



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/14/2019
Time: 10:00 AM
Location: 211
Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 0388, SD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Authorizes parents and guardians of vulnerable students and students exhibiting behavioral issues to request a clinical or psychoeducational evaluation. Requires the Department of Education, after expelling a student, to provide an assessment to receive special education services. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) offers the following comments related to SB 388, SD1. The Department is obligated to ensure all students receive supports they need to access their education in a timely manner. The Department recognizes that early identification of vulnerable children and children who are exhibiting emergent or persistent behavioral and educational issues is critical to ensuring access to appropriate behavioral interventions. Current practice is for school teams to use the Student Support Process (SSP), a problem-solving, team-based and data-driven process that guides the team to develop a behavior support plan to address the identified behaviors. One of the required components of SSP for this population will be to conduct an adverse childhood experience (ACE) questionnaire or a similar assessment to ensure appropriate supports are provided.

The Department cannot support evaluating suspended students to identify and provide services for any social disorder, emotional disorder, or learning difference because this requirement implies all students suspended from school are immediately suspected of experiencing a disability which conflicts with existing federal and state regulations. Determination of eligibility of a child with a disability is made by a group of qualified professionals and the parent of the child. Determination of Eligibility, 34 CFR §300.306; HAR §8-60-38 (1).

This bill would require the Department to change its practices, which would result in violation of IDEA. The Department is legally obligated to follow the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), Title 8, Chapter 60, *Provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education for a Student with a Disability*.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.



Date: 02/12/2019

Time: 11:11AM, Location: Conference Room 211

Committee: Senate WAM

Person Testifying: Josiah 'Ākau, Founder & Executive Director – Kinai 'Eha

Title of Bill: SB 0388 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

The Kinai 'Eha program is in full support of SB388 and respectfully asks that the Senate WAM committee also support the legislation. Kinai 'Eha is an alternative education training program teaching at-risk youth, ages 16-24 the construction trades. We train teens and young adults who are on work furlough from the Hawai'i Youth Correctional Facility and come to us from many of the vulnerable populations listed in the bill. We have found extreme value in having our students provided with comprehensive social/emotional and learning differences assessments that have uncovered a multitude of social/emotional disorders and learning differences which had never been diagnosed. All of our students, many who are Native Hawaiian have experienced or continue to experience trauma due to their past and current life situations.

Most of our students in Kinai 'Eha are DOE dropout's and have never received a comprehensive clinical and learning differences assessment, thus they have not benefited from the critical mental health and educational services required for successful education and employment attainment and overall quality of life and well-being. The assessments have provided our team and the students with valuable insights into their social/emotional well-being. Many of our students suffer from anxiety and depression or both, which is compounded by a myriad of learning differences. The information we have garnered from the assessments have allowed us to craft individual service plans (ISP) for each student. These ISP's ensure that our students receive the appropriate mental health care and educational assistance they need to complete their GED's/HISET diplomas, develop workforce readiness skills and live an overall healthier and productive life – essentially disrupting the "Pathway to Prison" and cycles of poverty within their families.

While in the DOE, many of our students were considered the "trouble makers, delinquents, stupid and good-for-nothing kids." Their assessment results tell a different story...half of the students tested were gifted. In order for Hawai'i to disrupt the "Pathway to Prison" we need to address root causes of why our most vulnerable students are being disenfranchised and dropping out of our public school system. Toxic stress is real and it affects how our brains are wired and function. Our at-risk kids are immersed in toxic stress on a daily basis and we cannot ignore any longer the effects this has on their social/emotional well-being and cognitive development. Comprehensive assessments for this special population is critical and a key to unlocking what we cannot see occurring in the brain. We need to conduct these assessments as an early intervention strategy to help uncover the root causes of academic underperformance and negative social behaviors in order to provide the students with the critical care they need to be successful in school, work, home and their communities.

Mahalo nui,

Founder & Executive Director, Kinai 'Eha

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilber S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

Wednesday, February 14, 2019, 10:00 a.m., Conf. Room 211

Support for SB388, Relating to Education

Aloha, my name is Jin Chang. I am the Director of Project Development for Partners in Development Foundation, a Native Hawaiian 501-C-3 Not-for-profit Foundation. I co-created the Ke Kama Pono Safe House, a residential program for adjudicated males ages 13-17, but I am submitting this testimony as an individual citizen and not as a representative of PIDF. I am also a Trauma-Informed-Care trainer.

I was a high school teacher for 15 years and through my past experiences as a teacher and my current duties with the oversight of PIDF's adjudicated youth programming I can without question support the need and suggested strategies to address at-risk youth that is outlined in SB388.

Brain sciences, adverse childhood experiences and significant trauma and learning disabilities (both diagnosed and undiagnosed) contribute to youth challenges in and out of the classroom. If no intervention is to take place, then there is probably a long road of incarceration, potential homelessness, shorten productive lifespan and a financial cost and social burden to not only society but to families both of the child and potential victims who may suffer harm.

Please do not give up on our 'ōpi'o and support SB388.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Danny Goya', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Danny Goya

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 10:59:57 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ian Kitajima	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is a relatively low cost approach when you consider the long term social, economic, and human costs for our state - crime, incarceration, substance abuse, homelessness, health related issues. Each of those issues are measured in increments of one hundred million dollars per year. If we could prevent 1000 people from ending up incarcerated, that's a \$MM number per year but more importantly we have 1000 productive citizens (tax paying) family members home. Mahalo for the opportunity to support this measure.

February 13, 2019

Committee: Senate WAM

Person Testifying: Gina AL Samala, PsyD, Clinical Psychologist, Mililani Psychology Group

Type of Bill: SB 0388 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

~~I am in full support of SB388 and respectfully ask that the Senate WAM committee also support the legislation strongly support SB388 which would require the department of education to evaluate and assess certain vulnerable children. This population includes children exhibiting emergent or persistent behavioral and educational issues as well as suspended students. The purpose is to identify and provide services needed for social or emotional disorders as well as learning differences. Early identification and services for vulnerable youth and providing support~~ is critical given the pervasive impact of social, emotional, behavioral, and learning challenges. Early intervention with built in community supports (i.e. school) yield promise to help divert youth from the “pathway to prison” to a “pathway to success.”

I have had the privilege of conducting comprehensive neuro-psycho-educational assessments and providing services with diverse populations in Hawai'i for over 20 years. Evaluating members of the “vulnerable” population listed in the bill has been especially rewarding given its challenges and potential for change.

When working with youth and young adults in the Kinai 'Eha program, a common process ensued: initial apprehension to test taking due to a history of academic failure. However, these individuals quickly became engaged and eager to learn how they performed. Majority of examinees did not expect to do well and were surprised with their results. It was not what they were accustomed to. True learning differences were also identified and explained. *It seemed to all make sense finally.* Almost all examinees expressed the they felt “dumb” academically and experienced a high level of anxiety (panic reaction) and depressed mood throughout their lives given the combination of stress in all main facets of their lives. Instead, they often made their mark in the school setting by modeling negative roles observed in dysfunctional experiences. Hence, the perpetuation of negative self-concept (academic, competence, acceptance) through the generations despite adequate or better cognitive potential.

I have seen immense progress with environmental/psychotherapeutic supports as well as a shift in self-perception spurred by assessments. They can be powerful as the process is structured, relatively “safe” (rather than focusing on emotion/behaviors), and provides objective information that may otherwise have been missed throughout earlier years, overshadowed by behavioral challenges. This new focus on one's own cognitive potential and sense of competence often leads to tremendous personal growth, as they shift from relying solely on the resolution of dysfunctional systems beyond their control (i.e. family, codependence, abuse) to planning for growth.

The comprehensive assessment can help to identify strengths among the “vulnerable population” who may have not had the opportunity or guidance to recognize, hone, and apply these skills. I highly support this bill and have no doubt that it will benefit countless individuals and the community as a whole if executed effectively.

Sincerely,

Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Mililani Psychology Group

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2019 10:06:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Omar Sultan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 5:08:50 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melissa Belanger	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 8:25:30 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Richard J. Kravetz	Testifying for Alaka'i Na Keiki, Inc.	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Students who face expulsion frequently have undiagnosed learning disabilities and/or mental health disorders.

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 6:40:09 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kelsey Mukai	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 6:56:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Linda Hufano	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Prior to expelling any students, it is imperative to know whether the student has a learning disability or mental health disorder that contributes to the issues leading to expulsion.

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 7:00:36 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Angela Song	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a social worker that believes that these measures will help provide more access to resources that are needed.

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 7:10:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kyleanne Braman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 7:54:36 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michelle Kawasaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 9:35:25 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alisha Yoshitsugu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a Clinical Psychologist on Maui, working with children and adolescents. After reviewing this bill, I would like to express strong support. I regularly witness the struggle of parents and youth to access the care they need, to be successful at school. Requiring the DOE to go beyond the basic minimum required by federal laws to assist these vulnerable youth will not only benefit these youth in the present but will also impact the whole society in the future. Unfortunately, I have seen all too often that youth get labeled as "bad" or "unmotivated" due to behavior that occurs in school or by lack of attendance. We must consider the impact of social factors beyond the youth's control that are contributing to their emotional and social difficulties that are manifesting in behaviors. Mandatory assessment that is timely and not 60 days after a parental request, is a good way to identify and address the youth's needs and implement support as needed.

Please consider passing this bill to benefit one of our most vulnerable populations.

Respectfully,

Alisha Yoshitsugu, PsyD

Licensed Clinical Psychologist

LATE

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 2:07:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jean Adair-Leland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-388-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2019 7:36:34 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/14/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments: