



**STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII TEACHER STANDARDS BOARD
TEACHER STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING**

MINUTES

Remote Technology via Zoom

650 Iwilei Road, Suite 158
Honolulu, HI 96817

Friday, January 16, 2026

PRESENT IN-PERSON:

Kristi Miyamae, Ex Officio Committee Member, Board Chair
Kahele Dukelow for Roy Takumi, Committee Member

PRESENT ONLINE:

Dr. Katina Soares, Committee Chair
Dale Matsuura, Committee Vice Chair
Deanna D'Olier, Committee Member
Daphne Okunaga, Committee Member
Dondra Ozaki, Ex Officio Committee Member, Board Vice Chair

EXCUSED:

Justin Mew, Committee Member
Natashya Nihipali, Committee Member

STAFF:

Felicia Villalobos, Board Executive Director
Steven Harada, Licensing Specialist
Dr. Mitzie Higa, Licensing Specialist
Tracey Idica, NBCT, Licensing Specialist
Kaulana Molina, NBCT, Licensing Specialist
Kris Murakami, Esq., Licensing Specialist
Dr. Jennifer Padua, Licensing Specialist

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. ROLL CALL TO ESTABLISH QUORUM

Committee Chair Dr. Katina Soares called the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board ("HTSB") Teacher Standards Committee ("Committee") meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Committee Chair Dr. Soares iterated HTSB's Mission and Vision. She shared information regarding procedures for virtual committee meetings, then called roll call and established quorum. Ex Officio Committee Member Kristi Miyamae and Committee Member Kahele Dukelow were present in-person. Committee Chair Dr. Soares, Committee Vice Chair Dale Matsuura, Committee Members Deanna D'Olier, Daphne Okunaga, and Ex Officio Committee Member Dondra Ozaki were present online. Committee Members Justin Mew and Natashya Nihipali were excused.

Committee Chair Dr. Soares shared information regarding non-public site disclosure. None of the Committee Members participating online had anyone present with them to disclose. Committee Chair Dr. Soares shared additional information regarding meeting protocols and procedures.

B. PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS

On-time and late written testimonies were submitted and posted to HTSB's website. No one signed up for online testimony. The following people signed up for in-person public testimony:

Kahea Faria, member from Hawaiian Workgroup, testified on behalf of Agenda Item III.B. NBI 25-22: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review. She requested that the New Business Item ("NBI") be revised to reflect the Hawaiian Workgroup's December 12, 2025, meeting agreements. She stated that the changes that were made did not reflect the essence of what was agreed upon at the Hawaiian Workgroup meetings.

Kau'i Sang, from the Office of Hawaiian Education ("OHE"), Hawai'i Department of Education ("HIDOE"), testified on behalf of Agenda Item III.B. NBI 25-22: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review and submitted late written testimony. She stated that HIDOE did not concur with the draft NBI as it did not interpret and project their intentions of the recommendations that were discussed at the December 12, 2025, Hawaiian Workgroup meeting. She recommended that the Committee replace the draft NBI with the attachment that was provided by HIDOE in their written testimony.

C. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Board Executive Director Felicia Villalobos ("ED Villalobos") announced that there were two new board members. The first member was excused from the meeting, and the second member is Daphne Okunaga from Hawai'i P-20.

D. APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the November 14, 2025, meeting was approved as written.

II. PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS

On-time and late written testimonies were submitted. No one signed up for online or in-person public testimony.

III. ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. NBI 25-21: License Affirmation (October and November 2025)

Committee Chair Dr. Soares reviewed NBI 25-21, affirming the licenses and permits for the respective months.

There were no questions or discussion from the Committee.

Committee Chair Dr. Soares called for a roll call vote on whether or not to recommend NBI 25-21, as written, to the full board ("Board") at the general business meeting scheduled at 10:45 a.m. Committee Chair Dr. Soares and all other Committee Members present voted to recommend.

ACTION — The Teacher Standards Committee voted to recommend NBI 25-21, as written, to the Board, with all seven Committee Members present voting aye.

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

Committee Chair Dr. Soares reviewed NBI 25-22, highlighting the Rationale/Background of the NBI. She asked ED Villalobos if she would like to add any information before going into discussion. ED Villalobos first wanted to point out for the record that this NBI would need to be recognized if it is to be recommended to the Board. Committee Chair Dr. Soares apologized and agreed that it will be recommended to the Board.

ED Villalobos laid some groundwork and gave a brief overview of how HTSB facilitates the Hawaiian Workgroup ("Workgroup") after reading the testimony that was submitted and found that there was some confusion about the NBI. She explained that since the Workgroup reconvened back in 2022, they met about 15 times to discuss all the different recommendations that come out of the Workgroup. ED Villalobos explained that the Workgroup consists of about 19 members from different stakeholder groups, as the Board recognizes their expertise in their content area. She also addressed a concern that came about in some of the testimony that the stakeholders need to make the decisions, in which ED Villalobos responded in agreement. ED Villalobos pointed out that the HTSB staff would facilitate the Workgroup meetings so they can help bridge the gap in the members' understanding of licensure and educator preparation program processes, which were outlined in Hawaii Administrative Rules ("HAR") since 2019 and the Hawaii Revised Statutes. She also wanted to clarify for the record that all Workgroup members were given the minutes as well as the draft of this NBI, as requested, as there were about 22 correspondences going back and forth. ED Villalobos was open to facilitating another meeting with the Workgroup if they would like to have this NBI deferred. She announced that there will be an upcoming all-day in-person Workgroup meeting on February 20, 2026.

Committee Chair Dr. Soares recommended that this NBI be deferred based on all the testimony that she read, as well as her own personal experience working at a kaiaipuni

school. She believed that this is important and knows that there is a huge shortage of teachers, especially in kaiapuni schools.

Committee Member Dukelow mentioned that she sits on the Board of Education and believed that everyone is in support of the Palapala A'o Kūikawā ("PAK") but thought that the way the NBI was written did not capture the spirit of the discussion and agreements that were made in the Workgroup. She thought the NBI needed more clarity as it currently allowed for some potential implications and misinterpretation of the following three important issues:

- 1) People are afraid that the NBI would only allow one of two pathways to become licensed in a Kaiapuni pathway. One being you can be educated in a Kaiapuni path, or you can be educated in an English path and add a field. Because everyone's situation is different, there needs to be as many different possible pathways forward to licensure.
- 2) The thought that PAK has its own HAR and teacher prep programs are separate from that. The PAK is not connected to any one or two and the NBI is unclear of this separation.
- 3) The idea that the review of the PAK should be done in partnership with OHE as OHE runs and organizes the PAK.

Committee Member D'Olier also agreed that the NBI needs further revision and needs to go back to the Workgroup for clarification.

Ex Officio Committee Member Miyamae called upon Licensing Specialist Dr. Jennifer Padua ("LS Padua") to explain the guidelines and certain requirements for licensing that need to be followed when a recommendation comes through as she thinks that can sometimes get blurred within the Workgroup.

LS Padua shared a couple of examples where the testimony that was submitted did not follow the law. One of the testimonies submitted had the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements ("NC-SARA") crossed out which is a federal law and needed to be followed by all educational stakeholders. Another testimony submitted stated that HTSB should monitor and ensure programs have language support. LS Padua explained that if it is a non-HTSB-approved program, then HTSB does not have the authority to do that. The Workgroup had discussed how HTSB-approved programs are going to support those that are not in a Hawaiian language immersion program. LS Padua further explained that there has to be a collaboration with the OHE as HTSB does not have the capacity and believes they are willing to support them with the Hawaiian permit so they can make their way towards licensure.

Committee Member Dukelow expressed a concern that the NBI gave her the impression that if you're a PAK, then you have to go through a Kaiapuni teacher licensure program pathway, which is limited and will harm potential teacher candidates. She pointed out that the majority of the teachers who are kaiapuni teachers now were educated in English teacher licensure programs so the idea that the English training cannot bridge into kaiapuni is something that needs to be discussed more as there are many different ways you can build a kaiapuni teacher. She felt it was about setting the foundation between the PAK and licensure as no kaiapuni teacher is going to learn everything through one pathway.

Committee Chair Dr. Soares understood the need for more clarification as she did not see it that way.

Ex Officio Committee Member Ozaki thought more time was needed for continued discussion and clarification, with consideration of the licensing requirements, before a decision can be made.

Ex Officio Committee Member Miyamae called upon ED Villalobos to clarify more about the rules and regulations in terms of the programs and the different pathways. ED Villalobos first wanted to point out that the language used for bullet number two of the NBI was not from her but from the Workgroup so it wasn't a definite that teacher candidates would have to go through a Kaiapuni-approved program. She explained there was heavy discussion and concern within the Workgroup when it came to what safeguards should be in place for any HTSB-approved educator preparation program that was going to prepare someone for initial licensure and needed to be in a kaiapuni setting all day long. There was even more of a concern for the institutions who were not approved in a Hawaiian language or immersion field/program and how they can be supported.

Committee Chair Dr. Soares wanted to confirm if this NBI will be ready for the next Board meeting agenda since the next Workgroup meeting is February 20, 2026. ED Villalobos confirmed that it will be ready as there will be guardrails in place to make sure there is enough time for stakeholders to develop the language they are comfortable with and have the voting complete, all within federal guidelines and HAR.

Ex Officio Committee Member Miyamae moved to defer the NBI so the Workgroup can discuss and propose the language that they would like. Ex Officio Committee Member Ozaki seconded the motion.

Committee Member Dukelow suggested that before they go into the next Workgroup meeting, it would be beneficial if the stakeholder groups knew their kuleana. She thought there was some overlapping and maybe some competing kuleana between the groups. She also felt it was the program's kuleana to monitor the teaching experience and the Workgroup can provide guidance.

There were no further questions or discussion from the Committee.

Committee Chair Dr. Soares called for a roll call vote on whether or not to defer NBI 25-22, as written, to the Board at the general business meeting scheduled at 10:45 a.m. Committee Chair Dr. Soares and all other Committee Members present voted to defer.

ACTION — The Teacher Standards Committee voted to defer NBI 25-22, as written, to the Board with all seven Committee Members present voting aye.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Chair Dr. Soares adjourned the Teacher Standards Committee Meeting at 9:45 a.m.

List of people who submitted written testimony before the meeting

<i>ON-TIME WRITTEN TESTIMONY for Teacher Standards Committee Meeting</i>		
NAME	ORGANIZATION	AGENDA ITEM
Kade Yam-Lum		III.B. NBI 25-22: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review
Kananinohea Māka'imoku	'Aha Kauleo Statewide Council for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni	III.B. NBI 25-22: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review
Dr. Pililuaikekaiohilo Keala	'Aha Kauleo Statewide Council for Ka Papahana Kaiapuni; Kawaihuelani, Ka Hālau 'Ōlelo Hawai'i	III.B. NBI 25-22: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review
Kananinohea Māka'imoku		III.B. NBI 25-22: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review
Kahea Faria		III.B. NBI 25-22: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review

<i>LATE WRITTEN TESTIMONY for Teacher Standards Committee Meeting</i>		
NAME	ORGANIZATION	AGENDA ITEM
Kaleialoha Kaniaupio-Crozier	Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Kalama	III.B. NBI 25-22: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review
Kau'i Sang	Hawai'i Department of Education, Office of Hawaiian Education	III.B. NBI 25-22: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review