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

March 25, 2014

Dear Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani and Committee Members:

This testimony is submitted in support for HB2257 HD2 SD1, adjusting the salary cap of the Superintendent of Education.

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.

The Coalition supports the raising the salary cap of the Superintendent of education. The data comparing the 15th largest districts by student population on annual Superintendent salary is quite compelling (see attachment). Hawaii's Superintendent Salary at \$150,000 is by far the lowest salary among the 15 comparable districts; next Superintendent salary above Hawaii starts at \$225,000, with the other districts exceeding that and more. As a state, we have placed much responsibility on our Superintendent and we expect them to deliver a high quality education system for all public school students in the state. As the leader of the state's largest employer and the responsibility of over 180,000 students, it is critical that we have the best possible person in this position. Compensation is major factor in our ability to attract the most qualified candidates for this position. It is unacceptable that we pay our Superintendent nearly 50% less than their peers in other comparable school districts. Additionally, according to a Civil Beat article, our state Superintendent's salary does not even make the top 10 of highest paid state employees, with salary ranges from \$295,000 to 189,000.<sup>1</sup> Nor does it compete with dean's salary at University of Hawaii. As of May 2012, the University of Hawaii dean of education was paid \$199,368 and the dean of architecture's salary was \$188,520.<sup>2</sup> The UH football coach's salary is \$550,000.<sup>3</sup>

Parents, families and the community want to see the best quality leadership for our schools. We are in a unique situation, with one state and one district, serving all students in Hawaii. We want to be able to

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<sup>1</sup> Nanea Kalani, "Hawaii State Salaries 2012: Highest Paid Employees," *Civil Beat*, 09/20/2011

<sup>2</sup> Keoki Kerr, "New UH Librarian's \$195K salary brings criticism," *Hawaii News Now*, last updated 03/18/2013

<sup>3</sup> Sara Lin, "UH Football Coach Norm Chow Releases His Salary," *Civil Beat*, 01/10/2012

attract quality candidates to lead our state education system with salaries competitive with other comparable districts in the nation. We urge you to support this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration. Our support of 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 (\*)

City Public Schools with a student population of 1,036,053 through the 15<sup>th</sup> largest public school system, Wake County Schools with a student population of 149,508.

Ranking	School District	Salary	Additional Compensation
1	New York City Public Schools	\$250,000.00	
2	Los Angeles Unified School District	\$330,000.00	Car/driver, bonus if student and graduation rates rise
3	Chicago Public Schools	\$250,000.00	
4	Miami-Dade County Public Schools	\$275,000.00 - \$320,000	
5	Clark County School District (Las Vegas, Nevada)	\$250,000.00 bonus up to \$20,000	Life insurance; paid \$4,000 after hours pay; 31 days vacation, car allowance
6	Broward County Public Schools (Fort Lauderdale, Florida)	\$290,000.00	\$77,800
7	Houston Independent School District	\$300,000.00	
8	Hillsborough County Public Schools (Tampa, Florida)	\$257,958.00	
9	Hawaii Public Schools	\$150,000.00	
10	Orange County Public Schools (Orlando, Florida)	\$230,000.00	
11	Fairfax County Public Schools (Fairfax, Virginia)	\$292,000.00	Deferred comp \$15,000
12	Palm Beach County School District (Palm Beach, Florida)	\$225,000.00	
13	Gwinnett County Public Schools (North Atlanta, Georgia)	\$387,934.00	\$18,000 transportation allowance; retirement supplement
14	Dallas Independent School District	\$328,000.00	Up to \$75,000 per annum-performance bonus, up to 3 prof membership, student based incentive \$125,000, retention incentive \$50,000, travel expenses for District business, \$500 car allowance in lieu of mileage, cell phone \$250, term life ins. \$500,000, \$10,000 moving expenses, \$6,000 transition expenses, \$1,000,000 liability insurance
15	Wake County Schools (Raleigh, North Carolina)	\$275,000.00	\$16,500 for retirement, \$1,100/per day up to 10 consulting days, provide security if appropriate

B. Previous action of the Board on the same or similar matter

The following are Board actions taken on salary adjustments:

1. The last across the board salary adjustment for the Deputy Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents and Complex Area Superintendents was in 2006 until just recently on September 17, 2013, this Board approved salary adjustments for these employees.
2. On June 19, 2012, the Board amended Board Policy 1310-4 to ensure that the minimum annual salary for a tenured educational officer appointed to the Deputy, Complex Area or Assistant Superintendent position shall be no less



Tuesday, March 25, 2014  
9:00 AM  
Conference Room 211

TESTIMONY TO  
THE SENATE COMMITTEE  
ON WAYS AND MEANS

**RE: HB 2257 HD 2 SD1– Relating to Department of Education Superintendent’s Salary**

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt, Executive Director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 students statewide.

**HAIS is in strong support of HB 2257 HD 2 SD 1** to increase the salary cap of the Department of Education Superintendent’s Salary.

As a long-time educational administrator, I can identify with the demands required of the job of Superintendent. I believe that we should adjust our priorities to reflect the high value of education and compensate individuals appropriately so that we may attract and/or retain the high quality leadership needed for our public school system.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.