

Aloha Chair and Members of the Hawai‘i Teacher Standards Board, the Teacher Standards Committee, and the HTSB General Board,

*I am writing in strong support of **New Business Item 25-22: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review**. I appreciate the thoughtful and deliberate work of the Hawaiian Focus Workgroup in reviewing the current use of the Hawaiian Permit and in proposing recommendations that strengthen both educator preparation and accountability while honoring the purpose for which the permit was originally established.*

The Hawaiian Permit has long served as a vital pathway for fluent ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i speakers to enter Kaiapuni and Hawaiian-medium classrooms at a time when the need for qualified Hawaiian language educators remains urgent. This permit recognizes that language fluency, cultural grounding, and community knowledge are assets that must be brought into classrooms now, while also supporting permit holders as they work toward full licensure. NBI 25-22 reinforces this original intent by clarifying expectations and ensuring that permit holders are not left without adequate linguistic and pedagogical support during their preparation.

I strongly support the recommendation that HTSB-approved Educator Preparation Programs take responsibility for coordinating and providing ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i instructional support throughout all clinical experiences, practicum, and student teaching placements. Structured and consistent language mentorship during clinical preparation is essential for maintaining the integrity of Hawaiian-medium instruction and for ensuring equitable support for permit holders across programs and placements.

I also support the Board’s encouragement for Hawaiian Permit holders to enroll in Kaiapuni-focused teacher preparation programs. These programs are uniquely designed to integrate language proficiency, cultural practice, and instructional methodology specific to Kaiapuni settings. Clear guidance regarding enrollment pathways and licensure implications, including awareness of NC-SARA requirements for non-HTSB-approved programs, helps permit holders make informed decisions and protects them from unintended barriers to licensure.

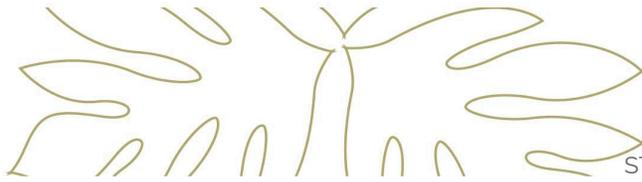
Finally, I strongly agree with the recommendation to institute a periodic review of the Hawaiian Permit in collaboration with the Hawaiian Workgroup. Regular, community-informed review ensures that the permit remains responsive to evolving educational needs, workforce realities, and the expectations of the Hawaiian language revitalization movement. This approach honors ‘ike kūpuna while allowing the policy to grow with present-day realities.

NBI 25-22 represents a balanced and responsible step forward. It strengthens program accountability, improves support for Hawaiian Permit holders, and reinforces instructional quality in Kaiapuni and Hawaiian-medium education without undermining access for fluent speakers who are essential to the system.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your continued commitment to ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, Kaiapuni education, and the future of Hawaiian language teaching in Hawai‘i.

Me ka mahalo,

Kade H. Yam-Lum



'Aha Kauleo

STATEWIDE COUNCIL FOR KA PAPAĀHANA KAIAPUNI

TO: Teachers Standards Committee, Hawai'i Teachers Standards Board

FROM: Kananinohea Māka'imoku, Luna Ho'omalū (Chair)
'Aha Kauleo, Papahana Kaiapuni (Hawaiian Language Immersion Program)
Statewide Advisory Council to the Office of Hawaiian Education

DATE: January 14, 2026

SUBJECT: Testimony NBI 25-22 Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review.

Aloha mai e ka Teachers Standards Committee,

The 'Aha Kauleo (AKL) is the statewide council for the Papahana Kaiapuni Hawaiian Language Immersion Program, which provides proactive leadership, direction, and advocacy for the development and growth of its Hawaiian medium schools and advises directly through the Office of Hawaiian Education (OHE) of the Department of Education (DOE). AKL consists of parent and teacher representatives per elementary (K-6), secondary grades (6-12) and/or from each Hawaiian medium education site, and a principal representative, along with representatives from the University of Hawaii Hilo and Manoa, Brigham Young University-Hawaii, University of Hawaii-Maui College, Aha Punana Leo, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and the Kamehameha Schools/Bishop Estate.

The 'Aha Kauleo strongly supports the Hawaiian Permit and offers COMMENTS on the current draft of NBI 25-22 for the Committee's consideration.

The Hawaiian Permit provides a critical pathway for fluent Hawaiian language speakers to enter Kaiapuni (Hawaiian language immersion) classrooms as teachers while they concurrently pursue credentials and licensure. This permit is an essential strategy for addressing the urgent and ongoing shortage of qualified Kaiapuni teachers.

In light of the 67% increase in student enrollment across Hawai'i State Department of Education Kaiapuni schools, we urge the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board to continue collaborating closely with Kaiapuni education experts and stakeholders—including members of the Hawaiian Workgroup—to uphold Hawaii Administrative Rules 8-54-9.6 and ensure informed and responsive decision-making for teachers serving in Kaiapuni settings. Communities such as Hale'iwa and emerging schools like Kalaniana'ole School in Hilo are eagerly awaiting qualified Kaiapuni teachers. **Without an adequate supply of qualified Kaiapuni teachers, the**

expansion and opening of new Kaiapuni classrooms cannot occur—regardless of student demand. Fluent Hawaiian-language speakers are the most critical resource for Kaiapuni schools, yet they remain among the most difficult educators to recruit and retain. Targeted interventions, such as the Hawaiian Permit, are essential to meeting the projected need for an additional 165 Kaiapuni teachers over the next decade.

As the statewide advisory council for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni, we share a collective kuleana to ensure that licensure policy honors the unique context, developmental phase, and long-term sustainability of Hawaiian medium and immersion education. Any revisions to NBI 25-22 should be informed by the expertise and recommendations of Kaiapuni educators and stakeholders and aligned with the shared leadership framework that governs Ka Papahana Kaiapuni.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



[EXTERNAL] Testimony NBI 25-22 Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibility, and Review

From Pililuaikekaiohilo Keala <pkeala@hawaii.edu>

Date Wed 1/14/2026 8:58 AM

To HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

FROM: Dr. Pililuaikekaiohilo Keala

Makua Kaiapuni (Parent of Kaiapuni school children)

Hope Luna Ho'omalua (Vice Chair), 'Aha Kauleo, Statewide Advisory Council to the Office of Hawaiian Education

Assistant Professor, Kawaihuelani, Ka Hālau 'Ōlelo Hawai'i

RE: Testimony NBI 25-22 Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibility, and Review

Aloha mai e ka Teachers Standards Committee,

I am writing to share my testimony of support for the Hawaiian Permit and offer comments on the draft of NBI 25-22 for the Committee's consideration.

It is my understanding that the Hawaiian Permit offers Kaiapuni schools the opportunity to utilize fluent Hawaiian language speakers as classroom teachers while they concurrently pursue credentials and licensure. This strategy is essential for addressing the pressing and ongoing shortage of qualified Kaiapuni teachers. This and other targeted interventions are essential to working towards meeting the needs of the Kaiapuni schools in the area of teacher shortage. It is my recommendation that any and all revisions to NBI 25-22 should be informed by the expertise and recommendations of Kaiapuni educators and stakeholders, and aligned with the shared leadership framework that governs Ka Papahana Kaiapuni.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Na'u nō me ka mahalo,

Pililuaikekaiohilo M.Q. Keala, EdD

--

Pililuaikekaiohilo M.Q. Keala, EdD

Hope Polopeka (*Assistant Professor*)

 Artboard 1.png

Kawaihuelani, Ka Hālau 'Ōlelo Hawai'i

Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge

2540 Maile Way, Spalding 252

Honolulu Hawai'i 96822

"I pa'a i kona kupuna, 'a'ole ka'kou e puka"

TO: Teachers Standards Committee, Hawai‘i Teachers Standards Board

FROM: Kananinohea Māka‘imoku

DATE: January 14, 2026

SUBJECT: Testimony NBI 25-22 Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review.

Aloha mai e ka Teachers Standards Committee,

My name is Kananinohea Māka‘imoku. I submit this testimony in my personal capacity as a **member of the Hawaiian Workgroup**. I also bring to this testimony my experience as a first-language ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i speaker, a graduate of the first Kaiapuni class, a former Kaiapuni classroom kumu, a teacher educator who leads an HTSB-approved Kaiapuni licensure program, and Chair of the ‘Aha Kauleo Kaiapuni Advisory Council. In addition, I have collaborated in the redesign of the **Hawaiian Permit**, contributing to the development of licensure and workforce pathways specific to the Kaiapuni field.

I strongly support the Hawaiian Permit and offer **COMMENTS** on the current draft of NBI 25-22 for the Committee’s consideration.

While the Hawaiian Workgroup did have the opportunity to review initial drafts of NBI 25-22 via email, I offer this testimony to provide clarification and to help ensure that the policy language fully reflects the intent and substance of the Workgroup’s discussions. Kaiapuni education operates within a highly distinct context and faces challenges that differ fundamentally from English-medium settings. **The most immediate and pressing of these challenges is the severe shortage of qualified Kaiapuni teachers who are fluent ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i speakers.**

Even as student enrollment in Kaiapuni programs continues to increase, ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i remains a severely endangered language. Unlike English-medium pathways, which draw from a large and continually replenished pool of fluent English speakers, the Kaiapuni teacher workforce must be intentionally cultivated from a small and finite population of fluent Hawaiian language speakers. The Hawaiian Permit is therefore not optional, but a critical and necessary strategy for creating, stabilizing, and sustaining a speaker-to-teacher pathway within this unique educational ecosystem.

I respectfully request the Committee’s consideration of the revisions included in the attached document. These proposed amendments are intended to provide much-needed clarification and to better align NBI 25-22 with the discussions and shared understandings of the Hawaiian Workgroup.

New Business Item 25-22
Introduced January 16, 2025

TITLE: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review

The Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) adopts the following recommendations from the 2025–2026 Hawaiian Focus Workgroup for the purpose of clarifying the implementation, expectations, and ongoing review of the Hawaiian Permit:

- ~~● Educator preparation programs (EPPs) approved by the HTSB that enroll candidates holding a Hawaiian Permit shall be responsible for the planning, coordination, and provision of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i instructional support throughout all required clinical experiences, practicum, and student teaching assignments, and ensure that candidates satisfy HTSB licensure requirements.~~
- Hawaiian Permit holders can enroll in an HTSB or non-HTSB approved educator preparation program.
 - o HTSB approved programs with Hawaiian Permit candidates requires 'Ōlelo Hawai'i support planned and coordinated by the EPP during clinical experience
 - o Practicum should be done in the language in that content setting.
 - o EPP is required to provide Hawaiian Language Support and be observed in English or Hawaiian.
- ~~● The HTSB strongly encourages individuals holding a Hawaiian Permit to enroll in a Kaiapuni Hawaiian language teacher EPP to support linguistic and pedagogical proficiency aligned with Kaiapuni educational settings.~~
 - ~~○ Hawaiian Permit holders enrolled in a non-HTSB approved program should be aware of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) requirements (see New Business Item [NBI] 25-04) to ensure eligibility for HTSB licensure.~~
- The Hawaiian Permit, as outlined in Hawaii Administrative Rules, including its eligibility criteria, conditions, and requirements, shall undergo periodic review by the HTSB, with the scope, evaluative criteria, process, and timing determined in collaboration with the Hawaiian Workgroup.

Rationale/Background:

The Limited Duty Special Permit-Hawaiian Permit, as defined in Hawaii Administrative Rules §8-54-9.6(a)(1–6) and [NBI 16-06](#), was established to address educator workforce needs in Kaiapuni/Hawaiian Language Immersion and Hawaiian Knowledge educational settings while supporting the revitalization and perpetuation of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i. ~~As interest in Hawaiian language instruction and immersion education continues to expand, it is essential that teacher candidates holding a Hawaiian Permit~~

~~receive appropriate linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical support throughout their preparation to become fully licensed teachers. Hawaii Administrative Rules §8-54-9.6(a)(1-6) further explains that a Hawaiian Permit candidate:~~

- ~~● Is assessed as proficient in the Hawaiian language by the Office of Hawaiian Education in collaboration with a Hawaiian Language Immersion educator preparation program;~~
- ~~● Completes thirty (30) hours of induction by the Office of Hawaiian Education in collaboration with a Hawaiian Language Immersion educator preparation program;~~
- ~~● Submits a cultural growth plan on how the individual will obtain licensure, to be monitored annually by the Office of Hawaiian Education in collaboration with a Hawaiian Language Immersion educator preparation program;~~

During the 2025–2026 academic year, the Hawaiian Focus Workgroup reviewed the implementation and use of the Hawaiian Permit, identifying areas that required clarification, consistency, and long-term oversight. The Workgroup’s review emphasized the importance of structured ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i support during clinical preparation, alignment with Kaiapuni teacher education pathways, and the need for periodic evaluation of the permit to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.

In considering the broader landscape of Ka Papahana Kaiapuni, the work group highly encourages Hawaiian Permittees to pursue licensure through a Kaiapuni Education Preparation Program. Furthermore, we recommend that candidates pursuing licensure in other programs use the 'Add-A-Field' option to obtain the Kaiapuni license. This pathway adheres to the same rigorous requirements established by the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board.

The adoption of these recommendations is intended to strengthen the preparation and support of Hawaiian Permit holders while ensuring program accountability and instructional quality. ~~Requiring HTSB-approved programs Upholding the language of Hawaii Administrative Rules §8-54-9.6(a)(1-6), HTSB confirms that collaboration between the Office of Hawaiian Education and Hawaiian Language Immersion educator preparation programs~~ to coordinate ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i support during clinical experiences promotes equitable access to language mentorship and reinforces best practices for Kaiapuni immersion or Hawaiian-medium instruction.

~~Encouraging enrollment in Kaiapuni teacher education programs aligns permit holders with established pathways that integrate Hawaiian language proficiency, cultural knowledge, and instructional methodology specific to Kaiapuni settings. Finally, instituting a regular review cycle for the Hawaiian Permit ensures that its requirements remain responsive to evolving educational needs, workforce demands, and community expectations.~~

The adoption of these recommendations is intended to strengthen the preparation and support of Hawaiian Permit holders while ensuring program accountability and

instructional quality. Requiring HTSB-approved programs to coordinate 'Ōlelo Hawai'i support during clinical experiences promotes equitable access to language mentorship and reinforces best practices for Kaiapuni immersion or Hawaiian-medium instruction.

Encouraging enrollment in Kaiapuni teacher education programs aligns permit holders with established pathways that integrate Hawaiian language proficiency, cultural knowledge, and instructional methodology specific to Kaiapuni settings. Finally, instituting a regular review cycle for the Hawaiian Permit ensures that its requirements remain responsive to evolving educational needs, workforce demands, and community expectations.

Cost:

All costs are included in the current staff job duties/responsibilities.

Submitted by: Kristi Miyamae

Referred to: Teacher Standards Committee

January 14, 2026

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

FROM: Kahea Faria
Member, HTSB Hawaiian Workgroup

SUBJECT: **Testimony** - providing **Comments**- Teacher Standards Committee, III.
Action Discussion B. [NBI 25-22](#), Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements,
Program Responsibilities, and Review

Aloha mai kakou,

My name is Kahea Faria, I am a former K-12 Hawaiian Language Immersion (HLI) classroom teacher, and currently a faculty member of the Master of Education in Teaching (MEdT) program at the University of Hawaii - Manoa's College of Education.

On September 8, 2025, the HTSB reached out to me and another COE faculty member asking for our thoughts, "based on your expertise in preparing Hawaiian Language Immersion (HLI) candidates" regarding other EPPs' work with HLI candidates. Instead of responding to the HTSB questions, we felt that it would be best for the HTSB to form an official committee to review the circumstances, get multiple perspectives on the issue, and allow the committee to discuss as a collective.

On September 23, 2025, the HTSB noted that the issue could not wait until the scheduled Hawaiian Workgroup December meeting. In an effort to help the HTSB with this issue, a member of the Hawaiian Workgroup reached out to all members of the workgroup, including the HTSB staff, to schedule a special meeting to discuss this issue. The special meeting was held on October 20, 2025. The discussion and drafted policy clarification from this meeting does not seem to be reflected in NBI 25-22.

On December 12, 2025, the Hawaiian Workgroup met as scheduled, and the Office of Hawaiian Education shared a presentation on the Hawaiian Special Permit followed by

a discussion previously held at the October 20th Special Meeting. Again, NBI 25-22 does not seem to reflect the essence of our discussions. I highly recommend that NBI 25-22 be revised to reflect the Hawaiian Workgroup's December 12, 2025 agreements - as this workgroup includes the experts initially consulted by the HTSB on September 8, 2025, for their specialized expertise in these matters.

As a member of the Hawaiian Workgroup, I'd like to thank the Teacher Standards Committee for your review of this NBI, your considerations of our follow-up questions, and this recommendation to revise NBI 25-22.

No ka Pono a me ka Maluhia o ka Lehulehu
(1853 Legislative Session)