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Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator David Ige, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

February 27, 2014

Dear Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members:

This testimony is submitted in opposition to SB2139 SD1, with recommended amendments.

The Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E) is a diverse coalition of over 40 parent and community organizations dedicated to improving student achievement by increasing family and community engagement and partnerships in our schools. Our member list is attached.

Act 167, establishing a minimum number of student Instructional Hours and days per year, was passed in 2010 for three primary purposes:

1. Prevent future furloughs for students.
2. Provide instructional time equity among Hawaii students and their mainland peers.
3. Establish transparency and clarity in the definition and amount of instructional time provided by each school.

Act 167 sent a clear message to the community, that the legislature takes education seriously and that reduction of student instructional time would never again be compromised due to budget issues. All Hawaii students would receive the same amount of instructional time as their peers in Hawaii and on the mainland. All Hawaii families would know that their child receives the same amount of instruction as every other student in the state. Hawaii is unique, the only state that is one school district, with one funding source, and one union contract for all teachers. This should help insure that equity exists across the state. Instructional time for students should be no different. The DOE has undertaken the task of aligning the bell schedules for secondary schools and has made great progress. We support their effort to continue to meet the instructional time goals set forth in Act 167.

Rather than delete the 1080 instructional hours we recommend the following amendments:

1. Defer the implementation date until the next bargaining year so that any additional costs associated with increasing the time can be included in that contract.
2. Apply the increased time to 1080 instructional hours to secondary schools only, and to 990 instructional hours to elementary schools, which is consistent with instructional time for secondary and elementary schools nationally.

The process of aligning the secondary schools has been difficult, but the Department of Education (DOE), principals, staff and School Community Councils (SCCs) have worked hard to find schedules that work for their schools. If they wish, schools can, under the law, apply for a waiver. This is an important component of the law and if a school can make a compelling argument for the waiver, the BOE can grant the request. This provides a reasonable option for a school with unique circumstances. Finally, it should be noted that increasing the minimum student instructional time in the future for secondary schools, amounts to an increase from 5 hour 30 minutes to a 6 hour instructional day plus lunch and passing, or an approximately 7 hours day such as 8:00 am - 3:00 pm for students. This still allows time for after school activities, sports, and jobs for students. It would also make Hawaii student instructional time align with or exceed more than 50% of states, which is huge increase from 2010 when our state had some of the lowest instructional minutes in the country.

We strongly encourage you to stay the course with this law, and consider our amendments as a compromise.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration. Our opposition to this bill represents a 75% consensus or more of our membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura
HE'E Coalition Director

HE'E Member List

Academy 21
After-School All-Stars Hawaii
Alliance for Place Based Learning
*Castle Complex Community Council
Center for Civic Education
Coalition for Children with Special Needs
*DOE Windward District
*Faith Action for Community Equity
Fresh Leadership LLC
Girl Scouts Hawaii
*Good Beginnings Alliance
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation
*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars
*Hawai'i Charter School Network
*Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition
*Hawaii State PTSA
Hawai'i State Student Council
Hawai'i State Teachers Association
Hawai'i P-20
Hawai'i 3Rs
Head Start Collaboration Office
It's All About Kids
*INPEACE
Joint Venture Education Forum
Junior Achievement of Hawaii
Kamehameha Schools
Kanu Hawai'i
Keiki to Career
Kupu A'e
*Leaders for the Next Generation
Learning First
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds
Our Public School
*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
*Parents and Children Together

*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i
Punahou School PUEO Program
Teach for America
The Learning Coalition
US PACOM
University of Hawai'i College of Education
YMCA of Honolulu
Voting Members (*)



HAWAI‘I EDUCATIONAL POLICY CENTER TESTIMONY

Presented by Jim Shon, Director
Hawaii Educational Policy Center
February 27, 2014

COMMITTEE: WAM

DATE: Wednesday, February 27, 2014

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 211

SB 2139 SD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION

HEPC supports the essence of this bill. HEPC supports more creative definitions of instructional time, and a longer school day to engage students, particularly in high school.

HEPC especially supports allowing the Board of Education to work with stakeholders to define instructional time. HEPC is, however, wary of the implication in this bill that the definition is restricted to “seat time” and limits set out in the collective bargaining agreement.

HEPC respectfully suggests that on page 3, after “appropriate bargaining units” you add “and other partners and stakeholders.”

HEPC Thoughts on Instructional Time for consideration.

1. **The length of the learning/engagement day** is different than the number of instructional hours following a bell schedule. When a high school “ends” the school day at 2:30 we are saying that we have nothing for a large percentage of students when there are several hours in the day before many parents return home from work.

2. **Instructional time need not require a licensed teacher.** We already have Kupuna, but we also honor artists, musicians, athletic trainers, part-time coaches, robotics club mentors, farmers, civic learning and public service, etc. All of these could be encouraged and recognized. Mentors for the speech league, history day, the science fair are also part of the learning environment.

In conclusion, HEPC urges the Committee to see ***A Day In The Life of a Student***, and student engagement on campus as valid goals. This need not conflict with the CBA, but compliment and supplement education of the whole child.