



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

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Senate Committee on Education
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by

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

HB 672 HD2 – RELATING TO SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH SERVICES

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kahele, and members of the Senate Committee on Education, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this bill, HB 672 HD2 with amendments.

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 partner with public and private agencies to provide evidence based school health services to ensure screening for common conditions, up to date immunizations, and together with primary care providers, we ensure management of 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.

In describing the health care delivery landscape in Hawai'i, the June 2016 *State Health Innovation Plan* noted the program is "building and enhancing school based health services..." (p. 44) 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
- Executed MOU with the DOE and DOH to ensure coordination of services with the Public Health Nursing Branch
- Rapid response to emerging health concerns such as the DOH "Hawaii Smiles" report finding that our state has the highest documented prevalence of tooth decay among third graders in the US
- Expansion and coordination of school wellness programs
- Provision of sports physicals as needed
- Implementation of evidence based vision screenings and obtained glasses for those in need with Project Vision

- Improving attendance and decreasing early dismissal rates
- Nationally Certified School Nurses (NCSN) in Hawai'i schools
- UHM SONDH success in seeking local and national funding to support specific activities and program evaluation
- UHM SONDH leading the engagement of the health sciences disciplines (medicine, social work, dental, and pharmacy) in school health services
- UH health sciences students learning in DOE 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. 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 DOE with data to guide planning and resource allocation
- Build a school based oral hygiene assessment 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

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. We know that academic success leads to economic achievement - the major determinant of a healthy population. The proposed amendments to this measure reinforce the value of collaboration with state and community partners.

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 HD2 with amendments. We appreciate your continuing support of health in Hawai'i. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.