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We would like to provide input for the refresh of the DOE/BOE Strategic Plan and to the Governor's ESSA Task Force on the Blueprint for Hawaii's Public Education.

Hui for Excellence in Education, or "HE'E," is a statewide coalition of diverse stakeholders committed to working collaboratively to identify opportunities to improve public education in Hawai'i. HE'E seeks to be the nexus for community and parent engagement while serving as a public resource for educational policy. HE'E was formed in May 2010 by parents and community members who stood up and said "no" to school furloughs and "yes" to re-establishing education as a public priority. HE'E also aims to work collaboratively with the Department of Education (DOE) to enhance public education. Among HE'E's top priority areas for 2011-2016 enhancing family engagement in schools, influencing public policy that affects education, building trust and relationships within the coalition, promoting family engagement as one of the key components of school leadership, and creating family empowerment by collaborating to meet the basic needs of every child.

We applaud the effort by the DOE and the Governor's ESSA Task Force to get the community involved in both the formation of the DOE/BOE Strategic Plan and the ESSA Task Force's Blueprint for Hawaii's Public Education. The DOE has made an active effort to engage community groups such as ours to provide input for the Strategic Plan. The BOE is also hosting community meetings throughout the state to hear from community. The ESSA Task force is also conducting a series of town hall meetings to gather input for Hawaii's Blueprint for Education. We hope the DOE, BOE and Task Force will work collaboratively with the community input gathered to create a plan and implementation that will truly benefit our keiki.

Our members have been participating in the various community meetings, focus groups, the Governor's meeting at the Convention Center, the DOE Accountability Work Group, and attended BOE meetings. We have also hosted presentations from DOE leadership and staff as well as members of the ESSA Task Force.

#### **Governor's ESSA Task Force Comment: Blueprint for Public Education**

In creating the blueprint for Public Education, the ESSA Task Force has identified a number of priorities, such as school empowerment, innovation & creativity, school leadership, teacher quality, to name a few. What we don't see clearly in the blueprint is a bucket for family and community engagement, which is one of HE'E's priorities. Perhaps school empowerment could be defined as "school and community empowerment," which implies that families and community organizations have the opportunity to partner with schools to enhance the environment for the students. In addition, we suggest that the design include a specific definition of "community." HE'E's members include community organizations that work with parents and families and also networks that focus on community programs afterschool. Therefore, Coalition members would like to see that family and community engagement

have a place in public education.

### **BOE/DOE Comment: ESSA, State's Strategic Plan and the Accountability System**

We understand that ESSA outlines federal requirements that correspond to federal funding. In the past, our accountability system adhered quite strictly to the federal requirements so that we were insured of the federal funding. For the refresh of the Strategic Plan and the Accountability System, we recommend a slightly different approach, that the State create an accountability plan that encompasses a more holistic view of what we want for our state students, and that the federal requirements be a subset of the whole plan. This is consistent with the spirit of ESSA, giving more autonomy and empowerment to individual states.

HE'E particularly likes this approach as we feel that areas such as family and community engagement and having our schools look at basic needs of the whole child can be addressed more robustly. If the Strategic Plan will continue to have Goal 1 as Student Success and Goal 3 as Successful Systems of Support, we welcome a renewed section on family and community engagement. We also think a section on school culture would also be appropriate. As an indicator for family engagement or measuring school culture, we like the School Quality Survey (SQS) as a tool to monitor the progress of a school.

We also believe that the Strategic Plan should be aligned with the State's Accountability System. Currently, the goals and indicators of the Strategic Plan are not fully consistent with the Strive HI Accountability System. We think that if the two were aligned, it would be more efficient, effective and easier to understand for all stakeholders. As an example of how a state plan aligns with the state accountability system, we refer to New York City, with their Framework for Great Schools (equivalent to the strategic plan) and their School Quality Report (equivalent to Strive HI report for a school). NYC takes a holistic approach to school reporting, including both assessment data, but also qualitative data from surveys similar to our SQS. The presentation format is also very user friendly for both families and school leaders to utilize. Information is also presented in several languages appropriate for their district. Their framework and methodology is the result of a lengthy process and evidence-based analysis, both of which are similar to our effort in Hawaii. The NYC School Quality Report information can be found at this link: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm>

### **HE'E Priorities**

The two HE'E priority areas where we feel are applicable to the Strategic Plan and to the Governor's Task Force are family/community engagement in schools and creating family empowerment by collaborating to meet the basic needs of each child.

### **Background: Advocacy on Family and Community Engagement**

HE'E has done extensive advocacy on family/community engagement in schools. When the original DOE/BOE strategic plan was created for 2012-2018, HE'E strongly recommended to have family and community engagement included in the plan. As a result, there are two sections in Goal 1 Student Success and Goal 3 Successful Systems of Support, respectively, where family and community engagement is highlighted.

In addition to our advocacy on the Strategic Plan, HE'E, along with other family engagement advocates in the community, through two concurrent legislative resolutions, worked to create a Family-School Partnership Policy, which was approved by the BOE in 2015, titled "BOE Policy 101.14 Family and Community Engagement-Partnership."

### **Background: Advocacy on Meeting the Basic Needs of Every Child**

HE'E has also done strong advocacy for meeting the basic needs of every child, particularly in the area of health and wellness. We recently supported BOE Policy 103.4 on Student Health Services, which combines Board Policies 103.2 on Student Health Services and 103.4 on School Based Health Service Centers. In addition, we have highlighted the importance of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey to the BOE and DOE and participate in the Hawaii School Health Survey Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration. Our support of this policy 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  
\*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS  
Coalition for Children with Special Needs  
\*Faith Action for Community Equity  
Fresh Leadership LLC  
Girl Scouts Hawaii  
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation  
\*Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance  
\*Hawaii Association of School Psychologists  
\*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars  
\*Hawai'i Charter School Network  
\*Hawaii Children's Action 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  
\*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council  
Keiki to Career Kaua'i  
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 (\*) Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition. List as of August 2016*