



Charter School Administrative Office
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CSAO Status Report

DATE January 4, 2007
TO The Honorable Karen Knudsen, Chairperson
Board of Education
FROM Maunalei Love, Interim Executive Director
Charter School Administrative Office
RE CSAO Report

Aloha,

This being a new year, I am hopeful the Board of Education (Board), the Department of Education (DOE), the Legislature, and the charter school community will be able to address the many issues/needs that consistently come up year after year. The main points that will need to be addressed are stated below:

1. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

- Clarification and perhaps redefining the position of the Charter School Administrative Office (CSAO) and its Executive Director needs to take place in order to efficiently assist with support for the charter school community.
- The Board, at this point, is the support system for charter schools, as well as the authorizer. If the CSAO is to take on the duty of technical support, then staffing of the CSAO will need to be addressed. We are currently looking at how best to staff the CSAO and are in the process of clarifying staff positions. With only seven and a half positions currently filled, assisting the charter schools with technical support is being done at a minimal level.
- If the Board is going to continue as the authority that is responsible to offer technical support, then we need to address what that will be and how to assist with the delivery.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

- We are in the process of assisting with re-drafting the current draft administrative rules and are also waiting for response from the charter schools.
- As we know, these are well overdue and one of the most important issues regarding charter schools in Hawaii today.

3. CHARTER SCHOOL REVIEW PANEL (PANEL)

- The Panel is ready to start. A couple of members met to look over the guidelines used in the past. They have begun to draft new guidelines for the rest of the members to review when the Panel is convened. They look forward to working with the Board to move this forward.
- There are now two (2) Detailed Implementation Plans (DIP), fourteen (14) Letters of Intent, and one (1) DIP Amendment.

4. LEGISLATION

- The CSAO will be working on legislation with the assistance of the Board. I will have more information to hand out at the meeting.

It seems as though the Board looks at charter schools as a problem waiting to be solved. I ask that you look at charters as flowers in the process of blooming. As much as you may feel there are only 27 schools with 6,000+ students and 500+ staff, that is precisely what you have...27 schools struggling to survive, but doing the best they can with current insufficient resources...6,000+ students, with families who are supporting their schools by dedicating time and personal resources...and 500+ administrators, teachers, and support staff who feel charters are a worthwhile cause and are hopeful that their efforts will manifest in change where it is needed. These schools need your help...they need your support...and they need you to be proud of what they are trying to accomplish.

Mahalo nui loa,
Maunalei Love