



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

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August 1, 2019

**Special Education  
Advisory Council**

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Dwight Takeno, Chair  
Human Resources Committee  
Hawaii State Board of Education  
P. O. Box 2360  
Honolulu, HI 96804

RE: IV. A. Bold Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategies &  
IV. B. Policy Support of the Special Education Task Force 2018  
Summative Report

Dear Chair Takeno and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, strongly supports your Committee's above priorities and offers our assistance in formulating policy recommendations that will positively impact students with disabilities. In order to address chronic and complex issues like teacher recruitment and retention, professional development, and organizational supports to promote teacher collaboration and planning, SEAC holds that there is a need to ensure that the right group of key stakeholders are addressing the issues and doing the work together to design new and innovative solutions.

Recruiting highly qualified teachers and ensuring their retention is critical to improving the academic outcomes of students with disabilities. Data presented to this committee on November 15, 2018 emphasized the disparity between the recruitment of general education teachers versus special education teachers. Only 84% of SpEd positions were filled by individuals who graduated from State Approved Teacher Education Programs (SATEP) compared to 92% of GenEd teachers. Further exacerbating the problem of appropriate staffing is that a portion of the 84% SATEP personnel who fill special education teacher vacancies are general education teachers. They may not have the skillset to support students with IEPs, because they have not been exposed to a special education curriculum and practicum experience.

Your committee's second key priority of examining human resources-related policies to ensure the successful implementation of the



Special Education Task Force recommendations lends support to the timely, robust and consistent implementation of the following Task Force short-term and long-term recommendations:

- providing adequate time for teacher coordination and preparation,
- expanding mentoring and networking for special education teachers,
- implementing a professional development system across state offices, complex areas and schools, and
- expanding partnerships to support licensing & certification for special education teachers.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this issue. SEAC stands ready to assist the Board and the Department in the development and evaluation of policy revisions and implementation. Should you have questions, we will be happy to provide answers or clarification.

Respectfully,

Martha Guinan  
SEAC Chair

Ivalee Sinclair  
Legislative Committee Chair