



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Education
February 15, 2017 at 2:00 p.m.

by

Mary G. Boland, DrPH, RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor
School of Nursing & Dental Hygiene
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 672 HD1 – RELATING TO SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH SERVICES

Chair Takumi, Vice Chair Har, and members of the House Committee on Education:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this bill, HB 672 HD1.

The 2015 Legislature, in its wisdom, recognized that students must come to school healthy and ready to learn. Through Act 139, you provided fiscal support to provide school based health services through a Department of Education (DOE) partnership with the UH Mānoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene (SONDH) – the state's premier provider of nursing education. We launched this program by placing one APRN in 7 Complex Areas in schools in disadvantaged communities on O'ahu, Kaua'i, and the Island of Hawai'i. Second, we are partnering with public and private agencies to provide evidence based school health services to ensure screening for common conditions, up to date immunizations, and with primary care providers to manage chronic conditions that impact readiness to learn. Further, the program partners with both state agencies and the health care delivery sector to forge innovative partnerships to improve health and achievement of students, schools, and communities.

By aligning the resources of two state assets, students and schools are benefitting as we build a sustainable program. Outcomes from S.L.H. Act 139 efforts include:

- Leading community organizations matched the state funding including the Hawai'i Community, Harold K.L. Castle, and HMSA Foundations, Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i, and the Queen's Medical Center
- Linking the DOE student information system with the electronic health management software to report real time information to Complex Area Superintendents and principals on health services
- Expansion and coordination of school wellness programs
- Provided sports physicals as needed
- Implemented evidence based vision screenings and obtained glasses for those in need with Project Vision
- Improved attendance rates and decreased early dismissal rates

- Nationally Certified School Nurses (NCSN) in Hawai'i schools
- UHM SONDH able to seek national funding to support specific activities
- UHM nursing students learning in schools, increasing involvement with the high school health academies and role modeling for students

Together with our public and private partners, we have identified priority action areas: data sharing and funding for sustainability. Further, oral health and the lack of capacity for cross sector policy development emerged as areas identified for action. Therefore, we are asking for your support to:

- Implement Hawai'i Keiki statewide in the 15 DOE Complex Areas and pilot in 2 Charter Schools
- Implement the electronic health room management software in all schools to provide data to guide planning and resource allocation
- Build a school based oral hygiene services and sealant program
- Secure a lifetime license for EyeSpy eye assessment software for all schools in the DOE system
- Fund and establish school services coordinator positions in the Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Human Services (DHS) MedQUEST Division to work in collaboration with DOE and UHM SONDH

SONDH suggests a friendly amendment regarding the collaborating partners. We respectfully suggest an addition to the proposed language on page 5, lines 1-5, in HB 672 HD1 to read:

“The department shall execute the program in collaboration with the department of health, ~~and~~ the department of human services, and University of Hawai'i Manoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene to increase access to and reimbursement for school-based wellness and health services.”

The Hawai'i Keiki Program commits to interprofessional and interdepartmental collaboration to ensure the spread and scale of school based health services that are grounded in the community and reflective of community needs. Additionally, this measure seeks to establish Hawai'i Keiki as the mechanism to facilitate early eye screenings for school aged children through evidenced based eye assessment software. Screening and follow up referrals may be conducted by Hawai'i Keiki nurses and through community partnerships.

Hawai'i Keiki is a safety net partnership to increase access to healthcare for a vulnerable population – pre-kindergarten to high school keiki – by providing school health nursing in the public schools. The goal is to build a fiscally sustainable school health program using public funding, cost recovery, and community engagement.

Further, we know that academic success leads to economic achievement - the major determinant of a healthy population.

The legislature is to be applauded for your willingness to invest in the partnership of the DOE and UHM SONDH with the DHS, DOH, and others to improve student success through improved health screening, monitoring, and management of chronic conditions that impact learning.

Therefore, the SONDH respectfully requests that you pass HB 672 HD1 with an amendment. We appreciate your continuing support of health in Hawai'i. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.