



# MidWeek

This column by Senator Michelle Kidani  
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## **Legislative work continues**

In the several months before the Legislature convenes in January, we are continuing our review of state programs and priorities. As a member of the Senate's budget committee – the Committee on Ways and Means – I've been touring state facilities on Oahu and will also travel to the neighbor islands later this year.

In central Oahu, the committee's itinerary included a visit to UH West Oahu to review progress on construction of the new and very impressive administration and allied health professions building. The major work of the coming session will be to formulate the state's spending plan for the two-year period that begins in July 2019, and these site visits are of great value to this process.

## **The importance of language instruction**

I had the privilege of meeting Waipahu High School Spanish language teacher Mayra Hickling earlier this month. Mayra has taught Spanish for a dozen years at WHS, and she received the 2018 Excellence in Teaching Award from the Hawaii Association of Language Teachers. I was honored to present a congratulatory certificate from the Senate to her at the State Capitol.

Waipahu High is home to one of the largest foreign language departments in any DOE school, offering instruction in seven different languages.

Principal Keith Hayashi says that about 60 percent of WHS students are enrolled in at least one foreign language class.

We all know that those who study a language other than their own are introduced to new cultures, new perspectives on self-expression, and opportunities to learn and share with others. It's one of the reasons I advocated for special recognition of our public school graduates to create and present a Seal of Bilingualism to those who demonstrate proficiency in more than one language.

Congratulations, Mayra, and mahalo for the good work you do for our students!



***In a ceremony at the Lieutenant Governor's office this month, I was joined by senior administrators from Waipahu High School to recognize the 2018 Excellence in Language Teaching Awardee. From left, Kristy Nishimura, WHS School Renewal Specialist, Mayra's spouse Livingston Hickling, our honoree, WHS Principal Keith Hayashi and Assistant Principal Meryl Matsumura.***

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## Waipahu students find real-world solutions to real-world challenges

Thousands of people who attended last month's Building Industry Association Home Building and Remodeling Show at Blaisdell Center had the opportunity to see a Tiny House project created by students from the WHS Academy of Industrial and Engineering Technology. Junior and senior students used state-of-the-art design software to create a prototype Tiny House that could be used for housing the homeless or as cost-effective additions to Hawaii residences. They built a portion of the project to full scale for their booth at the show. WHS was the only high school at the show – real-life skills on display by young men and women in Waipahu's award-winning college and career readiness academies!



***Students in Waipahu High Schools Academy of Industrial & Engineering Technology displayed their "Tiny Home" design and prototype at the BIA Show this summer.***



## The numbers are in!

The DOE has released official school enrollment figures for the 2018-2019 school year, and once again central and west Oahu schools are among those that serve the largest numbers of students.

- ◆ Campbell (3,095 students), Waipahu (2,682) and Mililani (2,616) top the list of high schools.
- ◆ Mililani Middle (1,886 students), Kapolei Middle (1,526) and Waipahu Intermediate (1,275) serve the most students in grades 6 through 8.
- ◆ Among elementary schools, the top five are all in central and west Oahu: August Ahrens (1,244 students).