

Hawai'i State Department of Education



Equitable Access to Excellent Educators November 9, 2015



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Executive Summary

Hawai'i is pleased to submit its plan for Equitable Access to Excellent Educators to the U.S. Department of Education. The purpose of the plan is to close the gap of excellent educators in our schools, with a primary focus for students economically disadvantaged or from ethnic minority groups.

Hawai'i's population is unique in comparison to the states in the continental U.S. The vast majority of residents in Hawai'i are identified as ethnic minority and approximately 86% of the population is identified as non-white (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/15000.html>). For this reason, the HIDOE has elected a State-specific definition of minority student for the purposes of this Plan.

HIDOE is committed to closing the gaps in equity by increasing the number of experienced, licensed, and highly qualified teachers for all students who attend public schools in Hawai'i. The commitment to close the gaps in equity is shared by our stakeholder groups; as such, this Plan is also written for our stakeholders: HIDOE staff, students, parents, community members, partners in other state agencies, and Institutions of Higher Education, both public and private. This document summarizes the process by which stakeholders analyzed the state's data and provided recommendations on the root cause(s) and strategies for closing the gaps in equity. The strategies focus on attracting, retaining, supporting, compensating, and communicating with applicants, teachers, and school leaders to close the gap in equity of excellent educators throughout the state.

Introduction

The Hawai'i State Department of Education

Hawai'i's public school system was founded on October 15, 1840 by King Kamehameha III. It is the oldest public school system west of the Mississippi.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education's (HIDOE) governance and administrative structure differs from that of other states in that it is a single, unitary system, led by the State Superintendent of Education. Because of its unitary status, Hawai'i is both the State Educational Agency (SEA) and Local Educational Agency (LEA); there is no separate governing entity or governance for the LEA. Use of the term "Hawai'i State Department of Education" and "HIDOE" references both the SEA and LEA.

The Hawai'i State Board of Education appoints the Superintendent, who oversees the 10th largest school system in the nation, serving approximately 180,000 students. The Superintendent of Education is assisted by the Deputy Superintendent who manages the academic and educational programs, and the Senior Assistant Superintendent who supervises the administrative offices.

Public schools are divided into [15 Complex Areas \(See Appendix A\)](#). Each complex area is supervised by a Complex Area Superintendent who reports directly to the Deputy Superintendent. A Complex Area consists of one or more complexes, with each complex consisting of a high school and its feeder middle and elementary schools.



Hawai'i State Department of Education's Leadership Team (2014-2015)

There are forty-two (42) complexes grouped on a geographic basis into the 15 Complex Areas. Educational programs and services of the public schools regularly encompass grades Kindergarten through 12, and pre-school programs where established. The Complex Area Superintendents oversee personnel, fiscal and facilities support; monitor compliance with applicable state and federal laws; and oversee curriculum development, student assessment, and staff development services – all with the goal of increasing student achievement. Approximately 11,300 teachers work within Hawai‘i’s 15 Complex Areas.



In alignment with the Hawai‘i State Board of Education, HIDOE embarked on an ambitious path to ensure significantly more public school children graduate from high school, college, career and community ready. The guiding document for this work is the HIDOE [Strategic Plan](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/DOE%20Forms/Advancing%20Education/StrategicPlan.pdf). (<http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/DOE%20Forms/Advancing%20Education/StrategicPlan.pdf>). The Strategic Plan is focused on three main goals — Student Success, Staff Success and Successful Systems of Support — with detailed measures for each. To increase both efficiency and accountability, the Board of Education monitors the Department's progress through its aligned committees (Student Achievement, Human Resources, Finance and Infrastructure).

Hawai‘i’s Public School Students

HIDOE is committed to the success of all students by providing equitable access to excellent educators for all students. Student achievement is at the core of our Strategic Plan. All initiatives align to the goal of achieving student success.

HIDOE has worked over the past five years throughout the public school system to raise the quality of educational opportunity for students including the development and implementation of new standards, new assessments, and new organizational structures to improve collaboration, as well as system-wide use of data teams to monitor the effectiveness of those initiatives. The reforms are starting to pay off — more students are graduating, more students are taking

advanced coursework, more students are going to college and are prepared for college-level classes, more students are attending school, and more ninth graders are transitioning successfully into high school. See our factsheet, “Our Schools” — bit.ly/HIDOEschools.

“Today, Hawai‘i public school students attend one of the 256 Department or 34 Charter public schools located on seven of Hawai‘i’s eight main islands. Each of these islands is unique in its representation of the range of the country’s diverse educational landscape. Hawai‘i public schools are a study in contrasts, spanning dense urban areas characterized by concentrated poverty and its accompanying social and educational impacts; schools with homeless student populations; and schools in some of the wealthiest areas in the country. Seventeen percent of Hawai‘i’s K-12 schools are designated as “rural” by the National Center for Education Statistics. Of these rural schools, 42% are considered “distant” or “remote” and can only connect to metropolitan centers by costly air transport.”

(http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/DOE%20Forms/Special%20Education/Hawaii_SSIP.pdf)



Students at PCS Kawakini, <http://kawaikini.com/language/>

