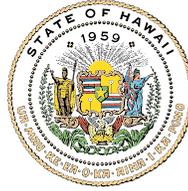


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OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN EDUCATION

January 14, 2026

To: Teacher Standards Committee Members
Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board

From: Kau'i Sang, Director
Office of Hawaiian Education, Hawai'i Department of Education

Subject: Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board, Teacher Standards Committee
Agenda Item III. B. NBI 25-22 Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program
Responsibilities, and Review

Aloha Members of the Teacher Standards Committee,

The Hawai'i Department of Education appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on Agenda Item III. B. NBI 25-22: Policy on Hawaiian Permit Requirements, Program Responsibilities, and Review. We request substantial amendments to the NBI to align with the recommendations made by the Hawaiian Work Group at its December 12, 2025, meeting.

The Department **does not concur** with the direction set forth in the current draft of NBI 25-22 and strongly urges this committee to adopt the revised version attached to this testimony. The revised draft reflects the collaboration of the Department of Education, through its Office of Hawaiian Education, with Ka Papahana Kaiapuni partners and the discussion of the Hawaiian Work Group convened by the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board.

The Department fully supports robust and rigorous teacher standards to ensure the continual delivery of a high quality education to the students in its care. In regards to Ka Papahana Kaiapuni, the need for quality teachers is often overshadowed by the pre-existing practices and frameworks that are deeply embedded within the system and unintentionally act as barriers to actualizing this imperative. At present, Ka Papahana Kaiapuni is in the process of critical research and (re)development. Through the tandem work with program founders, leaders, and experts in actively defining, refining, and reclaiming the methodologies and praxes, the Department hopes to produce and deliver high quality learning experiences. This is essential work and contributes to the ability of our educators and students to successfully overcome barriers and positively contribute to Hawaiian language revitalization. Therefore, it is vital that

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programmatic decisions, such as teacher standards and licensing, take the current context into account.

The Department takes its *kuleana* seriously. We encourage all partners to unite in making clear, well-informed programmatic decisions that support the faculty, staff, and students who have chosen Kaiapuni education.

Should you have any questions, please contact Dawn Kau'i Sang, Director, Office of Hawaiian Education at, dawn.sang@k12.hi.us or by phone at, (808) 784-6070.

DKS:lh

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 need to be engaged in job relevant professional development aligned with their cultural growth plan which may include a EPP approved by HTSB.
- ~~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.

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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