



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council
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May 7, 2020

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

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Catherine Payne, Chairperson
Hawaii State Board of Education
P. O. Box 2360
Honolulu, HI 96814

RE: V. A. Potential priorities for CARES Act K-12 funding for summer months and 2020-21 school year

Dear Chair Payne and Members of the Board,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) shares your concern that students with disabilities and their families are among the most negatively impacted by the forced closure of schools to maintain public health during Hawaii's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We strongly urge the Board and the Department to prioritize CARES Act funding to meet the needs of this vulnerable population.

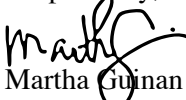
By definition, students found eligible for special education require specially designed instruction and related services in order to benefit from their education and not fall further behind in their peers without disabilities in academic achievement. SEAC has heard from a number of sources that our special education families are struggling to maintain their child's skills at home given their lack of training in providing specialized education services to meet the complex needs of their children, and the limitations of schools to provide instructional opportunities and therapies outlined in each student's IEP given the need for social distancing and no face-to-face interventions.

To mitigate these students' potential loss of skills and time needed to recoup those skills, SEAC strongly supports the timely provision of the following areas identified for priority funding with CARES Act monies:

- devices and connectivity for high needs students and high needs schools,
- training for special education students and their families on how to support on-line learning,
- compensatory services offered over the summer, and
- staffing differentials to help retain qualified and experienced special education teachers.

SEAC offers its support in continuing to identify unmet needs and assist the Department in designing and implementing appropriate as well as creative solutions to meet the individualized needs of our students and families.

Respectfully,


Martha Guinan
Chair


Ivalee Sinclair
Legislative Committee Chair