

JOHN S.S. KIM CHAIRPERSON

State of Hawaii

STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION ('AHA KULA HO'ĀMANA)

http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov 1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1100, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

FOR:	HB 1078 HD1 Relating to the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind
DATE:	March 2, 2021
TIME:	11:00 A.M.
COMMITTEE:	Committee on Finance
ROOM:	Conference Room 308
FROM:	Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission ("Commission") appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony providing **COMMENTS on HB 1078 HD1** which requires the Department of Education to develop a plan to transition the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind to a conversion charter school and requires a conversion charter school to enroll a student if the student's individualized education program prescribes that the charter school provides support for blind, deaf, or hard of hearing students.

The Commission defers to the Department of Education with respect to the provisions of the bill relating specifically to the School for the Deaf and the Blind's application for conversion to a public charter school, and the Commission will review the application according to our process, should it be submitted. However, please be advised that the Commission has currently suspended it's 2020 Request for Proposal due to the COVID-19 Emergency and the state's financial condition. Based upon the Governor's Executive Budget Memoranda and as advised by the Department of Budget and Finance that the state's financial outlook will not return to a level that can provide sufficient funding for new public charter schools until possibly fiscal year 2025, the Commission is not sure when they will be able to restart the process of authorizing new public charter schools.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE GOVERNOR



DR. CHRISTINA M. KISHIMOTO SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAI'I DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION P.O. BOX 2360 HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96804

> Date: 03/02/2021 Time: 11:00 AM Location: 308 Via Videoconference Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

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

Title of Bill:HB 1078, HD1 RELATING TO THE HAWAII SCHOOL FOR THE
DEAF AND BLIND.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to develop a plan to transition the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind to a conversion charter school. Requires a conversion charter school to enroll a student if the student's individualized education program prescribes that the charter school provides support for blind, deaf, or hard of hearing students. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) understands the intent of HB 1078, HD 1, requiring the Department to submit a letter of intent to an authorizer to convert the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind to a charter school, assist with the establishment of an applicant governing board for the charter school, and develop a detailed implementation plan to transition the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind to a conversion charter school. However, given the extensive work accomplished and currently underway, the Department respectfully requests that this measure be deferred.

Section 302D-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes, defines the requirements and procedures to establish a start-up or conversion charter school. Any interested community, department school, school community council, group of teachers and administrators or nonprofit organization may submit a letter of intent to form a charter school and establish an applicant governing board through the established procedures in Section 302D-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes. With a process to establish a conversion charter school already codified in statute, the Department respectfully submits that this portion

of legislation is not needed at this time.

The Department has been and will continue engaging community stakeholders and the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind in improving support and services for our students who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind through the statewide work group. The work group membership includes deaf and hard of hearing community members from the Deaf and Blind Task Force, current and retired classroom teachers of the Deaf, the former vice principal and other alumni of the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind, and deaf students. To replicate best practices across the nation, the work group's intention is to create a statewide Deaf/Hard of Hearing program with the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind serving as the hub of support. The work accomplished by the work group to date includes:

1. Modifications to the Department's existing student database allowing schools to identify special education students whose primary eligibility is not deaf, hard of hearing or deaf-blind;

2. Draft Communication Plan, outlining the student's preferred mode of communication, as part of the Individualized Education Program;

3. Comprehensive statewide Deaf/Hard of Hearing draft guidelines as a result of 10 sub-work group meetings held beginning January 2021;

4. Collaboration with the Department of Health's Early Intervention Section resulting in:

a. A draft Hawaii Communication Plan used by both agencies to ensure effective transition from Early Intervention to the Department;

b. Open dialogues about program visitation protocols; and

c. Brainstorming ideas on how the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind campus can be used as a centralized resource hub providing Early Intervention support to professionals and families of children who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing.

5. Collaboration with the Early Language Working Group (Act 177, 2016) to achieve the recommended goals set forth in the 2016 Interim Report of Findings of the Early Language Working Group to Support Age-Appropriate Language Development for Children from Birth to Age Five Years who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Deaf-Blind.

Additionally, the Department continues to make significant efforts to recruit, train and retain qualified administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals.

Given the Department's obligation to maintain the direct line of authority for the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and Hawaii Administrative Rules, Chapter 60 for all public schools, including public charter schools, the Department remains committed to supporting students who are

deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind through the engagement of community stakeholders and the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind to improve supports and be a part of the array of services provided for these students.

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

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. 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.

HB-1078-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 1:11:11 PM Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 11:00:00 AM

Subi	nitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ves	ta Morris	Maui Deaf Friends	Support	No

Comments:

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair

House Committee on Finance

Hawaii State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street, Room 306

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Support for House Bill 1078 - Relating to the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind

Dear Chair Luke and members of the House Committee on Finance,

Aloha, My name is Vesta Morris, Deaf president of Maui Deaf Friends. We strongly support the use of American Sign Language in our Deaf community to keep our culture, and Deaf values thrive. This influency often begins and best developed in our Education.

I am thankful for my education provided to me in American Sign Language (ASL) while I attended the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind for 15 years. An environment rich in American Sign Language in all aspects of a Deaf student's education in invaluable. Deaf staff and Deaf teachers provide students proper grammar, Deaf Culture, and Deaf pride in a Natural language environment. This is very beneficial to helping them find their way in the world.

I support House Bill 1078 to further provide a rich learning environment for Deaf Students at the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind (HSDB). Using American Sign Language is key to assuring clear communication for all Deaf students.

Please consider voting to establish HSDB as a charter school, and keep the use of American Sign Language alive.

Mahalo,

Vesta Morris

Deaf President, Maui Deaf Friends



RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirty-First Legislature, State of Hawaii House of Representatives Committee on Finance

Testimony by Hawaii Government Employees Association

March 2, 2021

H.B. 1078 - Relating To The Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO opposes H.B. 1078, which will require the department of education to develop a plan to transition the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind to a conversion charter school. The HGEA is concerned that converting the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind to a public charter school will result in less accountability and oversight, less monitoring and compliance, and less funding and support. The school is in dire need of these things. Less is not more under these circumstances.

As the exclusive representative of the school administrators and staff of all of Hawaii's public charter schools, the HGEA has witnessed firsthand some of the problems that come with a semi-autonomous school setting. Employees have sought our representation on several matters, including grievances that may have been avoided if the employer was the department of education and not an independent governing board. We do not see a benefit for the deaf and hard of hearing community and the conversion to a charter school will be of disservice to this underrepresented community.

The public charter school system has seen some success in Hawaii but has also been plagued with challenges. The mistakes made in the past should not be repeated as the victims of those errors are the very individuals we should be helping: the children, our workers, and the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of H.B. 1078.

espectfull submitted,

Randy Perreira Executive Director

Aloha,

My name is Steve Laracuente. I am Deaf and a retired Vice Principal from the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB). I was VP from Fall 2016 to Spring 2020. I worked at HSDB since Fall 1994, first as a Teacher and then as a Student Services Coordinator (SSC) starting in 2001, until Spring 2016, when I became VP. HSDB had a different name in 1994 as the Statewide Center for Students with Hearing and Visual Impairments. Later, the name was changed to the Hawaii Center for the Deaf and the Blind and then changed to HSDB. While we were still a "Center" we had flexibility to hire an Administrator who was fluent in American Sign Language (ASL), qualified and knowledgeable about Deaf Education. We also had flexibility to provide more training directly related to our work from mainland experts in Deaf Education. More importantly we had the flexibility to teach the Deaf/Hard of Hearing/Deaf-Blind students the way we needed to, in order to meet the students' needs, based on the most current, evidence-based methods. We were not under the control of Honolulu District since we were considered a Statewide entity. Once our name changed to HSDB (in 2003 I believe), we lost that flexibility, and we came under more scrutiny, oversight, and control from Honolulu District. When Hawaii Center for the Deaf and the Bind name changed to the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind, by law the Administrator had to an HGEA Principal.

However, HGEA did not have a Principal qualified, because of a background and Training in Deaf Education, with fluency in ASL. HSDB is currently a separate facility, or a Special Education School for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing/Deaf-Blind. Instruction in the classroom is communicated in ASL. English is taught as a second language through Reading and Writing (sometimes Speech if a student is able to speak). Teachers, Educational Assistants, and other staff, including Dormitory staff, must be fluent in ASL to effectively provide services to the Deaf/Hard of Hearing/Deaf-Blind students from neighbor islands, as well as Oahu. Seventy five percent of our Teachers, EAs and Dorm staff are Deaf and fluent language models, as well as role models for our students. Therefore, the Principal and Vice Principal must be able to communicate with the students and staff and some Deaf parents in ASL and have training and a background in Deaf Education.

Being under the control of the Honolulu District has not helped HSDB to improve from its "failing school" status for the last 17 years or so. We have had HGEA Principals and Vice Principals with no training, no background in Deaf Education, nor fluency in ASL. At this point, we need to give HSDB a status that will allow that flexibility that we had in the past and yet continue receive the resources (we get an annual budget directly from the Legislators and we get Title I funding) we need to continue improving our services to the Deaf/Hard of Hearing/Deaf-Blind students - statewide - not just at HSDB. Instead of Honolulu District controlling us, a "Board of Directors" or a similar control board, that reports to the Governor and/or the DOE, that is comprised of folks who are knowledgeable about Deaf Education would be a more logical approach to oversight.

In my 25 years at HSDB, I have often felt that HSDB staff are "miracle workers" and our students are "Helen Kellers". We continue to receive students with no prior school exposure, very little, or no prior language exposure in either English or ASL, and one or more additional

SGL's Testimony 02/15/2021 re: HB 1078

disabilities, which make it more challenging to teach. It is an extremely complex and difficult job which can be facilitated if we have open-minded folks ready to open their minds, listen, be creative and support our work.

At this point, with the transfer of our currently qualified and experienced Principal to a regular education school a year and a half ago, COVID19 and the possible 9% cut in Teachers' salaries, the future is looking bleak. HSDB could use a "booster shot" or "vaccination" from "lack of flexibility" to feel energized again. If becoming a Charter School can help HSDB become a truly flexible school that can hire QUALIFIED Administrators/Directors, Teachers. Educational Aides, Dormitory staff, and other support staff with fluency in ASL, training, certification, and experience in Deaf Education, who can help the State of Hawaii better serve Deaf/Hard of Hearing/Deaf-Blind students - statewide - to improve their lives by helping them become independent, contributing citizens of Hawaii, then I am all for it. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Stephen George Laracuente

SLaracuente@msn.com

HB-1078-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 10:25:26 AM Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cheryl Mizusawa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Fen 28, 2021

The Honorable Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

House Committee on Finance

Hawaii State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street, Room 306

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Support for House Bill 1078, HD1 - Relating to the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind

Dear Chair Luke and members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Cheryl (Mizusawa) Shimizu and I am Deaf. I attended the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB) for 12 years, and I support HB 1078, HD1 Relating to the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind.

When I attended HSDB, I had friends and teachers who could communicate with me using American Sign Language (ASL). They understood what it was like to be a deaf student trying to learn. I think it would have been a much better school if there had been deaf educators planning and running HSDB.

There have been many advances in teaching deaf children since I graduated, and it is important that HSDB keep up with those advances. We can only do that by including Deaf people in the planning and development for the future of HSDB.

I encourage you to pass this bill, because it will create a school that will meet the needs of Deaf and Deaf-Blind students. Hearing schools are guided by a Board of Education with professionals who understand how to educate hearing students. We are asking for the same consideration in planning and development of education for Deaf students who attend and graduate from HSDB.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Cheryl (Mizusawa) Shimizu

Deaf Advocate

February 28, 2021

Committee on Finance (FIN) Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair Tuesday, March 2, 2021, 11:00 AM

Support of HB1078 HD1

Madam Chair, Vice-Chair and Members,

During my 40+ years of professional responsibilities in the field of vocational rehabilitation in California, Maryland and Hawaii, I have worked with Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind individuals of all ages in providing a variety of training, including post-secondary education, focused summer camps, and vocational training designed to eventually lead to employment.

Without exception, individuals with well-developed English language skills and the ability to think critically were the best candidates to obtain the best-paying jobs. This meant that they were exposed to language at an early age and were academically challenged to excel in all areas, but especially in areas of their interests and aptitudes.

In my opinion the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind (HSDB) will only become an "Ivy League" school for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind by having the autonomy to employ qualified staff and administrators and allocate its budgeted resources to appropriately meet students' needs.

Under this legislation the current budget for the HSDB would be transferred to this charter school, stipulating that all staff and other employees having tenure shall suffer no loss of salary, seniority, or vacation and sick leave benefits.

I humbly request your enthusiastic support for HB 1078 HD 1 to enable all Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind children in the State of Hawaii receive academic training to compete and live in our society of the 21st century.

Sincerely,

Eleanor E. Macdonald, M.Ed. CRC (ret.)

P.O. Box 4777 Kaneohe, HI 96744

March 2, 2021

The Honorable Sylvia Luke Chair House Committee on Finance Hawaii State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street, Room 308 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Support for House Bill 1078, HD1 - Relating to the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the House Committee on Finance,

I support House Bill 1078, HD1 - Relating to the Hawaii School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB) which requires the Department of Education (DOE) to submit a letter of intent to an authorizer to convert HSDB to a charter school, assist in the establishment of a governing board for the charter school, and develop a plan to transition the HSDB to a conversion charter school as defined under Section 302D-1 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes Part I, Section 2 of the bill goes on to specify five important points that are necessary to accomplish these goals that shall not be repeated here.

As a member of the Deaf and Blind Task Force, hard of hearing person, and disability advocate who has worked with the Deaf, hard of hearing and Deaf-blind people since 1979, this bill delineates a plan covering components necessary to transition successfully to a Charter School. It takes into consideration points the DOE raised during the subject matter committee hearing, and strongly supports children who are Deaf, hard of hearing, and Deaf-blind attending HSDB. Standards developed in the plan should be considered for other programs in public schools educating Deaf, hard of hearing, and Deaf-blind considered for other programs in public schools educating Deaf, hard of hearing, and Deaf-blind considered.

The crucial part of this bill is that from the onset, the planning include stakeholders who are members of the Hawaii Deaf community (including students and graduates of the school, parents of students attending the school, and other professionals knowledgeable about deaf education). With only a limited number of professionals in Hawaii who are well-versed in developing and implementing curriculum for deaf education to make the plan feasible, the group developing the plan should extend to professionals in deaf education on the Mainland to obtain their input in the process. With virtual platforms such as Zoom, the cost would be minimal to include them. Providing quality education to Deaf, hard of hearing and Deaf-blind children is a vast endeavor, and without appropriate input a solid plan cannot be achieved without information and participation from all available educators of deaf children. And as with any good plan, it must be reviewed and revised as necessary to stay current. An important part of maintaining the process is financial viability and the creating a board that includes professionals knowledgeable in educating deaf children, and what it means to be Deaf, hard of hearing or Deaf-Blind. HD1 effectively includes that component, too.

We ask that quality education be provided for Deaf, hard of hearing and Deaf-blind children be offered at HSDB and be led and taught by qualified professional educators!

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Allen L. Jackson

Debbra L. Jackson, Member Deaf and Blind Task Force

LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

HB-1078-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 9:18:43 PM Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 11:00:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ed Chevy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chairperson Luke and Committee Members

Thank you for scheduling a hearing on HB 1078. Since we spoke to you last year, the education of HSDB's students has gotten worse. Let me give you just three examples.

1. From 2016 – 2019, HSDB was following all 12 recommended standards from the National Association of State Directors of Special Education. All 12 of them. Today it is not.

2. From 2016 – 2019, HSDB teachers were working on developing a curriculum. Today they are not. In fact, in 2019, the curriculum was 90% completed. Since then, under the leadership of a hearing principal who has no expertise or experience educating D/HH students, nothing has been done for over two years. Nothing. Can you name one other school in Hawai'i that does not have a completed curriculum? It just does not happen – except at HSDB.

3. Since 2019, HSDB has been looking for a new principal. Three years ago, Beth King, a certified hearing teacher of the Deaf in Maui for almost 14 years, an outstanding teacher of the Deaf and active in the community, moved to the mainland to pursue her doctorate degree. This May, she will become Dr. Beth King. She wants to return to her beloved Hawai'i. She wants to continue the work she was doing to improve the education of our D/HH students. She applied for the Principal's position. Would you believe she was told "you are not qualified?" Not qualified? Ms. King is more qualified to manage HSDB than any other hearing person in Hawai'i. And she knows the DOE bureaucracy. There is absolutely no one in Hawai'i who comes close to her. To make matters worse, she also applied for the Vice Principal's position. Again DOE told her, "you are not qualified." What is going on??!

This DOE bureaucracy is killing HSDB. DOE is not following national standards for HSDB, does not have a completed curriculum for HSDB, is depriving HSDB of quality people to work with its students. This has to stop. The only way it is going to stop is by converting HSDB into a charter school. Let the charter school board make the decisions on what is best for the students because DOE certainly is not doing so.

In closing, one of the highlights last year was having all of you on the committee sign "YES" when voting on our bill - it was extremely inspirational to all of us. I hope you will sign "YES" again on HB 1078. Thank you for considering our request and holding this hearing. Mahalo.

<u>HB-1078-HD-1</u>

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 6:55:48 AM Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 11:00:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Darlene Ewan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke and the committees,

I support this bill in making transition from DOE to Charter School.

Darlene Ewan

Honolulu, Hawaii

LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

<u>HB-1078-HD-1</u>

LATE

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 7:08:45 AM Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dane Silva-Ewan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke and the committees,

I support this bill.

Sincerely,

Dane Siva-Ewan

Honolulu, Hawaii

Testimony of Roderick J. Macdonald

Submitted to the Hawaii House of Representatives Committee on Finance (FIN) Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 2, 2021, 11:00 am

Re: HB 1078, HD1 - Relating to The Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind

Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, Members:

My name is Rod Macdonald. As a Honolulu resident who happens to be both deaf and blind, I am submitting this testimony to urge your vigorous support of HB 1078, HD1 Relating to The Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind (HSDB).

In my formative years - from kindergarten through transition to employment - I have experienced programs for the Blind, programs for the Deaf, mainstream programs with and without supports, and even one misplacement at a program for the cognitively challenged. I was even sent to a psychiatrist for six years in a well-meaning attempt to find out why I could not hear.

I am originally from the Boston area. My education, from third grade until a post-graduate year of high school, was at a private school for the blind, a setting very similar to that of a contemporary charter school since the school still received State funding.

HSDB is not your ordinary public school. In Hawaii, HSDB is the cultural centerpiece of the Deaf community. This is where many Deaf adults went to school. This is where the children of many Deaf people go to school. It is unique in that it serves children from all parts of Hawaii; it is primarily a residential school; it teaches special education children in two languages with a bi-lingual, bi-cultural curriculum requiring specialized resources. It needs to be administered and operated by specialists in Deaf education, not mainstream education.

As an individual who is both deaf and blind, I strongly believe that Deaf and Deaf-Blind children are best served by a specialized school where their special communication, language and developmental needs will be understood and effectively addressed. I believe that this can be most effectively done at a private/charter school, where highly focused educational needs can be addressed by an expertise-driven staff and administration.

This legislation before us seeks to do this by converting the existing Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind into a charter school.

I am aware that State revenues are an issue, but my understanding is that the net result of this legislation would be:

- 1. HSDB remains on the same property
- 2. HSDB uses the same facilities; and
- 3. HSDB has access to the same level of funding it has received before conversion.

Very importantly, the Department of Education is taxed with developing a workable timeline for the HSDB's transition to a conversion charter school, including identifying any additional funding necessary

to transition the HSDB to a conversion charter school that may be as yet unknown. In other words, identifying possible additional resource requirements will come before a final commitment to this conversion is made.

Establishment of the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind as a charter school would enable the "Diamond Head School" to focus on the needs of Deaf and Deaf-Blind children from early childhood through transition to employment and adult life. It would bring parents into the equation as active participants, with staff who know and understand the needs of these children. There would be no involvement of well-meaning-but-clueless mainstream education "experts".

It has been pointed out that Title 18, Chapter 302D-13 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes describes a process to establish a charter school, and thus this legislation is not needed. I respectfully submit that, yes, the "process" is there: any eligible entity can apply to establish/convert to a charter school, including the Department of Education; but this legislation is needed to specifically require the DOE to follow this process, something the DOE has thus far resisted. In other words, the DOE is being required to establish a plan with a timeline to implement this conversion; this legislation is not establishing new procedures, since the needed procedures are already in place.

This bill also provides that for any public school student whose IEP prescribes that the child needs support provided by HSDB, this transfer will be granted automatic admittance to the HSDB.

If the charter school is unable to provide all of the required services, then the department shall provide the student with services as determined by the student's individualized educational program team.

As our elected representatives, we ask that you give your full support to passage of this legislation.

Thank you - stay safe!

Sincerely, Roderick J. Macdonald, MA, LHD