaiian education representative.

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education
Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Lokalia Farm
Lokalia.farm@gmail.com

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Lokalia Farm and I am a pukana Kaiapuni, a proud graduate of Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui, class of 2012. I am a kumu hula and the eldest of three to have gone through Kaiapuni from Pūnana Leo to King Kekaulike High School.

I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent provides principles and programs with clearer guidance on how the school should be supported, while also offering a dedicated space for principals to collaborate and share insights.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy.

The Board of Education comes up with many solutions for English medium education only without consideration on how it affects Hawaiian immersion education and is not a solution for Hawaiian immersion education. At least one at-large BOE member with Hawaiian immersion expertise will support the BOE and facilitate the DOE in meeting its stated strategic goal towards equity and constitutional mandate in providing access to Hawaiian medium education.

In conclusion, the BOE and DOE needs representation specifically for Kaiapuni to provide support for the specific needs of this public education program.

I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 6:54:14 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Pilialoha Callahan | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I Pilialoha Callahan am in strong support of bill HB 1496 which establishes a position of a superintendent for the Papahana Kaiapuni Program. And requires at least one at- large board member of the board of education be a Hawaiian educator educator, practitioner or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language. I believe this is important in decision making when it comes to our education system. Having a person with this knowledge in a position of decision making can benefit our native Hawaiian and Hawaiian people getting an education in this state. They understand the culture, and what is needed to properly educate our haumāna. I mahalo you for deciding to make this position a priority and once again support bill HB 1496. Mahalo.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 7:39:32 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Ashley-anne Kahaiā Sakata | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Greetings to all,

My name is Ashley-anne Kahaiā Sakata. I am a fourth year Hawaiian Language Immersion teacher at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui ma Pā‘ia. Today, **I am sharing my testimony in support of the HB1496** bill which will allow a complex area superintendent for kaiapuni schools to be established. It will also allow a board of education seat for a Hawaiian education representative to be created in order for kaiapuni specific education and curriculum to be taught in a way that all teachers, students, and families to operate in a way that supports our continued efforts to revitalize ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i and Hawaiian culture and restore our maui as a kānaka and a lāhui Hawai‘i.

I thank you for your support in advance in considering this bill HB1496 to be supported and pushed forward. Mahalo nui!

Na‘u nō me ka ha‘aha (With humble regards), Ashley-anne Kahaiā Sakata

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 8:16:30 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kealohi Foster | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Welina me ke aloha e ka mea heluhelu,

‘O au kēia ‘o Ke‘alohi Foster and I am writing in strong support of HB1496. As an educator and a living product of the Papahana Kaiapuni, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of Hawaiian language immersion education on students, families, and the broader community. This bill represents a crucial step toward ensuring the continued success and growth of Hawaiian language immersion programs across the state.

Hawaiian language immersion education is vital for revitalizing ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and fostering cultural identity, academic achievement, and community resilience. Research has shown that bilingual education, particularly in Indigenous languages, enhances cognitive development, critical thinking skills, and overall student success. However, these programs often face significant challenges, including a lack of funding, resources, and qualified educators. HB1496 addresses these barriers by ensuring that the Papahana Kaiapuni's future leaders will already have great knowledge of the program and what it can provide.

As someone deeply committed to advancing Hawaiian immersion education, I strongly believe that passing HB1496 will contribute to the long-term sustainability of these programs and help bridge the educational disparities that Hawaiian immersion students often face. Furthermore, this bill aligns with the state’s constitutional mandate to promote the study and use of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, reaffirming our collective responsibility to honor and perpetuate the language and culture of Hawai‘i.

I urge the committee to pass HB1496 to ensure that keiki in Hawaiian immersion programs receive the support they need to thrive academically and culturally. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Me ke aloha palena ‘ole,

Ke‘alohi Foster

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 8:12:25 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kaua Kama | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB 1496

Hawai‘i State Legislature

January 29th, 2025

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB 1496, which establishes the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent, ensures Hawaiian representation on the Board of Education, and strengthens the foundation of Hawaiian language medium education. As a former student of the Hawaiian language immersion program, I have experienced firsthand the profound impact of learning through ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i—not only as a language but as a connection to my culture, identity, and values as a Native Hawaiian.

The Hawaiian language immersion program provided me with more than just academic knowledge; it grounded me in a deep understanding of my ancestors, community, and kuleana to perpetuate our traditions. Learning in Hawaiian strengthened my sense of self and pride in who I am. It shaped my worldview in ways that a standard English-based education could not, fostering a sense of belonging and responsibility to my heritage.

This is why HB 1496 is so critical. The establishment of a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent will ensure that Hawaiian immersion programs receive the dedicated leadership, advocacy, and structural support necessary for long-term success. Additionally, requiring a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar to serve on the Board of Education ensures that decisions affecting Hawaiian education are made with cultural and linguistic expertise.

Clarifying the purpose of the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program reinforces the state's commitment to revitalizing and normalizing 'ōlelo Hawai'i. More importantly, the appropriation of funds will provide resources to strengthen these programs, ensuring that future generations of students—like myself—continue to have access to an education that honors and uplifts our language and culture.

I urge you to pass HB 1496 to protect and enhance Hawaiian language education for the benefit of our keiki, our community, and the future of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Kaualilinoe Kama

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 8:23:37 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Alyssa K Marcos | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

As a kanaka and as a mother of keiki who attend kula kaiapuni, establishing this position is not only necessary, but vital to the kaiapuni programs and the stewards of these places. Olelo Hawai'i is an official language of the state, therefore the education and the perpetuation of the language is vital to the survival of our people. Implementing this position would not only help our keiki it would propose a much needed voice for our kaiapuni schools and charters.

Mahalo

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 8:30:15 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Charla Naone | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai Kakou,

My name is Charla Naone, and I am from Nanakuli Hawaiian Homestead on Oahu. I am the daughter of Charles and Leilani Naone. The first of my keiki started kindergarten in 2001 at Ke Kula Kaiapuni O Anuenue, graduating in 2014. I currently have two keiki who attend Ka Waihona O Ka Naauao Public in their Hawaiian-medium program.

I am writing in strong support of HB1496, which aims to strengthen and advance the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program and the broader vision of Hawaiian cultural revitalization. This bill takes critical steps toward empowering our Hawaiian communities by establishing the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent, ensuring dedicated leadership for Hawaiian immersion education programs statewide.

Additionally, the provision that requires at least one at-large member of the Board of Education to be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language is a vital and overdue step toward ensuring that decision-making in education includes voices grounded in our unique cultural and linguistic heritage. It is essential that those shaping policies affecting our Hawaiian children understand and reflect the values, traditions, and needs of our people.

The clarification of the purpose and objectives of the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program will provide a clearer pathway to supporting the language revitalization efforts that are critical for our community's future. The appropriation of funds ensures that these transformative changes can be implemented effectively.

This bill honors the Hawaiian people's history, language, and culture. It is an essential measure for ensuring a more inclusive, representative, and culturally competent education system for future generations. I urge you to support HB1496 and take this important step toward preserving and strengthening our cultural identity.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 8:32:43 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Haylee Watson | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai kakou,

My name is Haylee Watson and I am a parent of a Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Anuenue student .

I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

This bill will ensure that the State upholds its constitutional responsibility to Article X, Section 4, and Article XV, Section 4 of the Hawaii State Constitution (1978). The Hawai'i Revised Statute 302H-6 states that the department of education may establish a Hawaiian language medium state education agency with the capability of operating districts and complex areas on an equal basis with any other districts and complex areas of the department.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy.nBOE currently has Hawaiian immersion advocates who understand the pedagogy and methodology of Hawaiian immersion education. We would like to secure such an advocate in a leadership role as a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent.

In conclusion, I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

-Haylee Watson

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 8:43:30 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kanoelehua Hook | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB 1496

Relating to Hawaiian Language Medium Education

Aloha kākou

My name is Kanoelehua Hook, and I am submitting testimony in strong support of HB 1496, which seeks to strengthen and expand the Ka Papahana Kaiapuni program by establishing a dedicated complex area superintendent, ensuring representation of Hawaiian educators on the Board of Education, and providing necessary funding to support these initiatives.

The Hawaiian language and its perpetuation are fundamental to the identity, culture, and well-being of the Native Hawaiian people. Historically, the 1896 English-only education mandate nearly led to the eradication of 'ōlelo Hawai'i, disrupting intergenerational transmission and causing severe cultural and linguistic harm. The revitalization efforts of the late 20th century, including the establishment of Hawaiian language immersion programs, have been instrumental in reversing this decline. However, despite significant progress, systemic challenges continue to hinder the full realization of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni's potential.

By establishing a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni complex area superintendent, this bill ensures dedicated administrative leadership to address the long-standing issues of teacher shortages, curriculum development, special education services, and facility needs within Hawaiian language immersion programs. Additionally, requiring at least one Board of Education member to be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or language will help fulfill the State's constitutional obligation to support Hawaiian education and language revitalization.

This legislation is a necessary step in ensuring that Hawaiian language immersion programs receive the structural support and resources required to thrive. It aligns with the State's constitutional commitments and the broader goals of linguistic and cultural preservation. I respectfully urge the committee to pass HB to uphold the State's responsibility in supporting and strengthening 'ōlelo Hawai'i for future generations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Kanoelehua Hook

Aloha mai kākou,

I am writing as a parent of keiki 'ōlelo Hawai'i in support of HB 1496. We have four keiki, ages 6, 4, 3, and 4 months. Our oldest is in the kaiapuni program at Waiau- our family is very happy there, our son is thriving, and he loves his kumu. Our two daughters are at Pūnana Leo o Mānoa and we have enjoyed building an amazing community of 'ohana there.

I want to express my experience that both programs are bursting at the seams. At Waiau, we were warned to apply our son on the very day applications for kindergarten opened and we were fortunate to do so. We have friends who applied their son too late, and after being told there is no room for them, the only realistic option was to put him in the English school nearby where they live- he is now being taught by an educator who tells him not to call her "kumu" because "it's not respectful."

Every year, Pūnana Leo o Mānoa has to put applying 'ohana on a waitlist and ultimately has to turn many of them away. The Department of Health dictates the number of keiki the kula is allowed to have because of the amount of space there is at the site. Leadership at the kula has been searching for a new site that can fit more keiki for the last decade. As you can imagine, finding a new space in Mānoa for a preschool that is also affordable is an insurmountable task.

My niece is currently in sixth grade at Mā'ilikūkahi in Wai'anae. I do not envy the choice her mom will have to make in a few years when she has to go to high school- the only option for her to continue with a kaiapuni education would be to put her on a two-hour bus ride every morning to Palolo so she can go to Ānuenue.

I grieve for the 'ohana that want access to 'ōlelo Hawai'i programs for their keiki but are forced to choose English schools instead simply because of lack of reasonable access.

In 2019, the Hawaii Supreme Court issued an opinion with the finding that "the State should thus act with the goal of reviving and preserving 'ōlelo Hawai'i and the shared culture to which it is inextricably linked when determining whether it is reasonable to take additional steps to provide access to a Hawaiian immersion program." *Clarabal v. Dep't of Educ.*, 446 P.3d 986, 1004 (Haw. 2019).

This opinion indicates that a superintendent and a representative on the BOE to advocate on our behalf is necessary for the State to fulfill its obligations. I support, and will continue to support, any legislation that helps the kaiapuni program grow. With four young keiki, we know we have a long road ahead of us – we are committed to this community and will continue to fight for meaningful access.

Mahalo.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 9:39:06 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| STEPHANIE TEVES | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I write to support HB 1496 as a parent of a Kaiapuni child and as a life-long student of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. Kaiapuni schools are vital to the future of all people and communities in Hawai‘i. It makes us who we are. My child has thrived in Kaiapuni and it has been a tremendous gift to be able to send him to a school where his culture is honored and nurtured. I believe this has made him a more thoughtful and caring human, more innovative in his thinking, and his overall problem-solving skills. As a local person and a Hawaiian going to Hawai‘i public schools in the 1980s, we did not have this opportunity. I never learned about the land, I did not engage in place-based learning. Our interactions with Hawaiian culture were limited to May Day celebrations. The fact that Kaiapuni exist at all today is a testament to hard work and dedication of so many kumu, but these kumu should be better supported and not have to rely on their immense generosity to do this work. I see the materials my child comes home with, they show the work of kumu copy/pasting in ‘ōlelo words over English words. I see that there are no text books, but mostly worksheets. I also talk with other parents who have older children and they worry that there is no Kaiapuni options for them close to where they live. I have other friends whose children have special educational needs and thus they can’t send their children to Kaiapuni. This is a huge issue for educational access and is unacceptable. I believe that with more support, such as what is proposed in bills like this one, Kaiapuni schools will be given a better opportunity to provide the necessary resources to implement and support all of our keiki.

Mahalo nui for your time.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 9:52:27 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Aja Olson | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

My son is a former student of Kula Kaiapuni ‘O Waiau. I believe in the importance in having the proper support for our kaiapuni community so the future of our language can continue to grow and our keiki can have be given back what was taken from us. Something that is rightfully theirs.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 10:04:29 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kimberley Newhouse | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I am writing as a parent of a haumana at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui ma Kekaulike, and a lifelong Hawaiian Immersion advocate even before having children. I firmly support and request **your full support** of HB 1496 relating to establishing the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendant.

Hawaiian language lives. Our Kumu, schools, students, and families including the broader community deserve and need more administrative oversight and support for our Kaiapuni programs. With the number of Kula Kaiapuni students and teachers across Hawai‘i, this administrative leadership is desperately needed to ensure consistency, equity, and a seat at the table when decisions are being made for and about our children and Hawaiian Language Medium Education programs.

I humbly ask you to do the right thing for our children, your children, and support HB1496.

Mahalo,

K. Kehaulani Newhouse

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 10:01:41 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Danielle Paschall | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Establish a complex area superintendent and create a board of education seat for a Hawaiian education representative

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 10:08:39 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Keoni keopuhiwa | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support bill we need more immersion in more schools to educate everyone especially native hawaiians

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 10:19:06 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Makalapua Liua | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Sample Testimony

Deadline 2:00pm

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education Affairs

Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: [Full name]

[Group or organization you represent]

RE: HB 1496

Hearing on January 30, 2025

IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

[Introduce yourself]

My name is [full name] and I am a [parent, teacher, supporter, position, organization you represent].

I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common

training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared

path toward success.

[Reasons you strongly support HB1496]

Choose your top 2-3 to include in your letter of support:

●

This bill will ensure that the State upholds its constitutional responsibility to Article X, Section 4,

and Article XV , Section 4 of the Hawai‘i State Constitution (1978).

●

The Hawai‘i Revised Statute 302H-6 states that the department of education may establish a Hawaiian language medium state education agency with the capability of operating districts and complex areas on an equal basis with any other districts and complex areas of the department.

●

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent provides principles and programs with clearer guidance on how the school should be supported, while also offering a dedicated space for

principals to collaborate and share insights.



A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent would have clear expectations and a solid model for supporting Kaiapuni schools, ensuring consistent alignment with the unique needs and goals of Hawaiian language immersion programs.



A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy.



The Board of Education recognizes that appropriate support for and implementation of Hawaiian education will positively impact the educational outcomes of all students in preparation for college, career and community success BOE policy 105-8



Ensure equitable access to resources and education specifically for Hawaiian immersion education on all islands in Hawai'i's public schools, and uphold guidelines set forth in BOE policy 105-8



BOE currently has Hawaiian immersion advocates who understand the pedagogy and methodology of Hawaiian immersion education. We would like to secure such an advocate in a leadership role as a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent.



Public education has 2 language pathways- English and Hawaiian. Hawaiian education is not securely represented in the Board of Education.



Kaiapuni experiences unique opportunities and challenges warranting needed expertise on the Board of Education.



The Board of Education comes up with many solutions for English medium education only without consideration on how it affects Hawaiian immersion education and is not a solution for Hawaiian immersion education



At least one at-large BOE member with Hawaiian immersion expertise will support the BOE and facilitate the DOE in meeting its stated strategic goal towards equity and constitutional mandate in providing access to Hawaiian medium education.



This will provide needed expertise to the BOE and help to stabilize its decision making and leadership.

In conclusion [closing statement or re-state your position].

I/we urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA 'ŌLELO HAWAI'I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 10:22:01 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mahoe Haia | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

E ola ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i.

Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education
Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Kaluhikāuahemakanamaikalani (Kaluhi) Ka‘apana-Wengler
Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Waiau

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Kaluhikāuahemakanamaikalani (Kaluhi) Ka‘apana-Wengler and I am a teacher (kumu) at Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Waiau.

I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

As a Hawaiian immersion school within a school, we often feel that there is a disconnect in leadership and imbalance of equity to which our students, kaiapuni staff, and program in general receive in comparison to general English immersion education. It is often perceived that both programs are the same, when the students, staff, and program in general have completely different, very unique needs than that of a general English immersion education student. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent provides principles and programs with clearer guidance on how the school should be supported, while also offering a dedicated space for principals to collaborate and share insights. Securing a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent will allow for the needed guidance to principles on meeting the needs and providing more equity to our Hawaiian immersion students. This will provide needed expertise to the BOE and help to stabilize its decision making and leadership.

In conclusion, I support HB1469, as it will support equity to our students and provide the expertise needed to guide and advise principles and programs.

I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 10:24:20 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Sharde Freitas | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

kāko‘o

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 10:38:56 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kahaiola Harders | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of HB1496, which seeks to establish the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent and ensure that at least one at-large member of the Board of Education is a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language.

As a strong advocate for the revitalization and preservation of Hawaiian culture, language, and education, I believe this bill is a crucial step toward honoring the cultural foundation of our islands and further enhancing our educational systems. The addition of a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent will help provide dedicated leadership for Hawaiian Language Medium Education, ensuring that this vital program is better supported and able to grow in a way that respects and enhances Hawaiian language and culture.

The Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program is more than just a language program—it is a cultural lifeline that preserves and nurtures the language, traditions, and values of the Hawaiian people. Establishing a clear and sustained leadership role within the educational system will directly support the goals of these programs, empowering our children to learn in a nurturing and culturally relevant environment.

Furthermore, the inclusion of an at-large member with expertise in Hawaiian studies or language on the Board of Education is a critical measure. It ensures that Hawaiian perspectives are represented at the highest levels of decision-making, allowing for a more informed and culturally aware approach to educational policy. The input of a scholar or practitioner of Hawaiian culture and language will strengthen the board’s ability to make decisions that are inclusive and that reflect the true needs of our Hawaiian communities.

Finally, the appropriation of funds demonstrates a commitment to adequately support these initiatives and ensure that they can be successfully implemented. Without funding, even the best intentions can fall short. This investment will go a long way in ensuring the continued growth and success of Hawaiian language and culture within our schools.

In conclusion, HB1496 is a meaningful and timely measure that will help strengthen and expand Hawaiian language and culture education in our state. I urge you to support this bill for the future of our children, our communities, and our culture.

Mahalo for your consideration and aloha.

E ola mau ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

'O ke aloha nō,

Kaha'iola Harders

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Kawaiianuhea Moss

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Kawaiianuhea Moss and I am a counselor at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. I am testifying in strong support of HB1496. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success. My reasons for supporting this bill are as follows.

1. This bill will ensure that the State upholds its constitutional responsibility to Article X, Section 4, and Article XV, Section 4 of the Hawaii State Constitution (1978).
2. The Hawai‘i Revised Statute 302H-6 states that the department of education may establish a Hawaiian language medium state education agency with the capability of operating districts and complex areas on an equal basis with any other districts and complex areas of the department.
3. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy.
4. The Board of Education recognizes that appropriate support for and implementation of Hawaiian education will positively impact the educational outcomes of all students in preparation for college, career and community success BOE policy 105-8

In summary, HB1496 aligns with the State's constitutional obligations to preserve and promote Hawaiian language and culture. By establishing a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent, this bill empowers the Department of Education to effectively support Kaiapuni schools. This dedicated leadership will ensure that resources are appropriately allocated, and strategies are implemented to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education. Ultimately, this will not only benefit Hawaiian language learners but also contribute to the educational success of all students in Hawai‘i.

I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 10:41:37 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Alicia 'Ilikea Kam | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

My name is Alicia ‘Ilikea Kam. I am currently a kaiapuni parent and kumu. I am formerly a kaiapuni administrator. I have seen many struggles within the education system for kaiapuni schools that do not affect non kaiapuni schools. These struggles range from lack of curriculum and leadership to failed leadership and mistrust and misunderstanding of all things kaiapuni. The cultural differences alone creates quite a deficit in truly understanding the needs of a kaiapuni school. Establishing a kaipauni Complex Area Superintendent position to address and support the 29 kaiapuni schools throughout our state would be a great asset to our kaiapuni community.

It is not only fitting but imperative that a seat on the BOE be solely created for a representative for Hawaiian education since Hawaiin is one of our official state languages. The Hawaiian language is alive and continuing to thrive daily in all kaiapuni schools throughout our state. Our Hawaiian education needs a seat at the table.

Please consider passing HB1496 as I am stronly in support of this bill.

Mahalo!

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

na Alicia M. ‘Ilikea Kam

Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools
Sample Testimony
Deadline 2:00pm

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education
Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Kanehoalani Kalua
Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Waiau

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Kānehoalani Kalua and I am a Former Kaiapuni student and a PPE at Ke kula Kaiapuni ‘o Waiau. I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

The BOE currently includes advocates who understand Hawaiian immersion education, but securing a **Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent** would ensure dedicated leadership for kaiapuni schools. This role would bridge policy and practice, advocating for **resources, teacher support, culturally relevant assessments, and curriculum development**. With expertise in Hawaiian immersion pedagogy, the superintendent would strengthen systemic support, ensuring kaiapuni education thrives within the broader educational system.

A **Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent** would confidently identify the unique needs of kaiapuni schools, ensuring that **resources, support, and strategies** are specifically designed to strengthen Hawaiian immersion education. With a deep understanding of **Kaiapuni pedagogy**, this leadership role would help advance policies and initiatives that directly enhance student success and program sustainability.

In conclusion, securing a **Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent** is essential to ensuring that Hawaiian immersion schools receive the **targeted leadership, resources, and support** needed to thrive. With a leader who understands **kaiapuni pedagogy and its unique challenges**, we can strengthen the foundation of Hawaiian immersion education and ensure its long-term success.

I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA 'ŌLELO HAWAI'I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:10:45 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Alea Johnson | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in strong support of HB1496, which seeks to establish the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent and ensure that at least one at-large member of the Board of Education is a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language. As a strong advocate for the revitalization and preservation of Hawaiian culture, language, and education, I believe this bill is a crucial step toward honoring the cultural foundation of our islands and further enhancing our educational systems. The addition of a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent will help provide dedicated leadership for Hawaiian Language Medium Education, ensuring that this vital program is better supported and able to grow in a way that respects and enhances Hawaiian language and culture. The Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program is more than just a language program—it is a cultural lifeline that preserves and nurtures the language, traditions, and values of the Hawaiian people. Establishing a clear and sustained leadership role within the educational system will directly support the goals of these programs, empowering our children to learn in a nurturing and culturally relevant environment. Furthermore, the inclusion of an at-large member with expertise in Hawaiian studies or language on the Board of Education is a critical measure. It ensures that Hawaiian perspectives are represented at the highest levels of decision-making, allowing for a more informed and culturally aware approach to educational policy. The input of a scholar or practitioner of Hawaiian culture and language will strengthen the board’s ability to make decisions that are inclusive and that reflect the true needs of our Hawaiian communities. Finally, the appropriation of funds demonstrates a commitment to adequately support these initiatives and ensure that they can be successfully implemented. Without funding, even the best intentions can fall short. This investment will go a long way in ensuring the continued growth and success of Hawaiian language and culture within our schools. In conclusion, HB1496 is a meaningful and timely measure that will help strengthen and expand Hawaiian language and culture education in our state. I urge you to support this bill for the future of our children, our communities, and our culture. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:13:46 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kainalu | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha nui e ka ‘aha‘ōlelo moku‘āina ‘o Hawai‘i,

Eia no au ke noi aku nei iā ‘oukou nā moho a kia‘i ho‘i o ko kākou ‘āina, e kāko‘o piha i ia bila kānāwai, HB1496 i hiki ai iā kākou ka po‘e pa‘u i ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, ke ho‘omau ai a hō‘ola ai ka ‘ōlelo o kēia ‘āina, ‘o ia ho‘i ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. Inā holo ‘ia kēia bila kānāwai, e kāko‘o ‘ana ‘oukou i ka hō‘ola ‘ana o ko kākou ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i no nā hanauna e hiki mai ‘ana ma ‘ō nā kula kaiapuni. Inā ho‘okumu ‘ia he ‘oihana na ka po‘e Hawai‘i ma luna o ia DOE, hiki iā kākou ke hana pū a ‘imi i ala ‘oi kelakela no nā koho e hiki mai ‘ana pili i ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i.

Me ke aloha nui,

Kainalu

--

Dear Hawai‘i State Legislature,

I am asking you folks, the candidates and law makers of our home, to fully support the bill HB1496. So that we, the people who desire to speak the Hawaiian language, can continue to revive the language of this land, that is the Hawaiian language. If this bill is passed, you will be supporting the revival of our Hawaiian language for future generations through kaiapuni schools. If a position is established for the Hawaiian people on the DOE board, we can work together and find a better way for future decisions related to the Hawaiian language.

Kind regards,

Kainalu

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:19:02 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Tiana Keopuhiwa | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I support HB1496 because I believe it is imperative to create a seat for a Hawaiian Education Representative in order to best support our Kaiapuni students and 'ohana in their educational journey.

Mahalo,

T.Keopuhiwa

Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools
Testimony in Support of HB 1496

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Antoinette Kanoelani Kealoha
Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waimānalo (kumu, grandparent and former parent)

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Antoinette Kanoelani Kealoha and I am a teacher, former parent and now a grandparent of ke kula kaiapuni and I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

As a teacher, I will be able to fully implement the Foundational and Administrative Frameworks for Kaiapuni Education in all aspects of my position as a kumu. As it is now, and I am only speaking on my behalf, I am struggling to keep up with the instructions given by my current complex area superintendent, while trying to keep to the foundations of the FAFKE also.

- A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent provides principles and programs with clearer guidance on how the school should be supported, while also offering a dedicated space for principals to collaborate and share insights.
- A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent would have clear expectations and a solid model for supporting Kaiapuni schools, ensuring consistent alignment with the unique needs and goals of Hawaiian language immersion programs.
- A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy.
- Ensure equitable access to resources and education specifically for Hawaiian immersion education on all islands in Hawai‘i’s public schools, and uphold guidelines set forth in BOE policy 105-8
- BOE currently has Hawaiian immersion advocates who understand the pedagogy and methodology of Hawaiian immersion education. We would like to secure such an advocate in a leadership role as a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent.

In conclusion, I expect that you will make the right decision for my ‘ohana and the keiki of Hawai‘i.

I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:54:44 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| ?Iolani Brosio | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

Kāko‘o piha wau i kēia pila HB 1496 e ho‘okumu ai i nā mea kāko‘o i ke ola o ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i a me ke ola o ka lāhui Hawai‘i.

Me ka ‘oia‘i‘o,

‘Iolani Brosio

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:47:42 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kiana Ornellas | Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui ma Paʻia | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education

Affairs

Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Kiana Ornellas

Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui ma Pāʻia

RE: HB 1496

Hearing on January 30, 2025

IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā poʻo a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ʻAha ʻŌlelo,

My name is Kiana Ornellas, a teacher, alumni, and parent of our Hawaiian Immersion program at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui ma Pāʻia.

I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent would have clear expectations and a solid model for supporting Kaiapuni schools, ensuring consistent alignment with the unique needs and goals of Hawaiian language immersion programs. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy. A Kaiapuni specific BOE seat can

ensure equitable access to resources and education specifically for Hawaiian immersion education on all islands in Hawai'i's public schools, and uphold guidelines set forth in BOE policy 105-8. Kaiapuni experiences unique opportunities and challenges warranting needed expertise on the Board of Education. The Board of Education comes up with many solutions for English medium education only without consideration on how it affects Hawaiian immersion education and is not a solution for Hawaiian immersion education.

In conclusion, I strongly support Bill HB1496 to move kaiapuni forward cohesively throughout all school in Hawai'i. I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA 'ŌLELO HAWAI'I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:26:45 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Hooleia Kaeo | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

TO: KŌMIKE HO‘ONA‘AUAO - COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair

Rep. Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

FROM: Ho‘oleia Ka‘eo

RE: HB1496 - RELATING TO EDUCATION

Hearing on Thursday, January 30, 2025

IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496

Aloha e distinguished Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica a me ka ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Kōmike Ho‘ona‘auao. Mahalo for the opportunity to address this committee on this important issue.

‘O Ho‘oleia Ka‘eo ko‘u inoa. No Waiohuli, Maui mai au. I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Relating to Kaiapuni Education.

As a proud graduate of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni at Kekaulike High School, I am grateful for the many opportunities this program has offered me. The most valuable and profound is the return of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i to my own ‘ohana. I have experienced firsthand how this educational pathway is not only personally transformation, its impact reaches families and broader communities. The success of Kaiapuni is reflected in the growth of the program over the years. There has been an increase in enrollment of 1,000 students in the past 10 years.

Despite this upward trajectory, schools are scattered across the islands and face unique goals and challenges. This bill establishes the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent which is much needed for the continual growth of Kaiapuni education. This bill also requires that at least one at-large member of the Board of Education be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language. This is an invaluable opportunity to ensure that Kaiapuni education is represented at the Board of Education. Furthermore, it will also secure a voice to promote Hawaiian education (i.e. Hawaiian history, language, culture, etc.) for all students in Hawai‘i.

This bill will help to ensure that the growth of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i in Public Education is supported by the State of Hawai‘i – honoring the official language of Hawai‘i and the HIDOE strategic plan (pg. 3).

I urge the Committee on Education to PASS HB1496.

Mahalo nui,

Ho‘oleia Ka‘eo

Honolulu, O‘ahu

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:31:37 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Carlos Lamas | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Carlos Lamas, and I am formally an Education Assistant and PE Teacher at Kihei Charter School in Kihei, HI. Today, I write in strong support of HB1496, which seeks to significantly enhance the support and structure of Hawaiian language and culture education through the establishment of the Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent.

This bill is a foundational step towards recognizing and institutionalizing the critical role that Hawaiian culture and language play in our educational system. By establishing a dedicated superintendent position, we ensure that the unique needs and opportunities of Hawaiian education are handled by someone with specialized knowledge and passion for Hawaiian heritage.

Furthermore, the requirement for at least one at-large member of the Board of Education to be a dedicated Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language is a commendable move. This ensures that the voices at the heart of Hawaiian education are not just heard but are influential in shaping educational policy and practice.

The clarification of the purpose and objectives of the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program within this bill further supports a structured and clear path forward for educators, students, and the community. This not only aids in curriculum development but also in fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Hawaiian language across our state.

The appropriation of funds as proposed in HB1496 is crucial. These funds will ensure the resources necessary to implement these changes are available, making the objectives of this bill achievable and sustainable.

In conclusion, HB1496 is more than just a legislative measure—it is a commitment to the future of our keiki and the preservation and flourishing of the Hawaiian language and culture. I urge you to pass this bill and make a solid investment in the cultural richness of Hawaii.

Mahalo for reading my testimony

Sincerely,

Carlos Lamas

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:35:46 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| tiare lawrence | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

E Ola ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:41:18 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kailana Moa-eli | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support the pono in within life Aloha aina

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:42:00 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Beth Chun Comstock | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Beth Comstock, and I am a parent of a Kula Kaiapuni student and a volunteer at the school. I'm writing in SUPPORT OF HB 1496, because the program needs leaders who actually understand the goals and needs of the students. Please help the state fulfill its duty to facilitate a Hawaiian language education properly and not abandon this subset of school children.

Mahalo nui,

Beth Comstock, Kaneohe

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:46:15 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Tiffany Nerveza-Clark | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Kāko‘o!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:50:24 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Cheyenne Takeuchi | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent provides principles and programs with clearer guidance on how the school should be supported, while also offering a dedicated space for principals to collaborate and share insights.

●

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent would have clear expectations and a solid model for supporting Kaiapuni schools, ensuring consistent alignment with the unique needs and goals of Hawaiian language immersion programs.

●

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:50:02 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| pahnelopi mckenzie | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support HB1496. Please establish a complex area superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools and create Board of Education seat for Native Hawaiian Education Representative.

Hawaiian Education has shown currently and historically to support a brilliant society and in Hawaii, Hawaiian education should be a at the forefront at all tables regarding education and the future generations.

Support HB 1496

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:00:30 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jordan Kalawaia Nunies | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

CREATE A BOARD OF EDUCATION SEAT FOR A HAWAIIAN EDUCATION
REPRESENTATIVE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:04:27 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| IwalaniHenoheapuaonaonalehuaonalanimakamae Lynn Ba | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:01:08 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| cheryl burghardt | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

With aloha,

I SUPPORT HB 1496 which establishes the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent. Requires that at least one at-large member of the Board of Education be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language, to be selected from a list of three nominees submitted by the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Clarifies the purpose and objective of the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program. Appropriates funds.

It is our kuleana and essential that we provide support for our Kaiapuni program in all ways that are possible. We live on the Hawaiian islands which from earliest times and until the US takeover had the highest levels of literacy in a world nation. As a citizen of this place, I encourage the committee to also support these efforts giving positive attention to a member being present on the BOE and most importantly appropriating the funds to the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program. This benefits our entire community on all islands and is an investment in our future.

Mahalo.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:05:41 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Pililuaikekaiohilo Keala | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education

Affairs

Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Dr. Pililuaikekaiohilo Keala

Parent of children currently attending a Kaiapuni school, previous student of a Kaiapuni school, Assistant Professor (Hawaiian Immersion) in the College of Education, School of Teacher Education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, UH Mānoa COE representative for 'Aha Kauleo, and Secretary of the 'Aha Ho'okō of the 'Aha Kauleo.

RE: HB 1496

Hearing on January 30, 2025

IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Dr. Pililuaikekaiohilo Keala and I am a parent of children currently attending a Kaiapuni school, a previous student of a Kaiapuni school, an Assistant Professor (Hawaiian Immersion) in the College of Education, School of Teacher Education at the University of

Hawai'i at Mānoa, the UH Mānoa COE representative for 'Aha Kauleo, and the Secretary of the 'Aha Ho'okō of the 'Aha Kauleo.

I am testifying in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1496 due to, but not limited to, the following reasons:

- This bill will ensure that the State upholds its constitutional responsibility to Article X, Section 4, and Article XV, Section 4 of the Hawaii State Constitution (1978).
- The Hawai'i Revised Statute 302H-6 states that the department of education may establish a Hawaiian language medium state education agency with the capability of operating districts and complex areas on an equal basis with any other districts and complex areas of the department.
- A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent would have clear expectations and a solid model for supporting Kaiapuni schools, ensuring consistent alignment with the unique needs and goals of Hawaiian language immersion programs.
- A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy.
- The Board of Education recognizes that appropriate support for and implementation of Hawaiian education will positively impact the educational outcomes of all students in preparation for college, career and community success BOE policy 105-8
- Public education has 2 language pathways- English and Hawaiian. Hawaiian education is not securely represented in the Board of Education.

- Kaiapuni experiences unique opportunities and challenges warranting needed expertise on the Board of Education.

In conclusion, I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB1496.

I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA 'ŌLELO HAWAI'I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:29:34 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ekini Lindsey | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

I am in full support for HB 1496, the mission to establish a designated seat for a Hawaiian Education representative, on the Board of Education. The Hawaiian Language is the official language, therefore, this engagement collectively will be beneficial!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:11:46 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Francisco K Valdez Sr | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support hb 1496

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:32:25 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Katrina Ahia | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee,

I support HB 1496. I have two children in the kula kaiapuni program, and I strongly encourage other families considering the program to go this route. However, there are difficulties with the kaiapuni program that I hope this bill will resolve.

This is our family’s 8th year in Hawaiian language immersion. We have been personally affected by the long-standing challenges enumerated in this bill.

I support all aspects of HB 1496.

Particularly egregious at the moment is that my older child, at the middle school, only receives instruction in the Hawaiian language for 2 of her 7 classes. This is hardly the complete educational program required by Hawaii Revised Statutes under chapter 302H. Two classes out of a seven period schedule is not sufficient to the revitalization and continuation of our state language.

The Hawaiian Immersion School community desperately needs support. The teachers, families, and students are all working diligently for the success of this program. The actions outlined in HB 1496 are critical to the success of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni. It is not equitable for us to have to work so hard that our children can receive their legally mandated education in the medium of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. Please help to enact this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Katrina Ahia

Lahaina, Maui

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:55:31 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Makamae Anahu | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

Kāko‘o piha au i nei HB1496 no ka paipai ‘ana i kā kākou Papahana Kaiapuni o nei pae‘āina. / I wholeheartedly support HB1496 for the promotion of our islands' Kaiapuni Program.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Makamae Anahū

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:58:14 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kaleleonalani Kekauoha-Schultz | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

*My name is Kalele Kekauoha-Schultz. I am a school counselor at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui ma Pā'ia. Today, **I am sharing my testimony in support of the HB1496** bill which will allow a complex area superintendent for kaiapuni schools to be established. It will also allow a board of education seat for a Hawaiian education representative to be created in order for kaiapuni schools to continue its efforts in revitalizing 'ōlelo Hawai'i & Hawaiian culture, and be able to restore our maui as a kānaka and a lāhui Hawai'i.*

I thank you for your support in advance in considering this bill HB1496 to be supported and pushed forward. Mahalo nui!

Na'u nō me ka ha'aha (With humble regards),

Kalele Kekauoha-Schultz

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:10:43 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Chelsie Miller | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Ka Papahana Kaiapuni would highly benefit from having its own CAS who is able to provide specialized support on the administrative level for our keiki, staff, and families. Designating a representative for kula kaiapuni will further the goal of reviving and learning Hawaii's language through our keiki. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:15:01 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Ruth McGlumphy | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

*My name is Ruth McGlumphy. I am a School Counselor at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui ma Pā'ia. Today, **I am sharing my testimony in support of the HB1496** bill which will allow a complex area superintendent for kaiapuni schools to be established. It will also allow a board of education seat for a Hawaiian education representative to be created in order for kaiapuni schools to continue its efforts in revitalizing 'ōlelo Hawai'i & Hawaiian culture, and be able to restore our maui as a kānaka and a lāhui Hawai'i.*

I thank you for your support in advance in considering this bill HB1496 to be supported and pushed forward. Mahalo nui!

Na'u nō me ka ha'aha (With humble regards)

Ruth McGlumphy

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:12:01 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Carrie Inamasu-Aken | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha e,

'O wau Carrie Inamasu-Aken. No Nānākuli mai au. He kanka 'ōiwi ā makuahine ā haumāna o ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i. E hele i ko'u nā keiki ma Ka Waihona 'o ka Na'auao ma Nānākuli. E a'o loa i ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i no nā keiki 'o Hawai'i, mau a mau. E kāko'o au i ka HB 1496 no ka mea e ho'omaopopo i ka nui o a'o Hawai'i nō kanaka 'o Hawai'i.

My name is Carrie Inamasu-Aken. I am from Nānākuli. I am a desendant of Hawaiian ancestry, a mother and a student of Hawaiian Language. My children attend Ka Waihona 'o ka Na'auao in Nānākuli. Children of Hawai'i need to learn the Hawaiian Language, perpetually. I support HB 1496 because it recognizes the importance of learning (about) Hawai'i for the people of Hawai'i.

To this end, we of Hawaiian ancestry need proper representation for the proper education needed for our children. Our keiki. We need to be confident - no, assured - that the generations to come have proper access to this education and connection to who we are as people of Hawaiian ancestry.

I ask this legislation to approve this bill and allow the Hawaiian people to thrive after decades of systemic oppression that almost caused us to lose everything that represents us as Hawaiians. I ask that we allow a Hawaiian educator, practioner or qualified representative to represent our Hawaiian keiki in the sphere of education. I ask that we allow funds to perpetuate Hawaiian education of culture, language and conservation.

This bill is a step in the right direction. I ask the legislation to recognize that kanaka 'ōiwi and kanaka maoli are in dire need of propecting was was taken from us, that of which we have nutured from the brink of death, by apporving this bill.

Mahala nō kākou.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:20:28 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Corie Poliahu | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am Corie Poliahu from Kahalu'u, writing in support of this bill because students need someone in leadership to support their goals to perpetuate the Hawaiian language and culture.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:29:36 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Keoni Chang-Purdy | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha kākou, kāko‘o au i kēia pila no ka pono o ka papahana kaiapuni. Inā he kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent kā mākou, e lohe ‘ia ana nō ko mākou leo kaiapuni. E paio ana nō ke kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent no ka pono o ka papahana, i kēia manawa he mau kuleana ko Complex Area Superintendent a ‘a‘ohe paha ona manawa e nānā ai i nā mea kūpono no ka papahana kaiapuni, a he māna‘ona‘o kēlā. Inā ‘a‘ole ‘ike ‘ia ka mea nui o ka papahana, pehea lā mākou e holo mua ai? No laila, he leo kāko‘o kēia no ke kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent.

Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools
Sample Testimony
Deadline 2:00pm

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education
Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Kaleialoha Kaniaupio-Crozier

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Kaleialoha Kaniaupio-Crozier and I am a kaiapuni teacher at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Kalama. I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

I support HB 1496 because a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent is necessary for our Ka Papahana Kaiapuni. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent provides principles and programs with clearer guidance on how schools should be supported, while also offering a dedicated space for principals to collaborate and share insights.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent would have clear expectations and a solid model for supporting Kaiapuni schools, ensuring consistent alignment with the unique needs and goals of Hawaiian language immersion programs. They can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy.

Despite the significant role Ka Papahana Kaiapuni plays in the revitalization of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, we still face systemic injustices and challenges. Having a CAS who understands Kaiapuni at its core will improve our program and, most importantly, benefit our Kaiapuni students. With a Kaiapuni CAS, students will receive equitable resources and see meaningful changes in their education, driven by strong leadership from the top.

In conclusion, I am in strong support of HB 1496.

I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:40:30 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kahakuilaila Ritte-Camara | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

‘O Kahakuilaila Ritte-Camara ko‘u inoa. ‘o Moloka‘i ku‘u one hānau. ‘O ka Pūnana Leo ‘o Moloka‘i ku‘u wahi hānai ‘ia i ka ‘ōlelo makuahine.

Eia ku‘u leo kāko‘o (support) no HB1496, Establish a complex area superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools, Create a board of education seat for Hawaiian Education Representative.

‘Ōlele Hawai‘i was my first language at the age of 2 while attending Pūnana Leo ‘o Moloka‘i. It is also the first language of all my four keiki. At that time ‘ōlelo needed our support to live again not only in our voices, but in our minds, na‘au and lifestyles. My mother introduced myself and my older sister into Punane Leo with no hesitation or doubt, but with the belief of Ho‘ōla ‘Ōlelo. This is what was the need.

Today we see ‘ōlelo thriving within our communities. Our culture lives and our kupuna are happy. But there is still a need, a void to be filled. KAIAPUNI! ENVIRONMENT! We need and deserve a healthy thriving learning environment for our kaiapuni! One that provides the necessary resources and access to opportunities each keiki deserves. An environment to be groomed and mentored by our own people! To be surrounded by ‘ōiwi who support each keiki to reach their fullest potential! A campus, a facility, representatives and a system of support dedicated to ‘ōiwi wale nō!

We need this! We deserve this!

More support in our immersion of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i and all the resources that support a keiki ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. From the lewa lani to ka ‘āina momona and out to ka moana nui ākea our people deserve total support and advocacy for how ‘ike, ‘ōlelo and culture is transmitted to our keiki and within our kaiaulu. We need full immersion and dedication of the leadership and person/people who make decisions on behalf of our keiki, our kaiāulu and our lāhui!

We need this! We deserve this!

This is my testimony and support of HB1496, Establish a complex area superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools, Create a board of education seat for Hawaiian Education Representative.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:40:45 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mikaella Kanoë Gowan | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

It is incredibly important that our schools have a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent along with a Board of Education seat for a Hawaiian Education Representative as we need advocates for our Kaiapuni schools beyond our classrooms. The Kumu are not always led by administrators that fully understand the intricacies and importance of a Kaiapuni Education and are in turn stuck in positions and with decisions made by people who don't support or understand Hawaiian education.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:41:41 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| James Kaalekahi | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha, My children attend Hawaiian immersion schools and I live in Nanakuli.

I am writing in strong support of HB1496, which aims to strengthen and advance the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program and the broader vision of Hawaiian cultural revitalization. This bill takes critical steps toward empowering our Hawaiian communities by establishing the position of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Program Complex Area Superintendent, ensuring dedicated leadership for Hawaiian immersion education programs statewide.

Additionally, the provision that requires at least one at-large member of the Board of Education to be a Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or the Hawaiian language is a vital and overdue step toward ensuring that decision-making in education includes voices grounded in our unique cultural and linguistic heritage. It is essential that those shaping policies affecting our Hawaiian children understand and reflect the values, traditions, and needs of our people.

The clarification of the purpose and objectives of the Hawaiian Language Medium Education Program will provide a clearer pathway to supporting the language revitalization efforts that are critical for our community's future. The appropriation of funds ensures that these transformative changes can be implemented effectively.

This bill honors the Hawaiian people's history, language, and culture. It is an essential measure for ensuring a more inclusive, representative, and culturally competent education system for future generations. I urge you to support HB1496 and take this important step toward preserving and strengthening our cultural identity.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

James Kaalekahi

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:43:54 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Michelle Miki'ala Pescaia | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Kāko'o piha wau i kēia.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:45:25 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Aubrey Matsuura | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha! My name is Aubrey Matsuura and I am writing in support of HB 1496. It is imperative to:

1. Establish a Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni schools and
2. Create a Board of Education seat for a Hawaiian education representative

In order for us to properly support our growing Kaiapuni programs it is essential that we have representation specifically for Hawaiian education to be part of the Board of Education. It is also essential to establish a Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni schools to again support the growing program. Both asks are important to ensure advocacy and support for said programs and to make sure our Kaiapuni schools have a seat at the table in decision making that will affect our Kaiapuni programs.

Mahalo!

Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools
Sample Testimony
Deadline 2:00pm

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Justine Jumalon

RE: HB 1496

Hearing on January 30, 2025

IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Justine Jumalon and I am a teacher. I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

Choose your top 2-3 to include in your letter of support:

- BOE currently has Hawaiian immersion advocates who understand the pedagogy and methodology of Hawaiian immersion education. We would like to secure such an advocate in a leadership role as a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent.
- Kaiapuni experiences unique opportunities and challenges warranting needed expertise on the Board of Education.
- The Board of Education comes up with many solutions for English medium education only without consideration on how it affects Hawaiian immersion education and is not a solution for Hawaiian immersion education

In conclusion, I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. **E**

OLA KA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I!!!

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education
Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Uluwehi Ornellas

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Uluwehi Ornellas and I am a proud graduate, former teacher, and parent of the kaiapuni school on Maui. I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent would have clear expectations and a solid model for supporting Kaiapuni schools, ensuring consistent alignment with the unique needs and goals of Hawaiian language immersion programs. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy. A Kaiapuni specific BOE seat can ensure equitable access to resources and education specifically for Hawaiian immersion education on all islands in Hawai‘i’s public schools, and uphold guidelines set forth in BOE policy 105-8. Kaiapuni experiences unique opportunities and challenges warranting needed expertise on the Board of Education. The Board of Education comes up with many solutions for English medium education only without consideration on how it affects Hawaiian immersion education and is not a solution for Hawaiian immersion education.

In conclusion, I strongly support Bill HB1496 to move kaiapuni forward cohesively throughout all schools in Hawai‘i. I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:51:21 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Marty Martins | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

As a longtime student of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, I support this bill. Hawaiian is one of Hawai‘i two official languages and should start being treated with more respect by the Legislature. Most kaiapuni schools are filled to capacity with long waiting lists. There are PhDs who have gone thru their entire primary and secondary education in Hawaiian immersion classes.

The Dept. of Education should create a seat for a representative of the Hawaiian language. Also, there should be a complex area superintendant for Hawaiian language schools.

Mahalo,

Marty Martins

Kīhei

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:57:27 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Dana Tanigawa | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai,

My name is Dana Tanigawa and I support this bill to establish a Kaiapuni Complex Area Supperintendent (CAS). As shared in the bill this is vital to support schools who struggle with diverse issues relating to their Kaiapuni program. With the department of education's tri-level system, there are still gaps in capacity and oversight with our Kaiapuni schools. All three levels need support. The wrap around support with the additional board member with input from the different entities bridges communication and accountability with those involved. The CAS would work with the Office of Hawaiian education, within the department, to continue to research, elevate, and support the Kaiapuni program. Please support this bill.

Na'u.

Dana Tanigawa

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:58:05 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kuanoni Kaniaupio-Crozier | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Deadline 2:00pm

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education

Affairs

Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Kuanoni Kaniaupio-Crozier

RE: HB 1496

Hearing on January 30, 2025

IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

‘O au nō ‘o Kuanoni Kaniaupio-Crozier, he kanaka ‘ōiwi, he aloha ‘āina, he kama o kēia ‘āina nani o Hawai‘i nei i kaulana i ke aloha. Eia au i keia lā e hāpai a‘e nei i ku‘u aloha a me ke kāko‘o no ka papahana kaiapuni i ho‘oulu mai ia‘u mai ko‘u wā kamali‘i a hiki i ka hele nui ‘ana o ko‘u mau kapua‘i wāwae.

My name is Kuanoni Kaniaupio-Crozier and I am a product of the Kaiapuni program.

I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

The Kaiapuni education has been of large benefit to my life, helping to educate me about my responsibility to Hawai‘i nei as a kanaka ‘ōiwi and gave me the tools for self-efficacy, learning, leadership and laulima. Without Kaiapuni education, I would not be here in the community today building Hawaiian language events that create community and kīpuka in the world where ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i lives as a primary vernacular. ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i has been paramount to the renaissance of our people, an opportunity to reclaim the knowledge that our ancestors say is preserved for us, a wise kupuna would have said *ka li ‘u o ka pa ‘akai, the way salt preserves*. We use this metaphor to discuss the way knowledge related to the understanding of our ‘āina of Hawai‘i is preserved for us in our mele, stories, and language. This is what Kaiapuni education is all about, connecting students to our own history while creating model Hawaiians that will lead us into the future while being plugged in to the needs our islands and its people. Ultimately, Kaiapuni programs service the entire community of Hawai‘i by keeping us connected to the ancestral knowledge of our shared home and create stewardship practices that extend beyond care for the land, to that of its people and its future.

- This bill will ensure that the State upholds its constitutional responsibility to Article X, Section 4, and Article XV, Section 4 of the Hawaii State Constitution (1978).
- The Hawai‘i Revised Statute 302H-6 states that the department of education may establish a Hawaiian language medium state education agency with the capability of operating districts and complex areas on an equal basis with any other districts and complex areas of the department.
- A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent provides principles and programs with clearer guidance on how the school should be supported, while also offering a dedicated space for principals to collaborate and share insights.
- A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent would have clear expectations and a solid model for supporting Kaiapuni schools, ensuring consistent alignment with the unique needs and goals of Hawaiian language immersion programs.
- A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy.
- The Board of Education recognizes that appropriate support for and implementation of Hawaiian education will positively impact the educational outcomes of all students in preparation for college, career and community success BOE policy 105-8

- Ensure equitable access to resources and education specifically for Hawaiian immersion education on all islands in Hawai‘i’s public schools, and uphold guidelines set forth in BOE policy 105-8
- BOE currently has Hawaiian immersion advocates who understand the pedagogy and methodology of Hawaiian immersion education. We would like to secure such an advocate in a leadership role as a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent.
- Public education has 2 language pathways- English and Hawaiian. Hawaiian education is not securely represented in the Board of Education.
- Kaiapuni experiences unique opportunities and challenges warranting needed expertise on the Board of Education.
- The Board of Education comes up with many solutions for English medium education only without consideration on how it affects Hawaiian immersion education and is not a solution for Hawaiian immersion education
- At least one at-large BOE member with Hawaiian immersion expertise will support the BOE and facilitate the DOE in meeting its stated strategic goal towards equity and constitutional mandate in providing access to Hawaiian medium education.
- This will provide needed expertise to the BOE and help to stabilize its decision making and leadership.

In conclusion, I implore you to move this bill forward by voting for it and to lobby for it with all the tools available to you. The future of Hawa‘i is in our hands, let’s *huli ka lima i lalo, turn our hands towards the ground* and get to work.

I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I!!!

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:58:36 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Haukea Valdez | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support HB 1496. Mahalo.

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:59:50 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Briann Starkey | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

RE: HB 1496

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

Aloha Senators.

My name is Briann Starkey and I am submitting testimony as an individual in support of HB1496. I am a kumu kaiapuni at Kula Kaiapuni 'o Kualapu'u on the island of Moloka'i and have been an educator for 19 years at Kula Kaiapuni 'o Kualapu'u. I am in support of this Bill for a Papahana Kaiapuni Program Superintendent for equitable representation on the Board of Education.

Mahalo for your time.

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education
Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Amber “Wai” Needham

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

My name is Wai Needham and I am a makuahine and supporter of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i.
I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

- This bill will ensure that the State upholds its constitutional responsibility to Article X, Section 4, and Article XV, Section 4 of the Hawaii State Constitution (1978).
- The Hawai‘i Revised Statute 302H-6 states that the department of education may establish a Hawaiian language medium state education agency with the capability of operating districts and complex areas on an equal basis with any other districts and complex areas of the department.
- A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent provides principles and programs with clearer guidance on how the school should be supported, while also offering a dedicated space for principals to collaborate and share insights.
- A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent would have clear expectations and a solid model for supporting Kaiapuni schools, ensuring consistent alignment with the unique needs and goals of Hawaiian language immersion programs.
- A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy.
- The Board of Education recognizes that appropriate support for and implementation of Hawaiian education will positively impact the educational outcomes of all students in preparation for college, career and community success BOE policy 105-8
- Ensure equitable access to resources and education specifically for Hawaiian immersion education on all islands in Hawai‘i’s public schools, and uphold guidelines set forth in BOE policy 105-8
- BOE currently has Hawaiian immersion advocates who understand the pedagogy and methodology of Hawaiian immersion education. We would like to secure such an advocate in a leadership role as a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent.

- Public education has 2 language pathways- English and Hawaiian. Hawaiian education is not securely represented in the Board of Education.
- Kaiapuni experiences unique opportunities and challenges warranting needed expertise on the Board of Education.
- The Board of Education comes up with many solutions for English medium education only without consideration on how it affects Hawaiian immersion education and is not a solution for Hawaiian immersion education
- At least one at-large BOE member with Hawaiian immersion expertise will support the BOE and facilitate the DOE in meeting its stated strategic goal towards equity and constitutional mandate in providing access to Hawaiian medium education.
- This will provide needed expertise to the BOE and help to stabilize its decision making and leadership.

In conclusion I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA 'ŌLELO HAWAI'I!!!

LATE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:00:34 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| GLENN A BACHMEIER | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support HB1496

LATE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:12:48 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kiani Yasak | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai e ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo o Hawai‘i,

My name is Kiani Yasak and I am a Kaiapuni teacher at Ke Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Kalama in Makawao, Maui. I am in support of HB 1496 to establish a complex superintendent for Kaiapuni schools and to create a Board of Education seat for a Hawaiian education representative. Please consider these vital systemic positions to help Kaiapuni progress forward and enhance our Kaiapuni education for our students, schools, and communities. Mahalo for your consideration.

Na‘u nō me ke aloha,

Kiani Yasak

LATE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:20:13 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Victor | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support HB 1496 because it is the kuleana of everyone living in Hawaii to support it's unique culture, in this instance the language.

LATE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 3:12:27 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Shelly Tokunaga May | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha kākou

I am in strong support of HB1496. I am a parent of children who have benefited from Kaiapuni and Hawaiian immersion charter schools.

I believe that our Hawaiian immersion schools should have supports in place to ensure the success of every child and family that attends these public schools. It is a struggle for families to choose to follow the Hawaiian immersion path because the resources and opportunities are not the same as English medium schools.

This bill will bridge these gaps by having dedicated leadership positions that understands the unique needs of Kaiapuni schools.

We all benefit when our keiki and families have choice and resources for a solid education that is rooted in creating a better Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time.

Dr Shelly Tokunaga-May

Aloha e Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee on Education,

I am in strong support of HB 1496. Ka Papahana Kaiapuni (KPK) Program has steadily grown since its establishment in the 1980s. Given this expansion as well as the unique needs and challenges of this language program, KPK deserves a dedicated superintendent.

In addition, securing a position on the Board of Education requiring familiarization with KPK. and expertise in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and Hawaiian knowledge is critical. This will ensure the selected member possesses sufficient knowledge about Hawaiian language and culture to aptly represent the interests of KPK in BOE decisions.

Please pass HB 1496. E ola ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i!

Kaulu Lu‘uwai

LATE

LATE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 4:31:45 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Regina Peterson | Individual | Support | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

I am in support and would like to give testimony online. please email me at oleloola@gmail.com

LATE

TO: Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair, House Committee on Education Affairs
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair, House Committee on Education
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Kawaiokapualeilehua ‘Ōpu‘ulani Kāneakua-Rauschenburg
Kumu Kaiapuni ma Waiau
Department of Education

RE: HB 1496
Hearing on January 30, 2025
IN STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496 - Complex Area Superintendent for Kaiapuni Schools

Aloha mai e nā po‘o a me nā lālā hanohano o ka ‘Aha ‘Ōlelo,

‘O wau iho nō o Kawaiokapualeilehua. He mamo ha‘aheo no ka ‘ohana Kāneakua. ‘O Hawai‘i ku‘u kulāiwi. ‘O O‘ahu ku‘u mokupuni. ‘O Kona ko‘u moku. ‘O Honolulu ko‘u ahupua‘a. No ka ‘āina ho‘okahua o Papakōlea mai au.

My name is Kawaiokapualeilehua Kāneakua-Rauschenburg and I am a kumu kaiapuni - Hawaiian Language Immersion Teacher.

I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent aims to set the stage for Kaiapuni learning communities, common training, economies of scale, centrally-situated expertise, and other avenues to give Kaiapuni education a shared path toward success.

I strongly support HB1496 because this will greatly benefit our kaiapuni school system. Having a complex area superintendent for kaiapuni school can help our voices be heard and help to ensure that our unique needs are met while also supporting the growth of Hawaiian language and culture in education. Kaiapuni schools focus on the immersion of students in language and culture. Having a complex area superintendent that is well rounded in both Hawaiian language education could benefit in making sure that the curriculum and teaching practices are aligned with goals set for our schools.

Kaiapuni schools differ from other schools. We have different challenges than other traditional schools experience and having a complex area superintendent can provide leadership and support that are specific to our needs. Additionally, they can advocate for our needs, which has been an ongoing struggle in the school that I am teaching at.

A complex area superintendent for kaiapuni schools can help to bring our schools from across the state together in regards to sharing our practices and resources. This support is necessary to nurture Hawaiian immersion education, ensuring that our language and culture thrives in Hawai‘i and in our education system.

Creating a board of education seat for a Hawaiian education representative can assist in ensuring that educational policies and curriculum reflects the cultural and linguistic needs of our kaiapuni students. It can help to protect our language, culture, and traditions. It can substantially build more trust between our communities and the education system. A Hawaiian education representative can advocate for preserving the traditional knowledge passed down by kūpuna, building that bridge for our keiki to feel connected to their ‘āina and lāhui.

Overall, this bill will ensure that the State upholds its constitutional responsibility to Article X, Section 4, and Article XV, Section 4 of the Hawaii State Constitution (1978). Public education has 2 language pathways- English and Hawaiian. Hawaiian education is not securely represented in the Board of Education. The Board of Education comes up with many solutions for English medium education only without consideration on how it affects Hawaiian immersion education and is not a solution for Hawaiian immersion education

A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent would have clear expectations and a solid model for supporting Kaiapuni schools, ensuring consistent alignment with the unique needs and goals of Hawaiian language immersion programs. A Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent can confidently define the specific needs of Kaiapuni schools, ensuring that resources, support, and strategies are tailored to enhance the success of Kaiapuni education and pedagogy. The BOE currently has Hawaiian immersion advocates who understand the pedagogy and methodology of Hawaiian immersion education. We would like to secure such an advocate in a leadership role as a Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent.

In conclusion, this is why I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB1496.

I urge the Committee to PASS HB1496. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

E OLA KA ‘ŌLELO HAWAI‘I!!!

LATE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 7:05:24 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Kyle Kolomona Nakatsuka | Individual | Support | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

Aloha nui kākou

I am a lifelong O'ahu resident and a kumu kula kaiapuni, Hawaiian Language immersion teacher, in grade 7-12 science. I am writing in strong support of HB1496, as it provides a means to carry out the essential work required to ensure that our kula kaiapuni can effectively hold up and advance the high academic standards that our haumana need to thrive in a complex society while preserving and pushing forward the indigenous knowledge and worldview of our islands.

E alu like kakou i ke aloha 'āina a me ka mahalo 'ike kūpuna.

Kyle Kolomona Nakatsuka

LATE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 7:23:31 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Cadence Feeley | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

We must support Kaiapuni and continue to grow Hawaiian Immersion schools in Hawai'i. It is the utmost of importance to continue supporting the keiki of Hawai'i in speaking 'ōlelo Hawai'i and being within a nurturing community that is continuing to revitalize Hawaiian language and culture. I support funding these positions.

LATE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 9:16:32 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| shantee brown | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

thank you representatives for introducing this bill. i support HB1496. children of hawai'i deserve access to hawaiian language classes. native hawaiians need to have a prominent role in decision making on the board of education and the state needs to strongly support existing kaiapuni schools as their curriculum will hopefully be the foundation for teaching hawaiian in all DOE schools.

LATE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 9:18:24 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Kanela Kamahalohanuilai | Individual | Oppose | In Person |

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to H.B. No. 1496

To: Members of the Legislative House

Aloha,

First and foremost I like to Thank my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and his father for helping get to where I am today. Also, I want to take this time to thank everyone in the room and around. I also want to forgive the State of Hawaii and all of the departments that supports the oppression here in the islands.

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to H.B. No. 1496, as I believe it undermines the integrity and needs of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni and the communities it serves. As a parent and concerned member of this community, I ask that you seriously consider the implications of this bill on our educational system and the well-being of our keiki (children).

Ka Papahana Kaiapuni deserves a superintendent who understands and supports the unique needs of our Hawaiian immersion schools. Currently, the superintendent earns \$240,000 per year but has failed to address critical issues such as educational food security, teacher job security, and school safety. This lack of action neglects the needs of schools throughout Hawaii, and it is unacceptable that our children are left without the resources and support they need.

Ka Papahana Kaiapuni does not need to be micromanaged by a superintendent who has not shown any initiative to make meaningful changes. We need a leader who not only listens to our community but also works with us to make positive changes. A leader who will engage with the community and demonstrate transparency. We do not need a superintendent who is disconnected from the very people they are supposed to serve.

Furthermore, I urge you to strike out the language on page 5, lines 1-2, which states: “The members shall be appointed by the governor, with advice and consent of the senate.” This provision consolidates too much power in the hands of the governor and the senate, without adequate community input or the people's vote. This level of authority should never fall on just one person or a small group, as there are numerous reasons why someone may need to be removed from office, and that decision should be made in a more democratic manner.

Similarly, lines 10-12 should be struck out. Giving one person and a board the power to make such significant decisions without input from the community is not acceptable. Where is the accountability? Where is the voice of the people? This bill should ensure that communities have a real say in how our schools are run.

Additionally, I ask that you strike Section 302A-604, which grants the current or future superintendent authority to make broad decisions, including selecting personnel outside their immediate staff. A superintendent should only be responsible for selecting their own team, not making decisions that affect the broader school system. Ka Papahana Kaiapuni deserves more autonomy and should be empowered to run its own operations.

Finally, Ka Papahana Kaiapuni needs its own superintendent who has a deep understanding of Hawaiian Kingdom law, as well as state and federal laws. Our schools deserve leadership that is rooted in the values and traditions of our people.

These changes must be addressed before the enforcement of this act, or it risks violating the rights of our children and families to a Hawaiian-centered education system. The community must be heard, and our rights must be respected.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you will take the necessary steps to amend this bill to better reflect the needs and desires of our community.

Aloha,
Kanela Kamahalohanuilai

LATE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/30/2025 12:31:44 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Melinda Healani Sonoda-Pale | Ka Lahui Hawai'i | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Here's the **refined statement** integrated into the testimony in a way that strengthens the argument:

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1496

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair

Rep. Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

January 30th, 2025

Aloha e Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee,

Ka Lāhui Hawai'i strongly supports **HB1496**, a critical step in strengthening Hawaiian language education and ensuring that 'Ōlelo Hawai'i continues to thrive for future generations. This bill provides the necessary administrative oversight, funding, and representation to uplift the **Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Hawaiian Language Immersion Program** and fulfill the state's constitutional obligation to Native Hawaiian students.

Ola i ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i – The Hawaiian Language Lives

The saying "**Ola i ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i**" reminds us that language is the foundation of identity, culture, and knowledge. **'Ōlelo Hawai'i is not a relic of the past nor a novelty for tourist signage—it is a living, evolving language that must be nurtured and supported at every level of society, including education, governance, and daily life.**

Despite its official status in Hawai'i, the Hawaiian language is often **reduced to tokenized phrases on airport signs or commercial branding**, reinforcing its presence as a mere **symbol rather than a fully functioning language of education, law, and daily communication**. Language revitalization requires more than surface-level visibility—it requires **structural investment, policy support, and institutional backing** to ensure its survival and growth.

I. Strengthening the State's Commitment to Hawaiian Language Revitalization

Hawai‘i’s **State Constitution** mandates the protection and promotion of Hawaiian language:

- **Article XV, Section 4** recognizes Hawaiian as an **official language** of Hawai‘i.
- **Article X, Section 4** requires the state to **promote the study of Hawaiian language, culture, and history** in public education.

Yet, despite these commitments, Hawaiian language education continues to **face systemic inequities**, from underfunding to a lack of specialized support for students in immersion programs. **HB1496 is an opportunity to align state policies with its constitutional obligations and ensure that Hawaiian language education is fully supported.**

II. Expanding and Strengthening Ka Papahana Kaiapuni

Ka Papahana Kaiapuni has been instrumental in **revitalizing Hawaiian as a spoken language**, but it faces significant challenges:

- **Limited capacity and teacher shortages** that prevent expansion.
- **Inconsistent funding and lack of administrative oversight**, resulting in disparities across schools.
- **A lack of special education services** designed for Hawaiian immersion students.

HB1496 establishes a **Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent** to provide **systematic leadership and advocacy** for Hawaiian immersion schools, ensuring they receive the **attention, structure, and funding they deserve**. This is not just an administrative change—it is a necessary step in ensuring that ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i is a **functional, living language** used by future generations in every aspect of life.

III. Ensuring Native Hawaiian Representation on the Board of Education

Native Hawaiian students make up nearly **24% of Hawai‘i’s public school population**, yet **there is no guaranteed Hawaiian representation** on the Board of Education. HB1496 **corrects this imbalance** by requiring that at least **one at-large Board of Education member** be a **Hawaiian educator, practitioner, or scholar of Hawaiian studies or ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i**.

Ensuring a **Native Hawaiian voice at the policy level** is essential in shaping an education system that supports the needs of Hawaiian students, respects their language, and **champions long-term revitalization efforts**.

IV. Investing in the Future of Hawaiian Language Education

To make these systemic improvements possible, HB1496 provides essential funding:

- **\$200,000 for a Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Complex Area Superintendent** within the Department of Education.
- **\$75,000 for a secretary position** to support the superintendent’s office.

This investment will **ensure that Hawaiian language education is not just maintained but expanded, strengthening its role in public education and securing its future as a truly living language.**

Conclusion

HB1496 is not just about education—it is about the survival of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and the fulfillment of a commitment made to Native Hawaiians in the State Constitution. ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i cannot be treated as a mere decorative element in tourism and commerce—it must be cultivated as a language of daily life, governance, and education. Language revitalization requires tangible investment, leadership, and systemic support, and HB1496 is a crucial step toward ensuring that ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i flourishes for future generations.

We urge you to **pass HB1496** and take a stand for **Hawaiian language, education equity, and the future of our keiki.**

Me ka ‘oia‘i‘o,

Healani Sonoda-Pale
Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i

LATE

HB-1496

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 10:56:05 PM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Anthony Martinez | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai,

My name is ‘Akoni Martinez. I am a teacher at Ke Kula Kaiapuni ‘O Ānuenu and am in strong support of HB 1496. The allotment of a superintendent for the kaiapuni schools is long overdue. This would be great progress in the development and sustainment of the program in terms of island communities, student population, teacher recruitment and retention, and curriculum. With this position, the superintendent can allocate funds to directly support ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i.