

SB2586

Date of Hearing: Monday, February 8, 2010

Committee: Senate Committee on Education and
Housing

Person Testifying: Garrett Toguchi, Chairperson, Board of Education

Title of Bill: S.B. No. 2586, Relating to Charter Schools

Purpose of Bill: Among other things: (1) Expands the powers and duties of the Charter School Review Panel (CSRP) to include adopting a clear process and rigorous criteria for the reauthorization of charter schools, and reauthorizing each charter school no later than three years following the initial issue of a charter and every five years thereafter; (2) Requires the Charter School Administrative Office (CSAO) to withhold funds for its operational expenses, including the salaries of the CSAO executive director and staff, from the annual charter school general fund appropriation; (3) Requires CSAO to report to CSRP, individual and aggregate expenditures of charter schools annually, and requires CSAO to adopt rules to develop a standardized method for charter schools report expenditures; (4) Requires any check transferring a per-pupil allocation from CSAO to a charter school to be co-signed by the CSAO executive director and authorized agent of CSRP; and (5) Repeals provisions limiting the number of start-up and conversion charter schools.

Board's Position: Chairperson Sakamoto, Vice Chairperson Kidani, and members of the Senate Committee on Education and Housing, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on S.B. No. 2586.

The Board of Education (Board) takes no position on this measure. In its discussions, the Board indicated that the provisions in the bill are provisions in which it has limited involvement. For example, the bill contains several charter school authorizing provisions, which directly impact the Charter School Review Panel, the charter authorizer. Many of the provisions in S.B. No. 2586 also affect the operations of charter schools which fall under the Charter School Administrative Office.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

sakamoto2 - Erin

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 06, 2010 5:50 PM
To: EDH Testimony
Cc: director@whea.net
Subject: Testimony for SB2586 on 2/8/2010 1:45:00 PM

Testimony for EDH 2/8/2010 1:45:00 PM SB2586

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: comments only
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Curtis Muraoka
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Submitted on: 2/6/2010

Comments:

Dear Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Kidani, and Esteemed Senators Chun-Oakland, Galuteria, Tsutsui and Hemmings of the Senate EDH Committee,

The Hawaii Charter Schools Network supports quality education. Period.

The Charter School Review Panel has been doing diligent and productive work on keeping schools moving toward quality, therefore our main comment is that this bill might not be necessary, except for the clause that lifts the cap, which is an element of the Race to the Top competition.

We do understand that giving the Charter School Review Panel enhanced control of the chartering and re-evaluation processes would create a sense of greater accountability, which I am certain is what policymakers, parents, and the entire educational community expects (and deserves).

We feel that CSRP is already doing so.

Sincerely,
Curtis Muraoka, Vice President
Hawaii Charter Schools Network

The Unified Voice of Hawaii's 31 Public Charter Schools

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair

Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Committee on Education and Housing

Ho'okako'o Corporation

February 8, 2010

SUPPORT FOR THE INTENT OF SB 2586 Relating to Charter Schools: Ho'okako'o Corporation supports the intent of SB 2586.

HC agrees that a reauthorization process is a very important part of a charter school accountability system. However, HC requests that the transition period for a school to transition out from the DOE to conversion charter status not be counted as part of the three year reauthorization schedule.

Recommended amendment to SB 2586: Amend Section 2 (i) (7) regarding the reauthorization of a charter school from three years to four years for a conversion charter school as the school transitions out of the DOE to charter status and implements its' new roles and responsibilities.

- The first year of conversion is a "transition" year from the DOE to conversion charter status. The school does not become fully operational as a conversion charter school until year 2 of conversion status. During the transition year, the school continues being funded directly out of the DOE budget and continues to be part of the DOE personnel and other systems. The transition year is a cooperative effort between the school and the DOE to ensure a smooth transition for the students and their families, administrators, teachers and staff and provides time for the role, relationship and connection between the DOE complex and the conversion charter school to be clarified and adjusted.
- Schools are required to submit semester and progress reports to CSAO and CSRP. HC Schools have submitted required progress and annual reports to funders in a timely manner and if there are concerns about reauthorization the schools should already have been informed before reauthorization.
- HC and its' schools review strategies to continuously improve curriculum, instruction and assessment practices and administrative and fiscal practices annually with board and school leadership.
- HC and its' partner schools are committed to fulfilling the mission of charter schools, being fiscally responsible and achieving the goals leading to positive changes in student outcomes, increased parent and community involvement and quality teaching and effective school leadership. HC works closely with the schools to guide, monitor and support each of the schools .

Examples of fiscal accountability:

- School s hire School Business Managers and work closely with the HC Administrative Services Manager and a CPA firm(Ikeda and Wong) to receive guidance and technical assistance and support.

- An annual financial audit by a CPA firm (Nishihama and Kishida) is required of each of its' partner schools

Examples of academic innovation and change:

- Expanded learning time

- PreK

- A new teacher evaluation program

- Programs that incorporate language and culture (i.e. Ike Hawaii)

Background About the Ho'okako'o Corporation: HC's mission is to help schools reinvent themselves for the purpose of improving the academic achievement and personal growth of their students. The Ho'okako'o Corporation(HC) is implementing Act 2 (2002) that enables a Hawaii based nonprofit corporation to operate and manage conversion charter schools and the nonprofit board to serve as the local school board of the school. HC collaborates with communities, educators, and families to provide conversion charter schools with expertise and resources to improve student success.

- HC was established in late 2002 and began operating in 2003. Three partner schools converted with HC - Waimea Middle School on the Island of Hawaii in 2003, Kualapu`u School on Molokai in 2004 and Kamaile Academy in Leeward Oahu in 2007. The three schools are located in communities of significant socio-economic need and are Title 1 schools. The total enrollment of the three schools is about 1500 students or about 17% of the charter school enrollment. As conversion charter schools, like their DOE counterparts, the schools continue as the public community feeder school and also serving the broader public as emergency shelters, election voting locations and other public facility services that state DOE facilities may need to provide.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 2586.



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February 8, 2010

Honorable Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senate Committee on Education and Housing

Re: SB2586, Relating to the Charter Schools – Support with amendments
EDH Committee – February 8, 2010, Conference Room 225, 1:45 PM

Aloha Chair Sakamoto, Vice Chair Kidani and Committee members:

On behalf of the Hawaii Technology Academy (HTA), a public charter school which serves students in Oahu, Kauai, Hawaii Island and parts of Maui, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of this bill and to ask for an amendment including reconciliation language for public charter and DOE schools.

We support the requirement for the Charter School Review Panel (CSRP) to determine a clear process with rigorous criteria for charter schools to be reauthorized. We support the provision allowing the Charter School Administrative Office (CSAO) to withhold funds for its operational expenses, including salaries for staff and the executive director. We support the other provision to shore up accountability for charter schools and to repeal the cap on the number of charter schools.

We respectfully ask that the committee consider inserting language from SB2901, which provides a reconciliation of funding for charters and DOE schools to obtain a pro rata share of per pupil funds when a student transfers from a DOE school to a public charter school or vice versa, subsequent to the annual enrollment verification.

HTA is one of Hawaii's 31 public charter schools that are part of the state public school system. Like Hawaii DOE schools, charters comply with federal and state education standards. We support efforts like this to improve Hawaii's public education system.

Most of all, we endorse changes that create equitable funding and a supportive environment for all DOE and public charter schools to better position Hawaii in competition for U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top (RTT) initiative. States with policies in place supporting equitable funding for all public school students are at greater competitive advantage to qualify for RTT and other federal grant programs.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge members to support passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

Jeff Piontek
Hawaii Technology Academy Head of School