



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

**Date:** 04/11/2025

**Time:** 03:00 PM

**Location:** CR 229 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Bill Title:** GM 0698 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the School Facilities Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAN IWASE, for a term to expire 06-30-2029.

**Purpose of Bill:**

**Department's Position:**

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) supports the nomination of Jan Iwase to the School Facilities Authority (SFA) Board. Ms. Iwase brings over 40 years of experience in public education and a deep understanding of how facilities impact learning.

As principal of Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School, she led the campus through a \$33.2 million modernization project, providing valuable insight into how large-scale construction intersects with daily school operations. Her leadership ensured the project supported students, staff, and the broader school community.

She has also been a vocal advocate for thoughtful school design, emphasizing the importance of creating learning environments that are safe, functional, and conducive to student success.

Ms. Iwase continues to support education in Hawai'i as a lecturer, author, and mentor. Her commitment to student-centered leadership and her hands-on experience with facilities make her a strong addition to the SFA Board. We respectfully urge the Senate to confirm her nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support.

April 8, 2025

The Honorable Michelle Kidani Chair  
The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Education

RE: Testimony in favor of Governor's Message 698 the nomination of Jan Iwase to the Hawaii School Facilities Authority

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

It is my pleasure to submit testimony in favor of the confirmation Governor's Message 698 the nomination of Jan Iwase to the Hawaii School Facilities Authority. Jan has dedicated her life to the education of our youth in Hawaii starting her career as a teacher at Head Start from 1973-1988 and then teaching at Wheeler Elementary and Mililani Mauka and retired as Principal of the Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School. Her dedication to our youth and her insight to the needs of our school facilities make her an ideal candidate. She is highly qualified to make decisions that will impact our school facilities.

Again, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in favor of the appointment of Jan Iwase to the Hawaii School Facilities Authority.

Charlotte Nekota

April 4, 2025

My name is Sherrylyn Yamada. I have been a retired Hawaii Department of Education School Level Administrator (DOE) since July 2016. I have been with the DOE for 41 years. Teacher for 27 years - 13 yrs as a SPED teacher (Makaha, Solomon, and Wahiawa Elementary), 4 yrs - Gifted and Talented (Mililani Waena El.) and 10 years Technology Coordinator (Mililani Waena El.). I served as school level administrator in the Central District for 14 years. Vice Principal (4yrs) at Solomon El. , Kipapa El. and Mililani Waena El. and school principal at Webling Elementary (10 yrs).

In addition, I am currently in Hawaii Alpha Delta Kappa (ΑΔΚ). Hawaii ΑΔΚ is an International Honorary Organization of Women Educators. I believe our organization of women supports strengthening and nurturing the education profession through commitment and promoting networking opportunities for schools.

I am presenting this testimony in favor of Ms. Jan Iwase, a nominee to the Hawaii School Facilities Authority Board. I believe people who are closest to the implementation of any program and/or project should be included in the planning and decision-making. They must also bring their experiences familiar to the purpose/goal/mission to the board. I have been in the trenches at the schools and know what support we need to provide for all our keikis in our schools. I come with a perspective as a teacher and an administrator. Sound decisions are best made with people who are aware of the challenges and issues of all stakeholders at the school/community level. I strongly believe Ms. Iwase is qualified to help move our school communities forward for the betterment of all our keikis. Her experiences in the DOE both as a teacher and administrator will allow those working with her to make decisions to create and support the best possible learning environments for all students.

Ms Iwase is a person who has demonstrated keen skills in being a listener, instructor and speaker. I have known her to be fair, thoughtful in words and actions (kind/polite) and works well with others (a team player). I have known Ms. Iwase as a fellow school level administrator in the Central District. She will be an advocate for everyone to ensure the school community will get the best. She's knowledgeable about school policies and regulations, military family dynamics, state building contractors, classified personnel, certificated personnel (teachers), parents and community at large. She feels strongly about the safety and well-being of all stakeholders in ensuring our students and school community are safe. School community members need support and will believe in someone who has shared the same daily experiences with them during the school and non-school days. She is someone familiar with the operational side of schools. From her experiences - she will advocate for all stakeholders. She will work with anyone to communicate the best possible solution for everyone.

Testimony for Jan Iwase - Hawaii School Facilities Authority (HSFA)

April 4, 2025

In conclusion, I truly believe Ms.Iwase would be that “voice” for the schools. She will support the school community, staff and teachers. Ms. Iwase has a vision to provide an exceptional learning environment for all students to excel and succeed today and in the future.

Respectfully,

Sherrylyn A. Yamada

59-252 A Kamehameha Hwy

Haleiwa, HI 96712

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim and members of the Senate Committee on Education,

This testimony is in reference to GM 698 – “Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the School Facilities Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee, Jan Iwase, for a term to expire 06-30-2029.”

My name is Charles “Charlie” Toguchi. I strongly and wholeheartedly support the confirmation of Gubernatorial Nominee Jan Iwase to be on the Hawaii School Facilities Authority Board.

Jan Iwase was an educator for 45 years and is still heavily involved in advocating for public education. As principal from 2003-2018 at Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School, Jan managed major school facility construction projects including the 33.2 million building project of the library media and student support center and covered play court. Jan’s education background, her knowledge and familiarity with major building projects, renovations and major repairs give her a strong foundation and the expertise needed to serve on the School Facilities Authority Board.

I have known Jan for more than 30 years. She is passionate about her work...is excellent in communication, collaboration and organization skills...is visionary...and leads by example and aloha. I can attest to her integrity, strength of character, diligence and dedication to her profession. Both professionally and personally, Jan Iwase is uniquely and highly qualified to be on the School Facilities Authority Board.

I strongly support the confirmation of Jan Iwase to the Hawaii School Facilities Authority Board.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,

Charlie Toguchi

**GM-698**

Submitted on: 4/8/2025 9:29:26 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/11/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ian Kitajima	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Letter of Support for Jan Iwase – HISFA Board Member Appointment**

Aloha! I am writing to express my strongest support for Jan Iwase’s continued service as a board member of the Hawai‘i School Facilities Authority (HISFA). With over 45 years of dedicated service to public education in Hawai‘i, Jan brings not only unparalleled experience and insight but also a deep commitment to ensuring that our children, educators, and communities have access to quality learning environments.

Throughout her long and impactful career—as a teacher, principal, and education leader—Jan has consistently demonstrated thoughtful leadership, collaborative spirit, and a focus on what truly matters: the success and well-being of our keiki. Her reputation as a respected and visionary educator is well-earned, and her voice on the HISFA Board continues to provide invaluable perspective grounded in decades of frontline experience.

As HISFA undertakes critical initiatives such as supporting Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luke’s *Ready Keiki* effort to provide universal access to preschool for all 3- and 4-year-olds by 2032, the development of a new Central Maui school to serve a rapidly growing population, and the construction of teacher workforce housing at Mililani High School, Jan’s insights into educational equity, facilities planning, and school leadership are especially essential.

Jan not only understands the classroom and school campus but also how physical spaces influence learning, community engagement, and educator retention. Her advocacy for children, families, and educators—coupled with her knowledge of Hawai‘i’s educational landscape—makes her an ideal candidate to continue guiding the bold and meaningful work HISFA is undertaking.

I wholeheartedly support Jan Iwase’s reappointment to the HISFA Board and urge you to retain her wisdom and leadership as you move forward on these transformative initiatives for our state.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your continued dedication to improving educational infrastructure for Hawai‘i’s future. Ian Kitajima

**GM-698**

Submitted on: 4/9/2025 10:52:22 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/11/2025 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

This testimony is in support of Ms. Jan Iwase's nomination to the HIFSA.

I have had the privilege of working with Ms. Iwase during her tenure as Principal of Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School. At the time, I was the coordinator of the Administrator Certification Program for the Hawaii Department of Education and Ms. Iwase was a Principal Mentor for educators going through the program.

Ms. Iwase's commitment to the school's students and community was evident as she built a culture of excellence at DKIES. She demonstrated excellence as a leader, developed excellence in the teaching staff, and promoted excellent school facilities. I worked at Hale Kula Elementary School when I first entered the DOE. When I later returned to work with Ms. Iwase, there was significant improvement in the quality of education. Innovation was happening in classrooms, students were excited about learning, and the campus was well maintained and inviting.

Her passion for leadership from the heart is evident in the books she has authored. Her books were recommended reading to those in the Administrator Certification Program as they spoke to the leadership qualities necessary to lead excellent schools.

Ms. Iwase is a visionary, leading with conviction, with students at the core of all her decisions. She is well qualified as is evident by her extensive resume, and will be an outstanding member of the HISFA.

Committee on Education  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair

GM698

April 11, 2025  
3:00 PM, Conference Room 229

#### IN SUPPORT

My name is Laureen Dunn and I am a Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) retired principal. I am testifying in favor of the Senate Education Committee and the Hawai`i State Senate confirming the nomination of Jan Iwase, to be a board member of the Hawai`i School Facilities Authority (HISFA) Board.

Jan Iwase, a retired HIDOE principal with 45 years of experience as an educator, possesses the knowledge, background, and understanding of HISFA's three target areas—to build preschools, build a Central Maui School, and teacher workforce housing—qualifying her to be a HISFA Board Member.

Ms. Iwase holds a bachelor's degree with a focus on early childhood education, giving her firsthand insight into the critical need for affordable preschools. As a former elementary school principal, she has witnessed the social and academic disadvantages faced by kindergarten students who lacked preschool experience.

Furthermore, Ms. Iwase has direct experience with multi-million dollar school renovations, having overseen the addition of new buildings at Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School.

Regarding the teacher shortage in Hawaii, Ms. Iwase has encountered challenges in recruiting mainland teachers due to the high cost of housing. Her understanding of this issue will provide valuable perspective on the Mililani Workforce Housing project.

If confirmed, Jan Iwase will be an invaluable HISFA Board Member, serving with dignity and honor.

Laureen Dunn

**GM-698**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 8:17:23 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/11/2025 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I have known Jan Iwase for many years and I think she will be an extremely effective member for many reasons. She listens before making decisions, is always open to suggestions, works very well with others in solving problems and coming up with the best solutions, and is an innovative leader. Jan Iwase always works hard to do the best she can in every situation she is a part of. I can honestly say that I trust Jan Iwase wholeheartedly, to make good decisions as a Board member.

**GM-698**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 12:44:45 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/11/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Carlson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony in support of Jan Iwase’s nomination to serve as board member of the Hawai’i School Facilities Authority. I have known Jan Iwase since 2005, when she was the principal at Hale Kula Elementary School, now named Daniel K. Inouye Elementary, on Schofield Barracks. **Jan Iwase is a dedicated, compassionate, and innovative leader who seeks opportunities to serve and better our community.**

Mrs. Iwase hired me to be the school’s librarian with the specific intentions of implementing project based learning and hosting family literacy events that foster a sense of community and ohana with our military families. At that time, many of our military families had a negative view of Hawaii schools and some of our families rarely ventured off base to explore Hawaii. To assure families their children were receiving quality education at our school, Mrs. Iwase pursued accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. This was years before most elementary schools pursued this honor. The first year we applied, we received a six year accreditation cycle—the best commendation a committee can award. This recognition reflected our commitment, capability, and dedication to supporting high-quality student learning and continuous school improvement. **Mrs. Iwase’s determination and dedication supported the school community through this process and validated the quality instruction our school offered.**

To foster literacy and community building, we hosted after school family events with a STEAM focus that brought the Coast Guard, the Honu Society, a West African drum and dance group and Brazilian Capoeira to perform for, or inform, our families. Always willing to be a team player, Mrs. Iwase joined in faculty vs. students volleyball games, ran the obstacle course and even sat in the dunk tank. These are memories children hold dear—to see their principal engaging with them in a playful manner. Mrs. Iwase maintained relationships with our military families and compiled a binder of correspondence she received from them—letters detailing how Hale Kula/ Daniel K. Inouye had prepared their children for their next mainland school, letters of appreciation for the opportunities their children had at our school, graduation announcements and photographs. Students still return to our school as high school graduates, looking for Mrs. Iwase. **Mrs. Iwase got to know our families, their needs and worked to support them on a personal level.**

Mrs. Iwase connected with students during the school day. If you needed to find Mrs. Iwase, you knew to look in the hallways, classrooms, recess field or cafeteria. As principal, she not only greeted every child on our campus by name (all 800+ of them), but she also knew the names, ages and stories of the teachers' children as well. Watching students solve math problems or harvesting vegetables from the garden, she saw how students' interests and questions fueled their learning. Mrs. Iwase moved our school from skill based instruction to the Project Based Learning model where student inquiry drives learning and teachers support students as they seek answers, develop their thinking, create and share their learning. **Jan Iwase is a champion for children; matching instructional delivery to how students learn best.**

When I introduced Mrs. Iwase to Twitter as a means of connecting with educators globally, Mrs. Iwase created an account, followed principals and engaged in #edchats. Through the connections she made, she saw the power of blogging and realized that educators should be recording their own stories; sharing their experiences. Mrs. Iwase maintains her blog to this day because it gives her the platform to share her experiences and advocate for the needs of our children. **Mrs. Iwase epitomizes what it means to be a lifelong learner.**

Recognizing the power of technology to connect students globally, Mrs. Iwase wrote for & won a Blended Learning grant for our school. This was 2011, when online instruction was just beginning to be developed—before Google Classroom and many of the platforms that make online learning so natural today. Mrs. Iwase carefully selected two teachers to lead the blended learning classrooms and forged a team to roll this out in a manner that would guarantee success. The parents and students valued that opportunity as a time when the students had more choice and responsibility in their learning. **Mrs. Iwase seeks opportunities for innovation when she knows it supports student learning.**

Mrs. Jan Iwase would bring a wealth of experience to The Hawai'i School Facilities Authority, and she would serve the board and our community, with the same dedication, compassion, innovative thinking she exhibited as our principal.

I humbly ask you to approve her nomination.

Respectfully,

Michelle Carlson

**GM-698**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 2:28:19 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/11/2025 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

To Whom it May Concern

Hawai'i State Legislature

RE: GM698

I have known Jan Iwase for nearly 10 years now. We first met at the Hawai'i Business Magazine's Leadership Conference. Since then we have worked closed on issues related to education in Hawai'i, including imagining what public education could be. My respect for Jan is unqualified and I support her nomination to the Hawai'i School Facilities Authority (HISFA). Given her many, many years as a public school teacher and administrator, and given her extensive writing on public education writ large, and given her deep involvement (after she retired) in public education in Hawai'i, Jan is, in my humble opinion, infinitely qualified to serve as a member of this Authority. I have spent most of my life working in the field of education, including in the area of school design. Jan's vision for what school facilities could be is innovative, yet practical. As an Authority member she will bring her unique blend of professionalism, integrity, kindness, can-do work ethic and vision for the future. I fully support her nomination.

Josh Reppun

What School Could Be Global Community Director

**GM-698**

Submitted on: 4/11/2025 9:54:22 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/11/2025 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of the confirmation of Jan Iwase to the board of School Facilities Authority. Ms. Iwase pretty serves in an interim capacity. She has been diligent and responsible in executing her duties as a board member. In addition, she is uniquely qualified to serve as a retired educator and principal of Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School which was extensively renovated during her tenure. She is a lifelong resident of Central Oahu and serves her community in many ways. She was a former early learning teacher and is passionate about expanding the Ready Keiki program. Please confirm her. Thank you. Alan Oshima