

**TO:** March 13, 2026 11:30 AM

**FROM:** Kananinohea Māka‘imoku

**SUBJECT:** TESTIMONY

**MEETING:** Teachers Education Committee Meeting

**AGENDA ITEM:** III. E. NBI 25-32 Establish Committee to Strengthen Program Review Process

**POSITION:** SUPPORT WITH COMMENTS

Aloha mai e ke Kōmike Teacher Education Committee,

My name is Kananinohea Māka‘imoku. I submit this testimony in my personal capacity as a former Kaiapuni classroom kumu, Coordinator of the Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program, Chair of the ‘Aha Kauleo Kaiapuni advocacy and stakeholder consortium, and a member of the HTSB Hawaiian Fields Workgroup.

I submit this testimony in **SUPPORT of NBI 25-32** and offer the following comments for the committee’s consideration. The effort to strengthen the HTSB program review process and increase transparency and consistency is an important step for Hawai‘i’s State Approved Teacher Education Programs.

As this committee is established, I respectfully emphasize the importance of ensuring that the review process reflects the diverse contexts of educator preparation across Hawai‘i, including the Hawaiian language medium pathway.

To support this work, I offer the following recommendations for the committee’s consideration:

- **Include individuals with Kaiapuni expertise** on the committee, including educators, school leaders, and teacher preparation faculty who understand Hawaiian language medium education. The Hawaiian Fields Workgroup and ‘Aha Kauleo—composed of Kaiapuni stakeholders from each school site—may serve as important collectives to engage with on this initiative.
- **Ensure Kaiapuni perspectives are included throughout the committee’s work**, from reviewing current processes to developing recommendations.
- **Avoid a “one-size-fits-all” approach** to program review. Hawaiian language teacher preparation operates within a distinct cultural, linguistic, and pedagogical context that may not align with English-medium documentation and review models.

- **Address language accessibility and equity in the review process.** For teacher education programs delivered through the medium of Hawaiian, such as Kahuawaiola, much of the documentation and evidence is written in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. Review processes should ensure that programs are evaluated appropriately within this language context.
- **Ensure that review committee members evaluating Hawaiian medium programs are fluent Hawaiian language speakers.**
- **Provide training for all review committee members** so they are prepared with the knowledge and skills needed to equitably review educator preparation programs, including those grounded in Hawaiian language and Indigenous educational contexts.

Including Kaiapuni expertise throughout this process will help ensure that improvements to the program review process are **culturally grounded, equitable, and supportive of Hawaiian language medium education.**

Mahalo for your attention to these comments and for your continued commitment to strengthening educator preparation in Hawai‘i.

Respectfully,



Kananinohea Māka'imoku



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**[EXTERNAL] Written Testimony for NBI 25-32**

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From Monica G. Smith <monicags@hawaii.edu>

Date Wed 3/11/2026 12:59 PM

To HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

Aloha Chair and Members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the proposal to establish a committee to review and recommend improvements to the HTSB program review process.

As a faculty member working directly within a State Approved Teacher Education Program (SATEP), I strongly support efforts to improve transparency, consistency, and communication within the program review process. However, I would like to raise several concerns and recommendations based on the experiences of those of us working daily in educator preparation programs.

First, many recent policy decisions and NBIs that directly impact teacher preparation programs (particularly dual licensure programs such as Elementary Education and TESOL preparation pathways) have been developed without meaningful consultation with SATEP faculty. These programs are designed and implemented by faculty who are experts in teacher education, licensure pathways, and the realities of preparing teachers for Hawai'i's classrooms. When policies are developed without input from those working within the programs, unintended consequences can arise.

For example, NBI 23-33 has had significant implications for how SATEPs prepare and license TESOL educators, yet the development of this policy did not appear to include systematic consultation with SATEP faculty across the State. **Policies that affect preparation pathways should be informed by those who design and deliver these programs as well as by the data and workforce needs of the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE).**

Currently, only approximately 54% of HIDOE classrooms are taught by teachers who meet the Standard Institutional Qualification (SIQ). Given the magnitude of this workforce challenge, policies affecting teacher preparation and licensure must be grounded in state workforce data and developed collaboratively with preparation programs to avoid further constraining the pipeline of qualified teachers.

For this reason, I support the creation of a review committee; however, I respectfully recommend the following:

**1. The committee should not be temporary.**

Ensuring transparency, responsiveness, and communication between HTSB and educator preparation programs should be an ongoing process rather than a one-year initiative.

**2. SATEP faculty representation should be guaranteed on the committee.**

Faculty working within teacher education programs possess essential expertise in program design,

licensure requirements, accreditation expectations, and field-based preparation.

### 3. HIDOE workforce data should be explicitly incorporated into policy decisions.

Program review and licensure policies should be aligned with the state's teacher workforce needs to ensure that regulatory decisions do not inadvertently restrict the preparation of teachers in high-need areas.

### 4. Communication channels between HTSB, HIDOE, and SATEP preparation programs should be strengthened.

Regular consultation with SATEP and HIDOE leaders and faculty would help ensure that policies are informed by both regulatory perspectives and programmatic realities.

The program review process plays a critical role in maintaining the quality and integrity of Hawai'i's educator preparation system. Strengthening transparency and collaboration between HTSB, SATEPs, and HIDOE will ultimately benefit teacher candidates, schools, and most importantly the students of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and for your commitment to strengthening educator preparation in our state.

Respectfully,  
Monica Smith

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Monica Gonzalez Smith, Ph.D.  
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*"Pa'lante, pa'lante, pa'tras ni pa' coger impulso."*  
(Forward, forward; don't step back, not even to pick up the pace.)  
—Cristina Saralegui

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#### Recent Publications

Briggs, M., & Smith, M. G. (2025). [Breathing in two languages: Inclusive SEL for multilingual learners](#). *Journal of English Learner Education*, 17(2), 1-27.

Smith, M.G., Schlaack, N., Padua, J. F. M., & Han, S. A. (2025). [Demarginalizing culturally responsive pedagogy: A Hawai'i school-university partnership aimed at promoting teacher candidates' abilities to work with Micronesian islanders](#). In J. Dresden et al. (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of School-University Partnerships* (pp. 823-849). Cambridge University Press.

Schlaack, N., & Smith, M.G. (2025). [Modeling culturally responsive teaching dispositions](#). In R. W. Burns & J. Jacobs (Eds.), *The Complex Work of Teacher Educators* (pp. 29-34). Emerald Publishing.

Smith, M.G., Schlaack, N., Banks, C. K., Padua, J.F.M., & Samsonas, S. (2022). [Culturally responsive pedagogy in a Hawai'i PDS: Preparing teacher candidates to work with students from Micronesia](#). *School-University Partnerships*, 15(2), 88-96.



Outlook

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**[EXTERNAL] Teacher Education Committee Testimony**

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**From** Keokapukoa Kaohelaulii <keokapu@hawaii.edu>**Date** Wed 3/11/2026 9:59 PM**To** HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>**TO:**

Hawaii Teacher Standards Board  
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

**FROM:**

Keokapukoa Kaohelaulii  
Kumu Haumana

**SUBJECT:**

**Testimony - [NBI 25-32](#): Establish Committee to Strengthen Program Review Process**

Aloha mai kakou,

My name is Keokapukoa Kaohelaulii, a Hawaiian Language Immersion kumu haumana of the Master of Education in Teaching (MEdT) program at the University of Hawaii - Manoa's College of Education.

I am writing in **support** of NBI 25-32 to establish a committee to review and recommend improvements to the HTSB program review process. Our kaiapuni schools need teachers, and the MEdT program offers a K-12 kaiapuni license only, therefore some of us could not take a position in either an elementary or a secondary setting.

Mahalo for looking into the HTSB's program review process.

12 March 2026

Aloha Chairperson Miyamae and Members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Kanoe Kanaka'ole, and I am writing in **strong support of NBI 25-32**, which proposes establishing a temporary committee to review and strengthen the HTSB program review process.

The program review process plays a critical role in ensuring the quality and integrity of Hawai'i's State Approved Teacher Education Programs. A clear, transparent, and consistent review system benefits not only teacher preparation programs, but also the communities and students those programs ultimately serve.

Establishing a committee to examine the current process is an important step toward strengthening public trust and ensuring that review expectations, timelines, and evidence requirements are clearly articulated. When preparation programs understand the criteria and expectations for review, they are better positioned to continuously improve their programs and prepare educators who are responsive to the needs of Hawai'i's diverse communities.

In particular, strengthening communication practices and transparency in reporting outcomes can help build stronger partnerships between educator preparation programs, community stakeholders, and the Board. These partnerships are essential to maintaining high standards while also honoring the unique educational and cultural context of Hawai'i.

I appreciate the Board's commitment to continuous improvement and thoughtful oversight of educator preparation in our state. Establishing this committee demonstrates a willingness to listen to stakeholder feedback and to ensure that the program review process remains fair, rigorous, and responsive.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of NBI 25-32.



Na'u nō me ka mahalo,  
Kanoe Kanaka'ole

TO: Hawaii Teacher Standards Board  
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

FROM: Stephanie Furuta  
Program Chair of Graduate & Non-Licensure Programs  
School of Teacher Education, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

SUBJECT: Teacher Education Committee Meeting  
Testimony - Item E, NBI 25-32 Establish Committee to Strengthen Program  
Review Process

POSITION: Support

Aloha Chair Miyamae, Vice Chair Ozaki, and Members of the Hawai‘i Teachers Standards Board,

My name is Stephanie Furuta, and I am the Program Chair of Graduate & Non-Licensure Programs in the School of Teacher Education (STE) at UH-Mānoa.

I appreciate the opportunity to write in **strong support** of NBI 25-32 to establish a committee to review, recommend improvements, and strengthen the HTSB program review process.

I appreciate the Board’s efforts to address the concerns raised by educators across state agencies, and community members. It is my hope that the HTSB review process can be streamlined, more transparent with clearer guidance and criteria, and application reviews occur within reasonable timeframes. I am hopeful that this review committee will be collaborative in nature and will include the SATEPs as co-creators and partners in the development of any new requirements and processes. Working together, the EPPs and the HTSB can have a positive and powerful impact on our education system and most importantly, our teacher candidates.

Mahalo for your leadership, your attention to this very important issue, and your commitment to strengthen Hawai‘i’s public education system.



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**[EXTERNAL] Teacher Education Committee**

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**From** Johrae Park <johrae@hawaii.edu>

**Date** Fri 3/13/2026 9:50 AM

**To** HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

**TO:**

Hawaii Teacher Standards Board

650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268

Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

**FROM:**

Johrae P. Park

Kumu Haumana

**SUBJECT:**

**Testimony - NBI 25-32: Establish Committee to Strengthen Program Review Process**

Aloha mai kakou,

My name is Johrae Pumehana Park, a Hawaiian Language Immersion kumu (haumana) of the Master of Education in Teaching (MEdT) program at the University of Hawaii - Manoa's College of Education.

I am writing in **strong support** of NBI 25-32 to establish a committee to review and recommend improvements to the HTSB program review process. The MEdT program did not recommend me for a kaiapuni license because they do not offer a K-6 or a 6-12 kaiapuni license for those of us who are hired on the job in an elementary or a secondary setting. Being that I was hired as an emergency hire at a secondary school, I could not complete the k-12 requirements of student teaching at an elementary level school, therefore, postponing my licensure. There should be a license that accommodates kaiapuni 6-12 for those of us in a year-long secondary teaching position, or vice versa, for those in a year-long elementary teaching position.

Mahalo!

Johrae P. Park