



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

Testimony of Warren Haruki  
Chairperson, Board of Education  
Chairperson, 2024 Legislative Ad Hoc Committee

**House Committee on Education**  
Thursday, March 21, 2024  
2:00 p.m.  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 309

**Measure: HCR190 / HR170**

**Measure Title:**

**REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TO PRODUCE A PLAN FOR ADHERING TO SCHOOL COUNSELOR BEST PRACTICES.**

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee:

The Board of Education (Board) respectfully offers **comments** on HCR190 and HR170.

The Board recognizes the key role that school counselors play in the development and well-being of our students, and appreciates the intent of these resolutions. The Board notes the Department's ongoing efforts to implement school counseling standards and best practices across our schools, and will work collaboratively with the Department as needed.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Board.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/21/2024

**Time:** 02:00 PM

**Location:** 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Resolution** HCR 0190 REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, IN PARTNERSHIP  
:  
WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TO PRODUCE A PLAN FOR  
ADHERING TO SCHOOL COUNSELOR BEST PRACTICES.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments for HCR 1090.

The Department remains committed to supporting school counselors in delivering essential services to students, encompassing academic progress, behavioral health, social-emotional wellness, and college and career readiness. This dedication is evident through consistent investment in the counseling profession and ongoing reinforcement of the pivotal role school counselors play in fostering positive student outcomes.

Aligning with the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) recommendations, Hawaii's overall student-to-school counselor ratio stands at 256-to-1, slightly above ASCA's 250-to-1 guideline but significantly below the national average of 385-to-1. Over the past five years, the Department has actively promoted and implemented the ASCA National Model, offering specialized training to all 15 complex areas statewide. This initiative underscores the Department's commitment to enhancing professional development for school counselors.

These efforts have yielded tangible results, with 18 schools recognized as prestigious national Recognized ASCA Model Program recipients since 2018, showcasing the effectiveness of the ASCA Model in improving counseling programs and supporting student success. This achievement highlights the effectiveness and impact of the ASCA Model in improving school counseling programs and ultimately supporting student success.

School counselors are instrumental in preparing students for post-secondary endeavors, offering career guidance, academic planning, and targeted interventions. Through collaboration with Hawai'i

P20, students receive ongoing support, including summer counseling services, to facilitate the transition to college or career paths.

To further support school counselors, the Department published a School Counselor Handbook in 2021, aligning counselor position descriptions with the ASCA National Model. Principals are encouraged to follow these guidelines in their hiring practices and scope of duties for counselors.

Through initiatives such as the Comprehensive School Counseling and Behavioral Health program at the Office of Student Support Services and the support of a dedicated Educational Officer, the Department remains committed to fostering holistic counseling programs that address the diverse needs of all students.

Given the Department's existing efforts aligned with ASCA best practices, a separate plan from the Board of Education (BOE) is not necessary. However, the Department defers to the BOE for additional insights.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments for HCR 0190.



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David Miyashiro  
Executive Director

March 21, 2024

Committee on Education

Rep. Justin H. Woodson, Chair

Rep. Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Members of the Committee,

**HawaiiKidsCAN strongly supports HR170/HCR190**, which requests the Board of Education, in partnership with the Department of Education, to produce a plan for adhering to school counselor best practices.

Founded in 2017, HawaiiKidsCAN is a local nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that Hawaii has an excellent and equitable education system that reflects the true voices of our communities and, in turn, has a transformational impact on our children and our state. We strongly believe that all students should have access to excellent educational opportunities, regardless of family income levels and circumstances.

Given Hawaii's affordability crisis, the stakes are incredibly high for students as they consider their post-secondary options. In fact, 70% of Hawai'i's future jobs require postsecondary education by 2031.<sup>1</sup> That means students simply can't leave their futures to chance.

It's clear that college and career counseling and advising is essential. There are approximately 10,000 high school graduates each year in Hawai'i who need to make the decision of what to do as a young adult. For many of these high school seniors, the process of deciding what to do after high school can be extremely daunting, especially for students from disadvantaged populations. The demand for high-quality and equitable counseling and advising services to prepare students for life after secondary school has been a historical challenge to address. With large numbers of students on campuses and limited time capacity of educators and staff, the need to provide every individual student with a high-quality education and student services has been overwhelming to our public school systems.

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<sup>1</sup> p. 51, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce's (CEW) Projection Report.

Hawaii P-20 released *Hawaii Counseling and Advising: An Essential Component of Student Readiness* as an issue brief that captures lessons from the field that were gathered from 2017-2022.<sup>2</sup> Among its findings and recommendations, the brief highlighted a number of areas where Hawaii is not aligned with best-practices articulated by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), including counselor to student ratios and the amount of time school counselors spend on direct and indirect student services.

The issue brief also highlighted how summer counseling could be a beneficial practice for both students and counselors, providing the additional time needed for personalized attention and support. Additional research from Hawaii P-20 shows that only 28 out of 46 DOE high schools offered college and career counseling during the summer of 2023. At the same time, participants report on the value and need for this time:

- Many students don't have a plan after high school and they feel lost during the summer.
- Students need assurance. Summer counseling helps build students' confidence and lessens anxiety levels.
- Students need more 1 to 1 support with college onboarding requirements, especially for University of Hawaii campuses.
- Advisors appreciate the support, professional development opportunities, resources and technology

HR170/HCR190 is a step forward to making sure our education system harnesses the full impact of school counselors and puts students on the path to success and stability.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Miyashiro  
Founding Executive Director  
HawaiiKidsCAN

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<sup>2</sup> <https://my.visme.co/view/kkdzxyx3-hica-brief#s1>

## Co-signers



Name	Zip code	Organization
Lillian Coltin	96813	
Phaedra Elisabeth Robinson	96734	RAI Hawaii LLC
Mataifono Tamapua	96707	