**Special Education Advisory Council**

Ms. Martha Guinan, *Chair*

Ms. Dale Matsuura, *Vice Chair* Dr. Patricia Sheehey, *Vice Chair*

Ms. Ivalee Sinclair, *Vice Chair*

Ms. Brendelyn Ancheta

Ms. Virginia Beringer

Ms. Deborah Cheeseman

Ms. Annette Cooper

Mr. Motu Finau

Mr. Sage Goto

Ms. Lindsay Heller

Dr. Kurt Humphrey

Ms. Tina King

Ms. Bernadette Lane

Ms. Kaili Murbach

Ms. Stacey Oshio

Ms. Carrie Pisciotto

Ms. Kau’i Rezentes

Ms. Rosie Rowe

Mr. James Street

Mr. Francis Taele

Mr. Steven Vannatta

Dr. Amy Wiech

Ms. Jasmine Williams

Ms. Susan Wood

Ms. Cara Tanimura, *liaison*

*to the Superintendent*

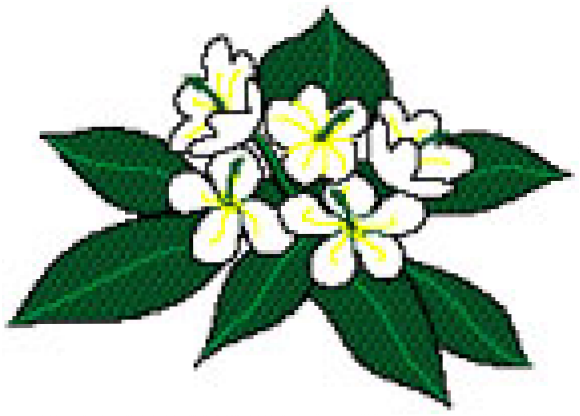
Dr. Bob Campbell, *liaison to*

*the military community*

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff

Susan Rocco, Staff

**S E A C**

**Special Education Advisory Council**

**1010 Richards Street, Room 118**

**Honolulu, HI 96813**

**Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129**

[**email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov**](mailto:spin@doh.hawaii.gov)

January 29, 2019

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair

Committee on Education

Senator Stanley Chang, Chair

Committee on Housing

Hawaii State Capitol

Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: S.B. 12 - RELATING TO TEACHER HOUSING

Dear Chairs Kidani and Chang and Members of the Committees,

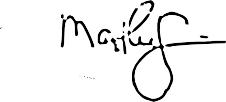
The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii’s State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), strongly supports the intent of S.B. 12 which creates a housing voucher program for full time teachers.

As you know, Hawaii suffers from a chronic shortage of qualified teachers for our public school students. The shortage is most acute for special education teachers who teach some of our most vulnerable students. This school year, only 84% of special education teaching positions were filled by individuals who had completed a state approved teacher education program. Of those teachers, a fair percentage have only general education training.

Retention of qualified teachers is also a growing problem. Last school year saw the most common reason cited by exiting teachers (38%) was moving out of state. We know from exit surveys that the high cost of living (and in particular, housing) was a major factor in the decision to leave Hawaii.

Given the critical personnel shortage to adequately serve the needs of special education students, we ask that your committees consider designing the voucher program to prioritize hard-to-fill teaching positions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important legislation. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Ivalee Sinclair

Legislative Committee Chair

Martha Guinan Chair

*Mandated by the* ***Individuals with Disabilities Education Act***