



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

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Friday, April 5, 2019
10:15 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 211

House Bill 407, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1, Relating to the Board of Education

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Board of Education ("Board") would like to testify in opposition to HB 407 SD1, which would require Board approval prior to the termination of a complex area superintendent.

The Board agrees that the complex area superintendents play a vital role for their public school communities, and they are an integral component of the Department of Education's ("Department") tri-level leadership structure.

The Board does not support proposed legislation that would prevent or hinder the Board or the Department from addressing their annual strategic priorities. Annually, the Board sets strategic priorities, which the Superintendent uses to develop her own priorities that serve as the Board's primary measures for holding the Superintendent accountable to improving public education.

To achieve her priorities, the Superintendent relies on an expansive tri-level cadre of Department leaders, which includes the complex area superintendents. Without the flexibility to terminate the crucial members of her leadership team, when necessary, the Superintendent's responsibility to meet her annual priorities and advance public education in Hawaii becomes increasingly challenging.

Further, the Board does not believe it is appropriate or effective for the Board to assume management responsibilities over Department employees and believes it should remain focused on its primary roles of education policymaker and supervisor to the Superintendent as envisioned by the Constitution of the State of Hawaii. The Board appreciates the Senate Committee on Education's amendment to this measure to keep appointment authority of complex area superintendents with the Superintendent rather than the Board. However, the Superintendent should remain responsible for managing the Department, its employees, and all related personnel decisions, including the termination of complex area superintendents when necessary.

We urge the Committee not to pass this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Board.

Very truly yours,

Catherine Payne
Chairperson, Board of Education
Chairperson, 2019 Legislative Ad Hoc Committee