



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council

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Advisory Council**

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Margaret Cox, Chair
Student Achievement Committee
Hawaii State Board of Education
P. O. Box 2360
Honolulu, HI 96804

RE: IV. B. Presentation on Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA")
Impacts on School Accountability

Dear Chair Cox and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) welcomes this opportunity to provide testimony on the Department's proposed accountability system under ESSA - Strive HI 3.0. Specifically we have recommendations regarding an accountability measure--achievement gap--and the parameters for identifying student subgroups in need of Targeted Supports and Intervention.

Achievement Gap. At the December 6th General Business meeting of the Board, the achievement gap was added as a Statewide Student Success Indicator in the final version of the Joint Strategic Plan. Achievement gap was defined as "the difference in meeting achievement standard between high-needs students (e.g., economic disadvantage, special needs, English Learners) and non-high-needs students."

Currently students with disabilities make up less than one fifth of the high-needs students measured in the achievement gap metric. The lackluster growth in achievement outcomes for students with IEPs is being masked by achievement gains by the other two high-needs student groups--students with an economic disadvantage and English Learners. ESSA has determined that states will no longer be able to combine groups of students into "super-subgroups" for accountability purposes. Therefore it is unclear to SEAC how Hawaii will apply this indicator.

Recommendation: SEAC recommends that targets be set for each of the subgroups included in the Strategic Plan achievement gap indicator



Recommendation (cont.):

to signify progress in reducing the overall achievement gap.

Targeted Supports and Intervention. The Department is proposing using an “n” size of 20 to trigger data reporting for any particular student subgroup for the purpose of providing targeted supports and intervention. SEAC appreciates that this minimum number of students for federal reporting and accountability purposes is smaller than the current “n” size of 30. However, we are concerned that some students are being left out of the accountability system.

Recommendation: SEAC strongly recommends using an “n” size of 10 students in order to ensure that more academically vulnerable students are identified and provided supports.

Thank you for this important opportunity to provide testimony. If you have any questions regarding this testimony, please feel free to contact me or Ivalee Sinclair, our Legislative Committee Chair.

Respectfully,


Martha Guinan
SEAC Chair


Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair