

GET Committee

From: Gina M. Flammer
Sent: Monday, August 19, 2019 3:22 PM
To: GET Committee
Subject: Testimony for GET - 3(1) and GET - 4 (1)
Attachments: WSF Challenges for a Small Schoo_.docx

Testimony from Rick Paul, former Hana High School Principal

WSF Challenges for a Small, Rural Isolated School

General Overview:

The main problem is an "Economy of Scale" Issue. Although listed as Hana High and Elementary School, we are actually a School Complex that consists of six (6) different academic levels. These levels range from an Infant and Toddler Program to an Early College Program. We have approximately 365 students spread across fourteen (14) academic levels. If we had 365 students in an elementary (6 grade levels) or middle school (3 grade levels) or high school (4 grade levels) the funding would be appropriate. However when spread across fourteen (14) WSF funded grade levels with four (4) different types of staff, it is very difficult.

The Hana Complex student population is eighty (80) percent Hawaiian/Part-Hawaiian and approximately eighty (80) Free or Reduced Lunch. Although we have a small school population, many of our students ride a bus for an hour to get to school.

Academic Programs

Infant and Toddler Program – Six-Weeks to Three-Year Old Children

We service students from six (6) weeks to three (3) years old in our Infant and Toddler Program. This is the only licensed child care facility in Hana. The nearest licensed Infant and Toddler Program is hours away. Our financial partners in this program are Maui Family Support Services and Kamehameha Schools. Other than renovating/repairing of the room, no WSF Funding is spend on the Infant and Toddler Program.

Executive Office of Early Learning (EOEL) – Four Year Old Students

This is Pre-School Program funded by the Governor that cares for four (4) year old Pre-School students. An Early Childhood Teacher and EA are provided along with a budget. No WSF Funding is spent on the EOEL Program.

Elementary School – Kindergarten (K) – Fifth (5) Grade

This level is our least affected level although it is still problematic. Our incoming K classes range from fifteen (15) to thirty 30 students. Often the class will be too small to have two (2) teachers but too large to have one (1) teacher at a 20:1 student to teacher ratio. All of our grade levels normally have either one (1) or two (2) teachers.

Our situation is further complicated by the Kaiapuni Hawaiian Immersion. For the 2018-19 school year we will have first, second and third grade Hawaiian Immersion classes. Currently, parents have chosen to send their children into the Kaiapuni program at an approximate ratio of two Kaiapuni students-to-one English student. This has been the trend for the last two years and we do not see it waning. If we have eighteen (18) students, approximately twelve (12) of these students will go into the Hawaiian class and approximately six (6) will go into the English class. This will require two teachers but eighteen (18) students bring in less than is needed for one teacher at a 20:1 ratio. This of course will also require an additional classroom where only

one would be needed for the eighteen (18) students. Once the Kaiapuni students reach third (3rd) grade, the student teacher ration becomes 26.15:1. This student/teacher ratio continues to the twelfth (12th) grade.

From an OHR perspective the addition of Hawaiian Immersion teachers, who capture about two-thirds (2/3) of the students, necessitate the need to have fewer teachers for the English speaking side. However, my Elementary staff is very stable with no vacancies appearing. All but one of my Elementary teacher either is from Hana, married someone from Hana or own a home in Hana. All are high on the ladder with regards to tenure. We must spend ninety percent (90%) of our WSF budget on personnel with the remaining ten percent (10%) to be used for operations. Running dual (Hawaiian Immersion and English) programs forces us to buy more teachers than the funding allows. So far we have been able to manage this problem due to the Office of Hawaiian Education (OHE) providing us with a position and we were able to move a high school teacher licensed in Hawaiian Immersion to a first (1st) grade classroom.

Middle School – Sixth (6th) through Eighth (8th) Grades

The Hana Middle School has less than ninety (90) students. At a normal ratio of 26.15 students for every teacher, the WSF funding would provide less than four (4) teachers for middle school. The four (4) teachers would need to be licensed and highly-qualified in the four (4) core areas (math, science, social studies and English).

If there is only one (1) section for each of the three (3) grade levels, there would only be eighteen (18) middle school classes offered. Each year, at least one (1) of the grade levels has two (2) sections. In this case there would be a total of twenty-four (24) middle school courses being taught. This would mean that the four (4) middle school teachers would have six (6) classes with five (5) different preps. It is in violation of the HSTA Contract for a teacher to have more than two (2) preps or to teach more than two (2) grade levels – unless they teach in a school of less than 500. These four (4) teachers must teach all the core classes and all the elective classes. Most of my middle school teachers are licensed to teach in grades six (6) – eight (8) so they could not cross over into high school.

High School – Ninth (9th) through twelfth (12) grades

Hana High School has less than ninety (90) students. At a normal ratio of 26.15 students for every teacher, the WSF funding would provide less than four (4) teachers for the high school. The four (4) teachers would need to be licensed and highly-qualified in the four (4) core areas (math, science, social studies and English).

These four (4) teachers would teach six (6) classes each for a total of twenty-four (24) credits if there was only one (1) section of each class (freshmen, juniors, sophomores and seniors). We have at least one large class which would require two (2) sections of this class. This would put us over the capability/capacity (teaching 28 classes) of the four (4) teachers. These same four (4) teachers would need to teach the four core areas. In addition, the same four (4) high school teachers are required to teach the following: Foreign Language, Art, Health and PE, and CTE Pathways. In addition, all of these classes require a Hawaii Qualified Teacher (HQT). It is

unreasonable for four (4) high school teachers to provide the minimum credits for a comprehensive high school. At the low point, we cut the Librarian position, the Foreign Language Position and the Physical Education (PE) positions. These positions have yet to be reconstituted.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

We are a hard-to-fill area. I have not gotten a qualified teacher from an OHR list in seven (7) years. If I did find a teacher, I would panic because there is no housing in Hana. In recent Tenured-Teacher Transfer periods I have had several qualified teachers who wanted to come to Hana but they declined because they could not find a place to live.

The teachers I hire are walk-ins (most not qualified) who already have a place to stay in Hana.

We have the capability to build teacher housing along with the land and no-cost labor but we do not have the funding to buy materials.

Title I Funding

Every year we use the bulk of our Title I funding to purchase an additional teaching position. In short we subsidize WSF positions with Title I funding.

Administration

We have one (1) Principal, one (1) Vice-Principal (VP), one (1) Athletic Director (AD) and one (1) School Renewal Specialist (1).

Because we are a complex, we are required to attend preschool (EOEL) meetings and Hawaiian Immersion meetings and trainings along with the meetings that elementary Administrators attend. We also attend middle school, high school and early college meetings. In short, we do not attend school meetings, we attend the meetings of a school complex. The travel takes its toll. To make an 8:00 AM meeting on Oahu we must leave at 4:00 AM to catch a flight. We then have to return to school. It makes for a very long day. The Committee of Weights (COW) awarded the K-12 schools approximately \$180,000 for an additional administrator. For two (2) years I was unable to use this funding for administration, because I had to use the funding for teaching positions. This past year, I used the funding to purchase an SRS position. At the low point, I could not afford a VP for two years. The AD and I were the only administrators. Upon my arrival in Hana, I had two VP positions. We had to cut one position to save funding.

One point we always make. Athletic Directors (ADs) were thrown into the weight a few years ago. The allocation was one-hundred (\$100) for each high school student. At Hana High our ninety (90) students affect an allocation of \$9,000 for a position that is \$90,000+. We have to subsidize \$80,000 out of our WSF funding to purchase an AD position. On the other hand, Campbell High has 3000 students which would provide \$300,000 for an AD position. One school is forced to struggle to find funding while another school had a windfall of funding.

Administrative Support

Several years ago the loss of WSF funding combined with the retirement of our 12-month, 1.0 FTE Registrar allowed me to reduce the 12-month position to a 10-month position and cut the 1.0 FTE Registrar to a .5 FTE Registrar. Over the next couple of years, through retirements, I was able to reduce the Student Services Coordinator (SSC) and the Student Activities Coordinator (SAC) from 12-month, 1.0 FTE positions to 10-month, .5 FTE positions and combined them with other .5 FTE positions that were cut from 1.0 FTE.

Teacher Support

Hana Complex is, I believe, the only complex or school to not have a full-time Mentor Teacher. We do not have a full-time Curriculum Coordinator, much less a Math or Reading Coordinator. Our Mentor Teacher (2 periods a day)/Curriculum Coordinator (2 periods a day) also teaches two classes a day. Our two counselors also either teach classes or provides reading support.

Office Staff

We have a unique situation regarding our complex office. An administration building was never built so our office is in a building without a bathroom. Because the Hana Complex is not provided Armored Car service, we must make our own deposits at the local branch of the bank. The hours of the bank are from 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM so the Account Clerk must leave the office to make daily deposits. There is no postal delivery in Hana. Everyone has post office boxes. The hours of the Post Office are from 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM. If the school needs to mail an item, they must be at the Post Office from 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM because the mail truck goes out at 12:00 PM. United Parcel Service (UPS) does not make home nor business deliveries. They deliver all parcels to Hasegawa Store for customer pick-up. FedEx does make deliveries to the main office. The result of the need for the office staff to leave the office to do business, combined with the lunch and break times, creates a situation where we have two split shifts in the office.

Custodial Staff

Hana is located in a rain forest it rains almost every day, sometime during the day. Our athletic field (we only have a girls' softball field – no fields for the male sports) is required to be mowed twice a week. DAGS is responsible for the mowing of the campus. This is problematic because they leave the DAGS base yard at 7:00 AM and arrive in Hana around 9:30 PM (in time for their break) they work until lunch, have lunch then work until around 12:30 PM so they have time to be at the base yard by 3:00 PM to end their day. If it rains DAGS cannot mow, the jungle takes over very quickly. This does not work so one of our custodians is assigned to mow our 40 acres. A few years ago we built a new middle school but we did not have the money to buy additional custodians. There are six (6) bathrooms in the middle school.

Superintendent's Reserve Fund

For the 2018-19 school year we were awarded \$200,000. This was much more than any other school. In order to bring back my current (2017-18) for the 2018-19 school year, I was \$180,000

short. I had to have this amount or I would have to staff reduce. This would involve letting go of three (3) teachers or six (6) classified staff or a combination of both. We need every person.

If you look back at our past Reserve Fund applications, you will notice that we ask for nothing except for certificate and classified positions.

Staff Reduction

The loss of the Superintendent's Reserve Fund would result in the loss of certificated and/or classified positions. We have only staffed reduced three (3) positions (PE, Foreign Language and Science – I had two) over the years. We eliminated several other positions through attrition such as moving away or retiring.

Staff Reduction has dire consequences for a small, rural, isolated school. Staff Reduction requires that the last one in is the first to leave.

In a larger school when you staff reduce, you may reduce one (1) of your six (6) science teachers. The students of the staff reduced science teacher are spread among the classes of the remaining science teachers. In a small, one person grade level or department school staff reduction could be the loss of an entire program of study. If your last person in is the only middle school science teacher, you have lost your entire middle school science program and you have no way to replace the position. Your teacher will be transferred to another school who will benefit but now we have no science teacher for three (3) middle school grade levels.

Community Partnership Support

In addition to reducing and combining administrative support positions, asking counselors to teach classes, we have also turned to the community for support.

Ma Ka Hana Ka Ike actually supports us with our Building and Construction Program in exchange for access to our students and the use of a building on campus.

Hana Arts provides all of our Elementary Art programs (vocal, dance, visual arts, etc.) in exchange for access to our students and the use of a building on campus.

The Superintendent's Reserve Fund is going away. If there is no funding to replace the Reserve Fund monies, Hana Complex will be in a very difficult position.