



Charter School Administrative Office

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CSAO Report

DATE: April 5, 2007
TO: The Honorable Karen Knudsen, Chairperson
Board of Education
FROM: Maunalei Love, Interim Executive Director
Charter School Administrative Office
RE: CSAO Report

Aloha,

I am attending the National Charter Schools Program Showcase in Washington, D.C. on April 5th and 6th, 2007 as the Hawaii State Team Leader and have asked the Charter School Administrative Office's (CSAO) Chief Financial Officer, Bob Roberts and the CSAO Federal Grants Coordinator, Donna Estomago to attend this Board of Education (Board) General Business Meeting. They will be delivering the CSAO report and will answer questions you may have.

As usual, the CSAO has been very busy with its support of Hawaii's Charter School System.

• **ACTIVITIES/SUPPORT OFFERED...Here are some of the highlights:**

1. PEER REVIEW PROCESS

- The CSAO together with the Department of Education's Title I Office will be conducting a series of Peer Reviews of five (5) charter schools. The schools chosen for this review are in Corrective Action or Restructuring.
- The five schools are:
 - 1) Halau Ku Mana
 - 2) Ke Kula Ni'ihau O Kekaha
 - 3) Kualapu'u
 - 4) Waimea Middle
 - 5) Waters of Life

2. MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

- I attended a National Charter School Facility Financing Conference in Washington, D.C. in March and some of the CSAO staff just returned from the California Charter Schools Conference. Although being off island is time consuming, we feel attending these meetings and conferences is necessary to assess the degree of support available nationwide to further support Hawaii's charter school community.
- The CSAO staff meets weekly to address the issues, concerns, and needs of the charters. At these meetings, we decide what meetings to attend and who should go. We also address maintaining adequate staffing at the CSAO. The CSAO is always well staffed in order to offer assistance to its charter school system.
- The CSAO will offer a report of recent meetings and conferences attended at the next Board General Business Meeting.

3. STEM DEVELOPMENT MEETING

- The CSAO is sponsoring a Developmental Meeting on Science and Technology.
- It will be held on April 16, 2007 at the University of Hawaii at Hilo Institute for Astronomy.
- The CSAO has invited individuals from the private sector and the Department of Education, as well as its charter schools.

4. UNION ISSUES

- Recently, some of the Hawaii State Teachers Association's (HSTA) Uniservs have asked some of the Local School Boards (LSB) to sign a Supplemental Agreement that the LSBs did not collaborate on or have any knowledge of. It is our understanding that HSTA was trying to assist by having all schools sign a contract by April 6th, 2007 in order to allow charters to be included in their budget request for collective bargaining increases submitted to the legislature. As members of the union, the charters feel they should always be included in negotiations.
- The CSAO is in discussion with HSTA and the charters to alleviate any misunderstanding and address the concerns of all parties involved.

5. ADMINISTRATOR'S AND BUSINESS MANAGER'S MEETINGS

- The CSAO held an Administrator's meeting on March 12, 2007. Highlights of the agenda were Workforce Development, Find Children's Programs Hawaii, Robotics, 504 Training, Pacific American Foundation's Aloha `Aina Program, and a fiscal update.
- On April 16, 2007, the CSAO will be conducting a Business Manager's meeting. The topics to be covered include audit preparation, GASB34, uniform chart of accounts, and fixed asset inventory.

6. INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL AUDIT OF THE CSAO

- An independent external audit by Carbonaro CPAs and Management Group was recently completed.
- Upon completion by the auditor, the CSAO will present the audit report and management letter comments to the Board.

• **CHARTER SCHOOL REVIEW PANEL (PANEL)**

1. The Panel will be meeting again on April 17th, 2007.
2. The Application Process in place will assist the Panel to move forward with its other duties and allow for timely notification to all applicants of the requirements for their Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP). It is not the intention of the Panel to make it difficult for those who have already submitted their DIPs, but to ensure that proper attention to all matters of importance has been addressed.
3. It is the Panel's intention to move forward with a timeline that will allow for recommendations of approval to the Board in time for schools receiving approval to be prepared per their DIP.

• **SITE VISITS**

1. I would like to thank Board members and staff who have consistently taken the time to attend the site visits the CSAO has organized to help the Board members and staff become better informed about our charter schools. We want to especially thank John Penebacker, Kim Coco Iwamoto, Eileen Clarke, Kendra Ito-Mizota, and Lea Young for attending many of the site visits we have scheduled. So far, the CSAO has scheduled visits at Halau Ku Mana, Hawaii Academy of Arts and Science (HAAS), Innovations, Kanu O Ka `Aina, Kanuikapono, Ke Kula Ni`ihau O Kekaha,

Ke Kula O Nawahiokalani`opu`u Iki, Ke Kula O Samuel M. Kamakau, Kualapu`u, Kula Aupuni Ni`ihau A Kahelelani Aloha (KANAKA), Myron B. Thompson Academy (MBTA), Voyager, Waimea Middle, and West Hawaii Explorations Academy (WHEA). That brings the total to fourteen (14) of Hawaii's charter schools with MBTA scheduled for its second visit today.

2. With thirteen charter schools left to visit, you are already half way through all twenty-seven (27) schools. The schools have expressed their appreciation for the time taken to visit their schools and students and your show of support.
3. The next scheduled visit is Ka Waihona O Ka Na`auao on Thursday, April 19th, 2007. Again, please go to see these schools. If you have any questions about what they are doing or why they are different, you should be able to have many of your questions answered by visiting them.
4. I also am requesting that we look at having one of our charter schools be a host school at one of the Board's future General Business Meetings.

- **LEGISLATION**

1. SB603 is the main charter school bill and is the one that is still alive. On Monday, it passed out of the House Finance Committee and will be going on to Conference Committee.
2. One of the House Finance Committee amendments took out language for a per pupil amount for facilities funds.
3. With almost all states that have charter schools offering some form of support for facilities for their charters, Hawaii is behind in regards to understanding the importance of supporting facilities funding for its charters.
4. The state has asked, "Why should we support facilities funding and support for charter schools?"
5. I ask, "With all other public schools receiving facilities support and funding, why would you NOT?"

Mahalo nui loa,
Maunalei Love