



HCR 38/HR 27, REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT A POLICY RELATING TO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TO GUIDE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT THE STATE

MARCH 21, 2024 · EDN HEARING

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus **supports** HCR 38/HR 27, which requests the Board of Education to adopt a policy relating to community schools to guide the establishment of additional community schools throughout the state.

Policymakers should promote education programs that deliver wraparound care for students and deal with educational “inputs” that impact student success, like poverty and access to healthcare. An example of such a program is the community schools model of education, which as noted in Hawai'i's Consolidated State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act, is a research-based strategy for school improvement that emphasizes high-quality teaching, culturally relevant curricula, wraparound student supports, positive disciplinary practices and restorative justice, parent and community engagement, and inclusive school leadership.

In prioritizing student wellness, community schools have been shown to increase learning growth and graduation rates, while decreasing behavioral referrals and chronic absenteeism. In New York City, for example, community schools that highlight mental health counseling and consistent family outreach have seen chronic absenteeism rates fall by 7.8 percent as of 2017, with graduation rates rising 4.8 percent. Engaged learners are more like to acquire the skills necessary

to become active citizens and productive members of the workforce. Additionally, since even the most affluent and well-adjusted children face challenges in their maturation processes, guaranteeing that schools have the resources to respond to childhood pressures and trauma with compassion and sensitivity may make the difference between sending a student to college or losing them to social threats, like substance abuse or our state's prolific sex trade.

As the National Education Association states, "Community Schools transform traditional public schools into neighborhood hubs that mobilize students, staff, families and community members to reimagine education and co-construct a shared vision for their school and community. Community Schools are developed with the understanding that every community is different." Community schools rely on integrated student supports, expanded and enriched learning opportunities, active family and community engagement, and collaborative leadership to strengthen educational outcomes. Currently, 25 community schools exist in our state.

25 Community Schools in Hawai'i

O'ahu <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Barbers Point El● Blanche Pope El● Dole Middle● Hawai'i School for the Deaf and Blind● Kaimukī High● Ke'elikolani Middle● Nānākuli High & Inter● Olomana School● Wai'anae El● Wai'anae High● Waimānalo School	Hawai'i Island <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Hōnaunau El● Ka'u High & Pahala El● Kealakehe El● Kealakehe Inter● Kohala El● Kohala High● Kohala Middle● Mountain View El● Na'alehu El● Pāhoa High & Inter● Waikōloa El● Waimea El	Moloka'i <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Maunaloa El Lāna'i <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lāna'i High & El
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Kris Coffield · Chairperson, DPH Education Caucus · (808) 679-7454 · kriscoffield@gmail.com

LATE

Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: House Committee on Education
Re: **HCR 38 / HR 27 – Requesting the Board of Education to adopt a policy relating to community schools to guide the establishment of additional community schools throughout the state**
Place: Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference
Time: March 21, 2024, 2:00 PM

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HCR 38 / HR 27**. This resolution requests the Board of Education to adopt a policy to guide the establishment of additional community schools throughout the state.

Community schools are public schools that act as neighborhood hubs to provide services and support that fit each community's needs. They are developed with the understanding that every neighborhood is different and ensure that families, students, and community members have a say in deciding what will work best for their students.¹

Research has found that well-implemented community schools correlate with positive results for children and families, including improvements in student attendance, graduation rates, behavior, and achievement.²

The number of community schools has been growing rapidly across the nation. There are currently thousands of community schools across the country, including 25 in Hawai'i. In our state, community schools are hubs of learning in which partnerships and collaboration create reciprocal relationships between learners and place, content and context, and schools and communities.³

It makes sense for the Board of Education to adopt a policy regarding community schools and their growing importance in our state.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Please pass this resolution.

Thank you,

Nicole Woo
Director of Research and Economic Policy

¹ <https://www.nea.org/student-success/great-public-schools/community-schools>

² <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/full-service-community-schools-are-critical-investments-for-children-and-families-in-poverty>

³ <https://www.hawaiiafterschoolalliance.org/community-schools.html>

HR-27

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 2:03:07 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/21/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
RE: HCR 38, HR 27 REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT A POLICY RELATING TO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TO GUIDE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

FOR HEARING ON Thursday March 21, 2024

FROM:

Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D.
46-255 Kahuhipa St. Apt. 1205
Kane'ohe, HI, 96744
Tel. 808.247.7942

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

But urging caution to avoid excessive expenditures on bureaucracy

In July 1992 my wife and I retired from our teaching careers in Boston and moved permanently to Kane'ohe. As educators one of the first things we did after unpacking was go to Kane'ohe Public Library to find books and other information about Hawaii's history and multicultural diversity. We saw a brochure on the checkout desk advertising the courses available for Fall semester at Windward School for Adults, which held classes on weekday evenings at Kalaheo High School. We were delighted to enroll in a beginners' course in Hawaiian language on Monday and Wednesday nights (Kumu Allison Ledward), and another course on Hawaiian history and culture on Tuesday and Thursday nights (Kumu William "Pila" Lau). Thereafter we continued to study Hawaiian language at more advanced levels on Monday and Wednesday nights with the same instructor, Kumu Allison Ledward, for three years. Nearly all our fellow students were ethnic Hawaiian parents of children attending Hawaiian language-immersion schools, who very kindly and generously helped us assimilate into local folkways -- for them it was far easier to learn Hawaiian language than it was for us, because they already had the advantage of growing up in a society where Hawaiian language and pidgin were commonplace in everyday life; so for us the courses required considerable homework to memorize vocabulary, phrases, and sentence patterns which often substitute for grammatical rules. It was a joy to participate in these classes; and I have continued to study Hawaiian history and culture, and practice the language, to now, 30 years later (although some political opponents might prefer I had not!).

We were also pleased to see that Windward School for Adults offered courses helping people earn a GED diploma; learn U.S. history and other topics needed for the citizenship exam; a course which people wishing to be certified as public school substitute teachers were required to pass; as well as recreational courses in guitar, Japanese language, etc.

About a decade later we were sad to see that Windward School for Adults, and many similar schools elsewhere, were being discontinued and any surviving courses were then consolidated and offered at far-away locations such as McKinley High School. I doubt we would ever have taken the valuable courses we took if they had not been offered in Kane'ohe/Kailua -- traveling to far-away McKinley at night would have been not only inconvenient but would also have taken us away from the environment where we wanted to be immersed and away from the people who had become our neighbors and friends, who guided us to become aware of local events and activities of interest.

While I support this resolution to (re)establish such community schools throughout the state, I also recommend that a way must be found to avoid excessive expenditures on bureaucracy. Windward School for Adults had its own "Principal" who, if I recall correctly, had the same salary and status as a daytime Principal of an entire school with many hundreds of children, some of whom were unruly or had special needs; along with dozens of teachers, secretaries, guidance counselors, etc. working under the rules of a labor union.

House Committee on Education
Representative Justin Woodson, Chair
Representative Trish La Chica, Vice Chair

March 20, 2024
Conference Room 309

RE: Support of HCR 38 / HR 27

Dear Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the Committee,

I support HCR 38, which would request the Board of Education to adopt a policy relating to community schools to guide the establishment of additional community schools throughout the state.

I first hand know the benefits a community school can achieve as a Community School Coordinator. While the concept or term is fairly new in Hawai'i, we have been doing the work for years already, connecting and working to eliminate silos of departments and resources to come together for the benefit of community and school.

- Community schools intentionally connect schools, 'āina, indigenous and contemporary knowledge and ensure that learners belong to a thriving community.
- Hawai'i-based community schools reflect who we are, how we live, and what we aspire to become.
- The intended outcomes of Community Schools in Hawai'i are:
 - Thriving learners, educators, families, 'āina, and communities are supported by nurturing networks that promote reciprocity.
 - Innovative, thriving hubs of learning that incubate and connect Indigenous wisdom and contemporary knowledge to create and meet local and global opportunities.
- **A strategy that believes in people:** In Community Schools, every family and community member is an asset. Each person's skills, talents, and generosity of time are utilized to build on students' strengths, engage them as learners, and enable them to reach their full potential.
- CS is a **strategy for transforming high-poverty, low-performing schools into thriving schools.** With schools so often serving as centers of community life, transforming schools can lead to transformed communities.
- **Community Schools work in partnership with community organizations, families, and other agencies to advance student outcomes** by integrating student supports, active family and community engagement, collaborative leadership practices, and expanded and enriching learning time. Educators may

work with partners such as local companies, nonprofits, and higher education institutions to offer students real-world projects that make learning more relevant and engaging. They build connections that can open the door to future opportunities.

- A CS strategy puts more **power in the hands of parents and families**.

I urge you to support this resolution that would encourage the growth of the community schools movement in Hawai'i and organize our resources towards the success of learners, families, and communities.

Sincerely,

Kainani M Kahunanui, MSW

