



**S E A C**  
**Special Education Advisory Council**

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December 1, 2015

**Special Education  
Advisory Council**

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Ms. Patricia Halagao, Chair  
Student Achievement Committee  
Hawaii State Board of Education  
P. O. Box 2360  
Honolulu, HI 96804

RE: Agenda Item IV. C. Update on Board Policy 101.7, School Climate and Discipline implementation plan

Dear Chair Halagao and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) supports the Board's policy on School Climate and Discipline and would like to comment on the Department's proposed implementation plan. SEAC respectfully requests to be included in all phases of the plan for the following reasons:

- The plan lacks family, student and community input other than the legal community.
- The Board's Policy on Family and Community Engagement/ Partnership instructs the Department to provide "adequate and appropriate time, resources and opportunities to include families in the design, implementation, evaluation and oversight of all relevant programs and services."
- Discipline has a strong relevance to students with disabilities who historically are two to three times more likely to be suspended than their non-disabled peers. Any suspension, whether it be for several days or several weeks, has the potential to negatively impact these vulnerable students' academic achievement, graduation rates and post-school outcomes.
- SEAC has a track record of being an early and consistent proponent for positive behavioral supports--both school wide practices and targeted interventions for students whose behavior impacts their own learning and the learning of others.



- SEAC has also testified against zero tolerance policies and exclusionary discipline.

Given SEAC's experience in this area and our diverse representation, we are ideal partners to work with the Board and the Department in ensuring that Hawaii's public school students have a safe and supportive environment in which to learn.

Sincerely,

*Martha Guinan/SR*

Martha Guinan  
Chair