



**S E A C**  
**Special Education Advisory Council**  
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February 17, 2022

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Student Achievement Committee  
Hawaii State Board of Education  
P. O. Box 2360  
Honolulu, HI 96814

RE: III. B. Presentation on amendment of and addendum to ESEA  
Consolidated State Plan

Dear Chair Namau'u and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) met with Glenn Nochi from the Office of Strategy, Innovation and Performance on February 14th to discuss the proposed ESEA Consolidation State Plan amendment and addendum from the perspective of the needs of special education students. SEAC would like to offer the following comments for your consideration:

Regarding the Proposed Addendum

SEAC is generally in support of the flexibility requested by creating short-term one-year changes intended to alleviate issues caused by the pandemic. One change under consideration is to replace or modify the chronic absenteeism measure with another measure for SY 2021-22 only. While SEAC agrees with the Department's rationale that absenteeism in many instances has been beyond the school's control due to student illness and quarantine requirements during the pandemic, we would like to see this measure reinstated and emphasized in SY 2022-23.

As your Committee knows, students with disabilities have traditionally had higher rates of absenteeism than any other student subgroup. By maintaining chronic absenteeism as an accountability measure, we focus schools on addressing the many factors contributing to a higher rate of absenteeism for students with IEPs, including higher rates of bullying and out-of-school suspensions. Many students with disabilities also have limited access to the general education classroom as the preferred learning environment for the majority of the school day, a factor that can contribute to students missing more days of instruction.



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Regarding the Proposed Amendment

SEAC is in strong support of the proposal to revise the minimum number of students for which data shall be reported (the n-size) from 20 to 11 in keeping with state statutes enacted in 2020. SEAC has been a proponent of using 10 (the standard used under the Individuals with Disabilities Act for confidentiality purposes) as the minimum n-size for accountability purposes dating back to No Child Left Behind. By declaring 11 as an N-size for accountability on our ESSA State Plan, Hawaii will join 17 other states in having an n-size of 11 students or lower to promote greater accountability for student sub-groups, like students with IEPs, while at the same time protecting student privacy and ensuring statistical reliability (<https://all4ed.org/publication/n-size-in-essa-state-plans/>).

Mahalo for the opportunity to express our support.

Respectfully,

Martha Guinan  
Chair