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Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
FINANCE

RE: HB 1996, HD2 - RELATING TO EDUCATION

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2020

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **opposes HB 1996, HD2**, relating to education.

This current version of this bill would require the Board of Education to include evaluation of The Strategic Plan Indicators as a component of the superintendent of education's annual performance evaluation. We appreciate the legislature made changes in this revision and took out the focus on the Strive HI Performance System as the lone component; however, The Strive HI Performance System is actually a large part of the Student Success Indicators in the HDOE Strategic Plan, thus we feel the focus for this bill will still continue to place too much emphasis on standardized test scores as well as solely increasing the special education inclusion percentage statewide.

**The Strategic Plan does not have indicators that report if those students with special needs who are put inside inclusion classrooms will then have the supports they require such as a licensed special education teacher in every special education classroom, including special education inclusion classrooms, or if they will have the support needed, such as an EA, School Psychologists, Speech Pathologists, Licensed Behavior Analysts needed etc.**

As with the The Strive HI report, **even the Strategic Plan continues to rely heavily on standardized test scores, further tying curricula to toxic levels of testing that erode creative thinking.** In effect, the department's evaluation system is high-stakes for schools, administrators, teachers, and this bill would still add this focus on the superintendent evaluations as well. Thus, HSTA opposes the Strategic Plan as a component of the evaluation system being used to evaluate the HDOE Superintendent. When school administrators are evaluated by a system that includes standardized test scores of students, and a pure percentage increase for our inclusion classes, without considering what inputs are not being provided to Title I schools that should be for their students to be successful, such as making sure there are enough licensed special education teachers for students with special needs, or

enough additional supports for students such as school psychologists, speech pathologists, as well as enough resources for all students with class sizes small enough for teachers to be effective for the individual needs of all of the students in each class, etc. It is basically an evaluation system with an over-emphasis on outputs, heavily relying on standardized test scores, without a look at the inputs needed and if they were provided.

**Adding the Strategic Plan Indicators as a component of the superintendent of education's annual performance evaluation still will include STRIVE HI metrics, and therefore will continue to contribute to the over-emphasis of standardized test scores on classroom instruction,** as well as just an increase in the percentage of inclusions classrooms without guaranteeing that the proper supports needed will be included in each inclusion classroom. Currently the Strategic Plan doesn't indicate an increase of a measurement that inclusion classrooms will have these reports. Teachers deserve professional respect, and need more supports and resources, not another metric for an evaluation system on our superintendent that will further emphasize outputs and not inputs, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **oppose** this bill.



## **HOUSE BILL 1996, HD2, RELATING TO EDUCATION**

FEBRUARY 24, 2020 · HOUSE FINANCE  
COMMITTEE · CHAIR REP. SYLVIA LUKE

**POSITION:** Comments.

**RATIONALE:** The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus provides the following comments on HB 1996, HD2, relating to education which requires the BOE to include evaluation of the most current strategic plan indicators as a component of the Superintendent of Education's annual performance evaluation and requires improvements in at least one-half of those indicators for any salary increase for the superintendent.

We appreciate this measure's effort to ensure that Hawai'i's public school system fulfills its stated learning objectives. That said, we are concerned that codifying the Hawai'i Department of Education's strategic plan indicators into state law as a measure of the Superintendent's performance will have the unintended consequence of tying our state's education system to standardized testing results, thereby deepening the our schools' dependence on testing regimes, rather than programs that promote authentic learning experiences.

Currently, the HIDOE's strategic plan indicators for Goal 1: Student Success exemplify our state's fetishization of standardized tests as a measure of learning growth. Goal 1's indicators include third-grade literacy, academic achievement in language arts, mathematics, and science, and the achievement gap between high-needs and non-high-needs students. Such metrics repudiate

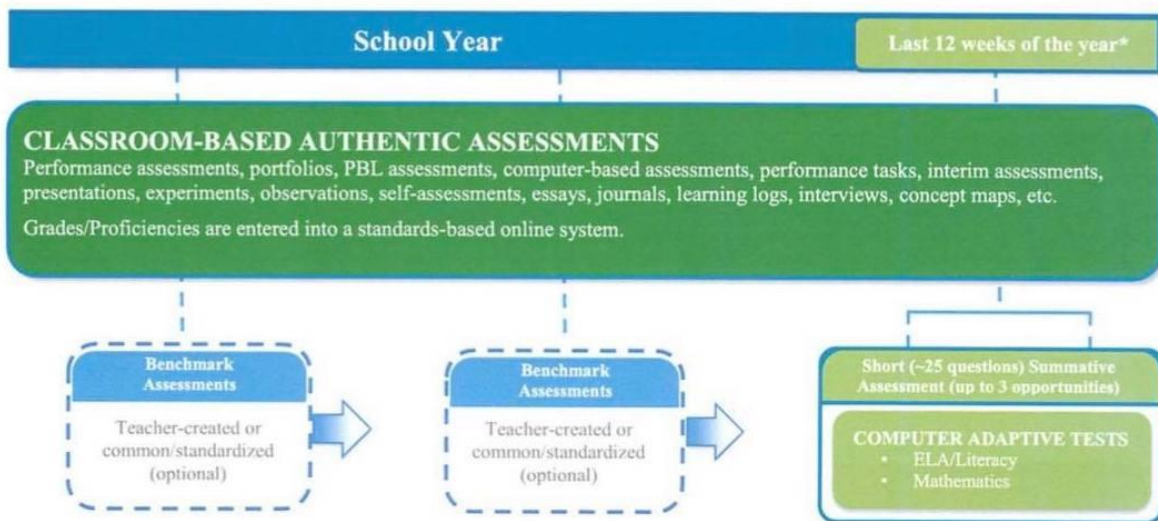
critical thinking in favor of rote test-taking skills, leaving little space for creative problem-solving. **The achievement gap is a particularly flawed measure of student success. Schools with low overall levels of achievement—most often high-poverty schools—tend to have lower achievement gap percentages than their high-performing peers precisely because so few of their students succeed on standardized tests, unlike affluent schools that typically experience more diversity in achievement levels between student subgroups.**

HIDOE spent at least \$60 million on testing-related contracts from 2015 to 2018, including a \$36.4 million contract with the American Institutes of Research to furnish the Smarter Balanced Assessment and HSA alternate assessment, the state's predominant standardized tests. Disappointingly, rather than eliminate this costly burden in favor of real-life learning opportunities, HIDOE leaders renewed AIR's multi-million dollar contract in September of 2019. Yet, HIDOE leaders have also made recent moves to embrace a more holistic vision of education by applying to participate in the federal Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority's pilot program for authentic assessments, using the mode that appears below.

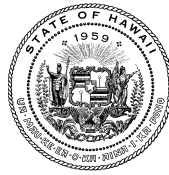
4 of 4

## Hawaii Innovative Assessment Model: A Balanced Assessment System

SY 2020-21: Grade 4 English Language Arts/Literacy and Grade 8 Mathematics



Rather than imposing punitive evaluation frameworks based on outdated educational ideas, we should invite the Board of Education and the HIDOE Superintendent to reflect on the Superintendent's performance and establish ambitious goals without agonizing over financial reprisal, much like teachers do when completing the "core professionalism" section of the educator effectiveness system (teacher evaluation system). Punitive evaluation frameworks invite reactionary anxiety, which may trickle down throughout our school system, creating a culture of fear among school administrators, teachers, and staff. Quite frankly, we should move in the opposite direction, incentivizing risk-taking and innovation at all levels of our school system.



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

**LATE**

**House Committee on Finance**

Monday, February 24, 2020  
12:00 p.m.  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 308

**House Bill 1996, House Draft 2, Relating to Education**

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

The Board of Education ("Board") opposes HB 1996, which would require the Board to include evaluation of the most current strategic plan indicators as a component of the Superintendent's annual performance evaluation and improvements in at least one-half of those indicators for any salary increase for the Superintendent.

The Board opposes proposed legislation that restricts its ability to effectively manage and oversee the Superintendent by reducing the Board's discretion in how it evaluates and compensates the Superintendent.

This measure mistakenly presupposes that the indicators in the Department of Education's ("Department") most current strategic plan are designed to directly reflect the performance of the Superintendent. The strategic plan indicators provide broad insight on the Department's progress and challenges in advancing student achievement and improving public education, but it is a limited perspective that lacks the nuance and context necessary when evaluating an individual. Many factors outside of the Superintendent and Department's control affect the indicator outcomes, and it is not reasonable to expect the Board to evaluate the Superintendent's job performance using metrics over which the Superintendent does not have complete control.

Further, this measure appears to attempt to link any salary increases for the Superintendent to performance, but it is unclear about the level of "improvements" expected for the Superintendent to be eligible for a pay raise. Notwithstanding the debatable merits of performance-based pay, the current language of the bill would allow the Board to consider even the most marginally positive increases in the indicators as improvements.

Ultimately, this measure would require the Board to each year determine how well the Superintendent is performing her job using metrics unreflective of her actual individual job performance. The Board could then increase the Superintendent's salary only if at least half of

those same metrics that are unreflective of job performance improve regardless of how inconsequential the improvements are. The Board opposes this approach and advocates for retaining the discretion it needs to manage its executive effectively.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine Payne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "C" and a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Very truly yours,

Catherine Payne  
Chairperson, Board of Education  
Chairperson, 2020 Legislative Ad Hoc Committee

**LATE**

**HB-1996-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/23/2020 9:35:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2020 12:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cynthia Reves	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a high school teacher, I oppose this measure.