

January 14, 2026

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

FROM: Kahea Faria  
Hawaiian Education

SUBJECT: **Testimony** - General Business Meeting, Item F. HTSB Program Review Process

The MEdT program prepares HLI teacher candidates for grades K-12 (NBI 13-09), which affords the candidates flexibility to support HLI teacher needs in elementary and/or secondary settings statewide. This pathway works well for teacher candidates who are not hired in teaching positions. However, due to the high demand for HLI teachers, we have candidates who enter the program already employed in an emergency hire position or who are hired shortly after enrolling in our teacher training program. In an effort to support candidates in these situations, while simultaneously addressing the critical shortage of teachers, we requested a program modification (NBI 13-09) to recognize two grade bands (K-6 & 6-12) within our preexisting K-12 Hawaiian Language Immersion (HLI) licensure pathway.

After multiple meetings, email correspondences, and completing two different program modification forms, our request is still pending. The HTSB staff and board chair required additional information for the recognition of the two grade level bands (K-6 & 6-12) in the form of course syllabi, assignments and assessments even though course descriptions, sequencing and a list of assessments, and their descriptions were acceptable in our approved K-12 HLI pathway (NBI 13-09). Updated information was provided to the HTSB as required; however, newly requested materials such as course syllabi, assignments, and assessments were excluded, as their inclusion were considered an overreach into the intellectual property of individual faculty members. Faculty members regularly conduct research and publish materials (e.g., curriculum, assessments, and related works) as a part of tenure, promotion, and periodic review obligations.

This process has created an unintended burden and stress for candidates in our program who must navigate the difficult decision of whether to leave their teaching positions to complete the requirements of our K-12 HLI teacher license pathway, or not pursue the only HLI teacher license available in the MEdT program. We are requesting that the two grade level bands (K-6 & 6-12) that comprise the current K-12 HLI teacher license be **recognized** as a means to support HLI OJT candidates, and the HLI programs that they serve.

Additionally, I'd like to highly recommend that **NBI 25-17** be reviewed again.

**No ka Pono a me ka Maluhia o ka Lehulehu**

(1853 Legislative Session)