

Senator Michelle Kidani

Twenty-ninth Hawaii State Legislature

(D) Senate District 18 – Serving Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Waikele, Village Park, Royal Kunia



Senate Vice President

Chair: Committee on Education

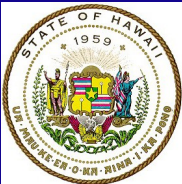
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Aloha friends and neighbors,

Assuring the safety of students in our schools has become a higher-profile issue in the wake of two staggering occurrences since the first of the year - the false missile attack alert that gripped the islands in mid-January, and the tragic shootings at a Florida high school on Valentine's Day.

In both cases, Hawaii parents understandably reacted to "what if . . ." scenarios. What if the missile attack were real and our children and grandchildren were at school and out of contact? What if there were an active-shooter on campus? How are school staff trained to respond? What's the plan?

The Department of Education has been quick to assure us that plans are in place to protect our youngsters. DOE Superintendent Kishimoto has asked her schools to make sure response procedures are up-to-date. School security has been increased as needed at some campuses when bogus threats of violence are posted.

At the Capitol, I support one bill making progress through the Senate—**SB 2576**— calling for installation of interior classroom door locks, intercom systems, and required emergency plans and practice drills at schools.

You can follow the progress of the bill at the Legislature's website (<https://capitol.hawaii.gov>) by entering the bill number in the appropriate box.

It's impossible to prepare for every unknown, but the circumstances have certainly made all of us more aware of the need to think about the "what ifs . . ."

National recognition for WHS Academies

The National Career Academy Coalition (NCAC) has recognized Waipahu High School for implementing national standards of practice in their Career Academy programs - and *exceeding* those standards in the process.

As a result, WHS was chosen to host a three-day intensive **national** seminar this month, focusing on the Academy of Health & Sciences and the Academy of Natural Resources—the first in Hawaii to be awarded Model Status by the NCAC.

"We are excited to showcase the hard work of faculty, students and community partners," said **Principal Keith Hayashi**. "We hope the foundation we created will help launch other academies around the country."

I paid a visit to the campus during the conference (photos on page 4). The quality of career and technical education at WHS - along with the spectacular success of the early college program - are building a solid foundation for our students' futures.

Congratulations to everyone who has contributed to the tradition of excellence at Waipahu High!

Me ke Aloha Pumehana,



From left, State Librarian Stacey Aldrich, Hye Kyung Choe of the McCully-Moiliili Library, recipient of the Excellence in Library Service Award, Curt Fukumoto, and Friends of the Library Executive Director Nainoa Mau.

Waikele's Curt Fukumoto is Librarian of the Year!

Curt Fukumoto has been named Librarian of the Year by the Friends of the Library of Hawaii. He was honored at the Friends annual meeting last week for his two dozen years of service at the Library's Main Branch, and elsewhere at Waianae, Salt Lake, Hawaii Kai and presently in Kaneohe where he is Children's Librarian.

In recognizing Curt, the Friends note that he likes to create programs to get the community into the library. He is known as "Uncle Curt" by those who attend his story times - baby story times once a week in the summer months and twice a month during the regular school year. No surprise that nearly 5,000 patrons attended Uncle Curt's story times last year!

At the Legislature . . .

We are about a third of the way through our 60-working-day Legislative session, with bills about to move from Senate to House and vice versa. Here are some measures that may be of interest to our area residents:

SB2377 – RELATING TO PLANNED COMMUNITIES:

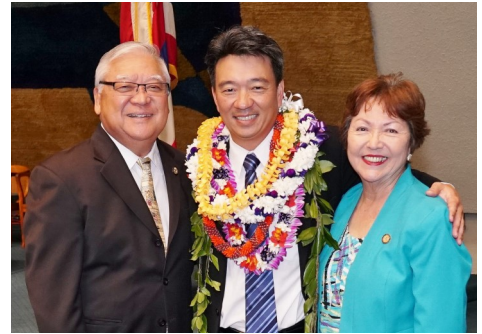
I introduced this bill to prevent situations similar to what has happened in Royal Kunia with The Meadows, where proposed golf course lands have been turned into residential parcels without public community input.

SB2237 – RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

This bill would transfer title for lands under school campuses to the DOE. For Waipahu, this could create opportunities for Waipahu High School to develop such lands with public/private partnerships to transform WHS into a 21st century campus. State-of-the-art learning environments could better meet the needs of students and surrounding community, building out the highly-successful Academies facilities and even help to construct affordable housing near a rail station.

SB2922 – PROPOSING AMENDMENTS TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION:

This bill would let voters across the state decide whether they want to create a tax on vacation rentals and residential investment properties to fund our public education system.



Senator Nishihara and I joined the Senate in saying aloha and mahalo to Lt. Governor Shan Tsutsui, former President of the Senate and our colleague for many years. He has decided to leave elected office and will pursue opportunities in the private sector, returning to his home island of Maui. Shan left the Senate to become Lt. Governor at the end of 2012. We wish him all the best for many more years to come.

Not too late to register for kindergarten!

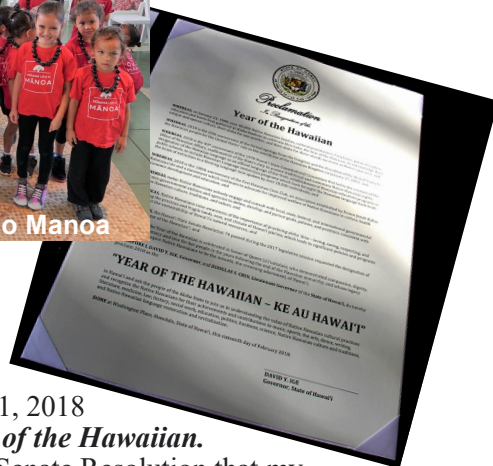
The DOE's registration period for kindergarten students who should start school in the 2018-2019 year officially ended last Friday, February 16. However, if you missed that deadline for some reason, contact your neighborhood school right away to sign up. Kindergarten is mandatory in the State of Hawaii. If your child will be 5 years old by July 31, she or he must be enrolled.

"Kindergarten gives our keiki a solid start towards becoming engaged learners throughout their school years and lives ahead," said Superintendent Christina Kishimoto. "We want our parents to be involved, be familiar with enrollment requirements and sign up in time for the new school year."



Punana Leo o Manoa

2018 Year of the Hawaiian



Kupuna and keiki joined elected officials and invited guests for a program of traditional and contemporary *mele* and *hula* as the one-year period beginning June 1, 2018 was officially proclaimed *The Year of the Hawaiian*. The designation was requested in a Senate Resolution that my colleagues Senators Kahele, English, Galuteria, Shimabukuro and I introduced last year.

The year 2018 marks the 40th anniversary of 'Olelo Hawaii immersion schools and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, as well as the 25th anniversary of the formal apology from Congress and the U.S. President for America's role in the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893. It is also the 100th anniversary of the first Hawaiian Civic Club established by Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole.

A program of events to mark the *Year of the Hawaiian* will be announced prior to the beginning of the commemorative period in June.



We



Our Teachers!



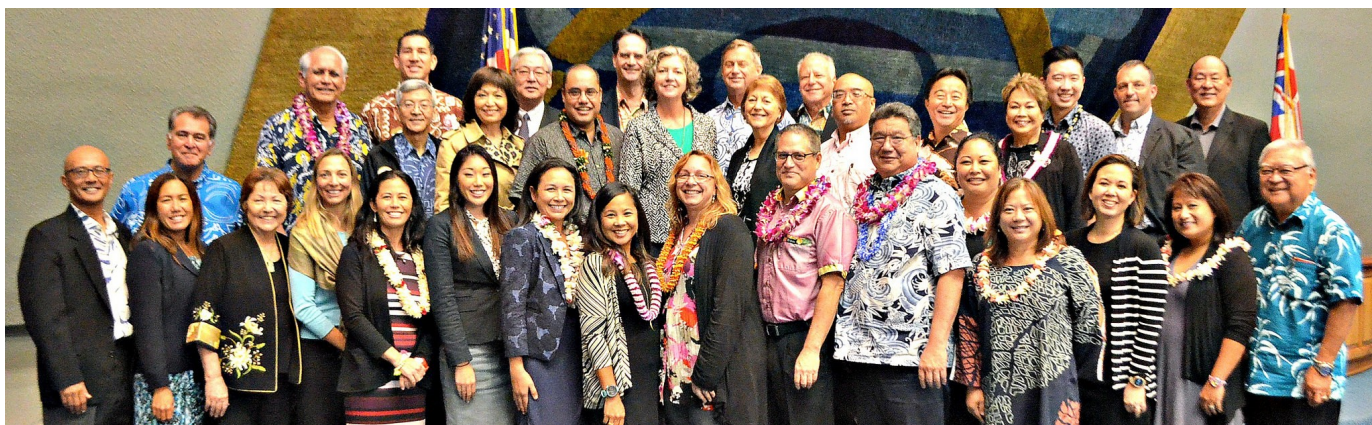
*It's been a great month for celebrating teacher excellence. Above, we recognized educators for earning National Board Teacher Certification or renewing their certification. Among them is **Tanya Cobbin**, a teacher in the Academy of Health and Sciences at Waipahu High School.*

Congratulations and mahalo for your hard work to earn certification and for the work you do for our keiki!

*Thank you, **Ken Kang**, for all you do for 'Aiea High School students!* Everyone was so excited when you were introduced as this year's **Hawaii Milken Educator** at a surprise assembly. Ken is a 1992 'Aiea grad who returned to his alma mater where he is the school's Tech Coordinator.

At right, that's a \$25,000 check for Ken from the Milken Foundation that has supported public school educators for more than 30 years. In Hawaii, 76 teachers have received \$1.9 million in Milken grants since joining the program in 1990. With me from left (in the photo above right),

*Milken Foundation Senior Vice President **Jane Foley**, Senator **Breene Harimoto**, DOE Superintendent **Christina Kishimoto**, **Ken Kang's** son **Hunter** and wife **Teszra**, the honoree, and 'Aiea Principal **David Tanuvasa**. In back of us, **Ainoa Naniole** from U.S. Representative **Colleen Hanabusa's** office.*



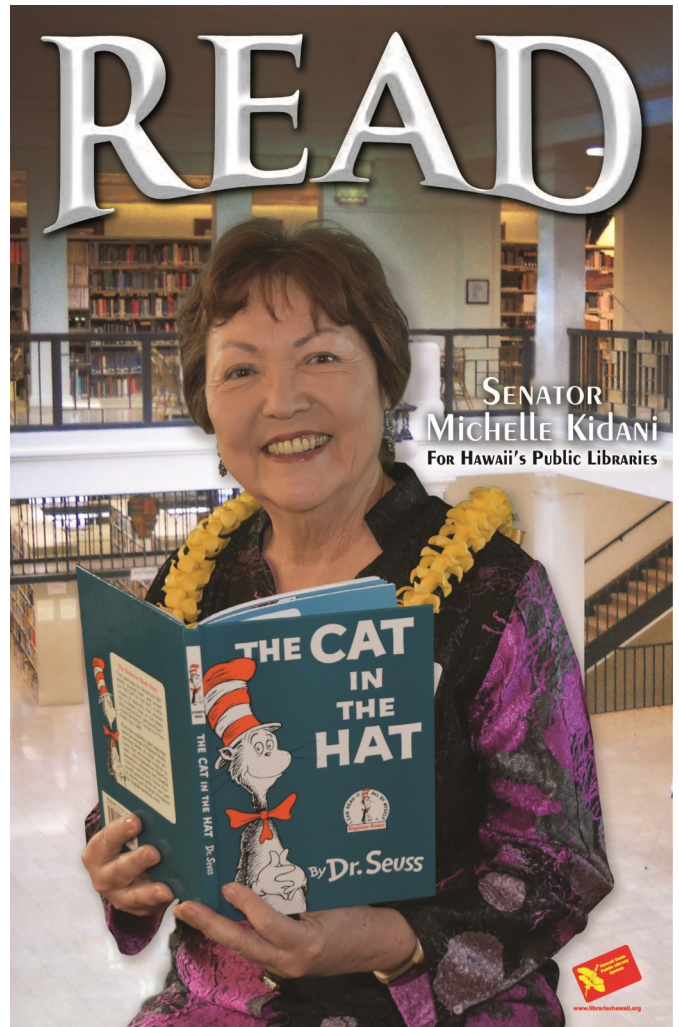
Several of us in the Senate were shadowed for a day by Oahu public school teachers as part of the Hope Street Group program to develop leadership skills and expand learning networks. (**Dana Tanigawa** of Waipahu Elementary is a **Hope Street Fellow**, but she was not available to participate.) *We have appreciated these opportunities to share, and to learn about the exciting and innovative work our teachers do in our schools.*



Mahalo to the Friends of the Library of Hawaii for honoring me as LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR. The guests at our reception posed for poster photos to promote reading and literacy.

I have been invited to several elementary schools in my district over the years to read to youngsters who LOVE the favorite book I always take along – The Cat in the Hat, by Dr. Seuss.

The Friends do a terrific job to support our public libraries all across the state. Mahalo!



A Sunday morning brunch at Leeward Community College – complete with craft booths and entertainment – raised scholarship funds to support LCC's culinary arts students. Several members of the Senate (*photo below*) were among the hundreds who turned out for the day's exceptional menu and great fellowship.



High-profile career programs in the culinary arts have been especially successful at LCC and at nearby Waipahu High School where I visited students in their kitchen (*at left below*) when WHS hosted a three-day National Career Academy Coalition Conference this month. [See story on page one.] DOE Superintendent Christina Kishimoto (*at right below*) and I stopped to chat with WHS students.

