

## LATE TESTIMONY

**Date:** 03/16/2011

**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 1384, SD 2 (SSCR 758) Relating to Education

**Purpose of Bill:** Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, requires children in public or private kindergarten programs to be assessed by an early learning educator prior to entering first grade to ensure the child is qualified to enter the first grade. Requires any assessment conducted by a private kindergarten program to be certified by the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools or the early learning council. Requires children who do not attend kindergarten to be assessed by DOE prior to entering first grade in a public school. Effective 7/1/2050.

**Department's Position:** The Department of Education (Department) does not support SB 1384, SD 2 (SSCR 758). The Department does not support testing of children ages 4 to 6 years. The National Association for the Education of Young Children's general rule for testing young children is as follows: the purpose of testing must be to improve services for children and ensure that children benefit from their educational experiences. Decisions that have a major impact on children, such as enrollment, retention, or assignment to remedial or special classes, should be based on multiple sources of information and should never be based on a single test score. Assessing all children prior to entering first grade in public schools will pose human resource, time, and fiscal implications for schools and will impact the Department's fiscal priorities. Additionally, young children's inexperience with tests can produce

misleading results (National Council of Teachers of English – NCTE – Resolution on Testing Young Children, 1989). Tests can be particularly misleading when used with very young children who may fully understand the material on the tests but perform poorly due to lack of understanding of the testing procedure, lack of concentration that particular day, or any number of factors. Assessment of young children needs to be done using a variety of methods and on-going instead of relying on one-time, snapshot views that placement tests provide.

The decision on a child's readiness for Grade 1 should be based on each child's progress toward developmental readiness domains that includes social, emotional, intellectual, and physical skills. The decision should also be agreed upon mutually and collaboratively with input and discussion with the school's administrator, classroom teacher, and child's family members.



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## KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

March 16, 2011

WRITTEN TESTIMONY TO THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

By  
Dee Jay Mailer, CEO  
Kamehameha Schools

Hearing Date: Wednesday, March 16, 2011  
2:00 p.m., Conference Room 309

To: Rep. Roy M. Takumi, Chair, Rep. Della Au Belatti, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Committee

**RE: Senate Bill No. 1384, S.D.2 - Relating to Education**

Chairman Takumi, Vice Chair Belatti and members of the House Committee  
on Education,

Kamehameha Schools offers the following comments on S.B. 1384, which  
proposes to amend chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes by adding a  
new section that would require all children entering public school be  
screened as part of an assessment process to inform instructional  
planning.

Kamehameha Schools would like to stress that such a screening should  
be aligned with standards and developmental expectations as defined by  
early learning experts. This means that the data gained should not be  
used for placement purposes or as an obstacle to first grade but  
rather to ensure that children's needs are being met through the

design of an appropriate curriculum, differentiated instruction and attention to individual needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.