

**HAWAII TEACHER STANDARDS BOARD
TEACHER STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING**

Friday, January 13, 2023

**Meeting Conducted by Remote Technology via Zoom
and
Physical Location at 650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268, Honolulu, HI 96817**

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Lokelani Han

Branden Kawazoe

Justin Mew

Dawn Raymond

Kim Sanders

Dr. Katina Soares

EXCUSED:

Elena Farden for Keahi Makaimoku

STAFF:

Felicia Villalobos, Executive Director

Tracey Idica, Licensing Specialist

Kris Murakami, Licensing Specialist

Jennifer Padua, Licensing Specialist

Raymond Rodriguez, Licensing Specialist

Elaine Hutchinson, Secretary

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson Sanders called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

OPENING REMARKS:

Chairperson Sanders shared information regarding procedures for virtual committee meetings:

- The following committee members, in addition to the Chairperson, are participating in today's virtual committee meeting and have established audio and video connection.
- Committee members shall be visible and audible to other members and the public during meetings.
- This committee meeting will be recorded.

ROLL CALL TO ESTABLISH QUORUM:

Chairperson Sanders called the roll and established quorum.

Six (6) committee members were present and one was excused.

DISCLOSURE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS AT PRIVATE LOCATIONS:

Chairperson Sanders shared information regarding private location disclosure:

- Committee members shall be considered present at the meeting for the purpose of determining compliance with the quorum and voting requirements of the board.
- Committee members who are participating remotely from their homes or other private locations must announce who is at the private location with them. Minors do not need to be identified unless they have a personal business, property, or financial interest in an issue.

Chairperson Sanders asked committee members if they have anyone present with them at their non-public site that they need to disclose.

- No disclosures were made.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURAL INFORMATION:

Chairperson Sanders shared additional information regarding meeting protocols and procedures:

- As a reminder, all committee members wishing to speak should raise their hand and the Chairperson will be notified to call on the person. The speaker must state their name prior to making their remarks.
- Votes will be conducted by roll call so that it is clear how each committee member voted.
- Members of the public who have signed up to testify or would like to testify online must be logged into Zoom using the same name they used to sign up for testimony. Please use the Chat Box to provide your name and the agenda item(s) you are testifying on. Testifiers today will have two (2) minutes to testify. Anyone who missed the opportunity to testify before the relevant agenda item will be allowed to testify at the end of the meeting.
- Testifying online can be challenging due to technical issues. The Chat Box is being monitored by Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board staff, and the Committee Chairperson will be notified that you would like to testify. You will be called on to give your testimony at the appropriate time in the agenda.
- Written testimony received more than forty-nine (49) hours in advance of the meeting has been uploaded to the online meeting agenda for members to review.
- A meeting held by interactive conference technology shall be recessed for up to thirty (30) minutes when audio communication cannot be maintained with a quorum of members, provided that the meeting may reconvene when only audio communication is reestablished.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS:

Mr. James Urbaniak, Personnel Specialist, Hawai'i Department of Education, Teacher Recruitment Unit, provided oral testimony in support of NBI 22-54.

- He oversees the Teacher Recruitment Unit for the Hawai'i State Department of Education (HIDOE) and is testifying in support of NBI 22-54.
- HIDOE has employed teachers on a J-1 Visa from the Philippines for the last few years. They have had about ten (10) fantastic educators statewide who have come into our school system, who have done excellent work through their evaluations on EES¹. These are trained educators who have completed state-approved teacher education programs, whose credentials have been evaluated by an approved NACES² evaluation organization.
- This NBI would give us the opportunity to continue to employ these excellent educators to assist us as a pipeline for recruitment for the Department and also to provide our students with much needed representation of Filipino educators in our classrooms. As many of you know, Hawaii's student population encompasses close to thirty percent (30%) of students who identify as Filipino. So, we think it's very powerful to have the opportunity to employ Filipino educators who can share their culture and identities with their students while we also have exceptional, trained, certified educators from the Philippines to help fill our vacancies.
- He asked for support for this NBI. He appreciates the board's time and thanked the board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the November 18, 2022, meeting were approved as written.

DISCUSSION/Action:

NBI 22-54: Consideration of a License Exception for the Hawaii Department of Education BridgeUSA J-1 Visa Program Candidates from the Philippines

- Chairperson Sanders reviewed NBI 22-54 which included "Rationale/Background: BridgeUSA/HIDOE Partnership."
- Committee Member Kawazoe thanked Mr. Urbaniak for sharing and had the following questions on this NBI for him.
 - a. What documentation is there available for the equivalents of a teacher license in the Philippines to our Provisional License?
 - b. Could he provide the equivalents of the state-approved teacher education program (SATEP)?
 - c. Is there the equivalent to the NASDTEC background check?
 - d. Is there the equivalent of their LEPT³ to our required PRAXIS® Exams?

¹ EES: Educator Effectiveness System, HIDOE

² NACES: National Association of Credential Evaluation Services

³ LEPT: Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers

- Mr. Urbaniak responded to three (b, c, d) of the four questions that Committee Member Kawazoe asked. He did not address Question “a” regarding equivalents to Hawaii’s Provisional License.
 - b. Prior to commenting on the equivalency between the PRAXIS ® Exam and the LEPT, one thing that is really important to know is that candidates who apply for this program have to have their transcripts evaluated by the NACES evaluation for international applicants. In that report which we provide and which we utilize here for employment purposes, it states whether their program has the U.S. equivalency of a state-approved teacher education program (SATEP) in the United States.

So, we’re able to see just off their transcripts, whether or not their program has met the definition of a SATEP in the United States. This is something they utilize and verify prior to anyone becoming employed and licensed.

More importantly, he thinks that through the NACES evaluation provider, it does deem that their program has met a completion from a state-approved teacher education program (SATEP) and that they’ve been trained in the practices in the United States and we utilize that as part of their vetting process. He is very comfortable with the background information received on each candidate to make a determination.

- c. They do require all of their candidates to go through what they consider the version in the Philippines of an FBI clearance. They call it a National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) clearance that verifies no criminal activity within the Philippines.

They require this prior to any candidates being granted a Visa. In order for them to get a Visa to come into the United States, the United States government does require a clear background check. So, this is done just for the Visa purposes on its own.

We will have this documentation available for us and in addition, when they do come into the United States, they are background checked and cleared once they obtain a Social Security number. Clearly, nothing will/should come up on that, simply because the Social Security number was just created but they will have that National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) background check which is the equivalent of a FBI clearance from the Philippines.

In addition, for employment purposes, we work with our partner agency who does their Visa, to ensure that the candidates have had no employment-related issues such as suspensions, dismissals and so forth from their individual school districts so that is also verified.

So not only the criminal aspect of it but also the employment aspect.

- d. For the LEPT exam specifically, it actually does cover the same components that are found within the PRAXIS ® Exam including content knowledge, basic skills, a pedagogy component about teaching practices and then a general content knowledge which is the basic skills. While it is a different test in itself, it does cover similar components.
- Committee Member Han asked Mr. Urbaniak how long this program has been in place and how many teachers have come through this organization. She saw a list at the end of the NBI document. (See “Department J-1 Cadre”)
- Mr. Urbaniak responded that ten (10) teachers have gone through the program and have been employed with us. This program was actually quite a large program. It started prior to the global pandemic but due to the pandemic, they had issues with the United States shutting down the ability to get a Visa.
 - These ten (10) teachers, when they are employed, have the full rights, benefits and contract as a regular teacher. They are given all the same pay, salary, benefits as any other teacher would get including differentials and so forth.
 - The program started in 2018 and the first ten (10) teachers came in 2020 in the midst of the pandemic.
 - He just returned back from the Philippines last week where they actually conditionally hired seventy-eight (78) teachers for this upcoming school year to help fill some of our vacancies, especially on our neighbor islands and rural locations where it is oftentimes very difficult to find qualified educators to fill some of those roles. We are really optimistic that this will help as one part of our recruitment process, to help fill qualified teachers in certain positions in those areas.
- Committee Member Mew asked if once we issue their Provisional Licenses, will their names be entered into the U.S. NASDTEC national clearinghouse database?
- Executive Director Villalobos answered that they will not be entered into the NASDTEC national clearinghouse database. We would run their names but like Mr. Urbaniak stated, their Social Security numbers will be new so nothing will pop up. We are hoping that the Philippines would catch any license infraction which is totally different from a criminal offense. This is similar to the U.S. where we run our individuals through the NASDTEC clearinghouse because they may not have a criminal offense on file but may have a disciplinary action put on a license.
- Committee Member Mew asked, “Once the teachers’ Visas expire, do they go back to the Philippines or will they possibly want to stay in the United States and teach at another system perhaps?”

- Mr. Urbaniak provided the following information and explanation to answer Committee Member Mew's question.
 - The J-1 Visa is for five (5) years.
 - The initial Visa is granted for three (3) years.
 - The teachers are evaluated just like any other teacher so if a principal does hire a J-1 teacher, they have the ability to non-renew their contract until they are tenured.

So, they could return back to the Philippines if they are non-renewed but we don't anticipate that. But, if they were, that would be the case.

- These teachers are issued an initial Visa for three (3) years and after the third year, they are allowed to have two (2), one-year extensions up to five (5) years.
- After that fifth (5th) year, they then must return back to the Philippines for two (2) years.

And part of this is, it's a cultural Visa exchange, meaning that they would need to then share their knowledge of what they learned in the U.S., as an educator in the Philippines for two (2) years.

- After that two (2) years, they then could reapply to come back on a J-1 Visa and hopefully, they'd want to come back to Hawaii in our school system, but they would be allowed to return then back to the U.S.
- At that point in time, obviously, that information is captured somewhere, they'd have their Social Security numbers.

Then, that could be for other jurisdictions or for us, that information could be captured in that clearinghouse is his assumption.

However, he did want to share that prior to them even getting a Visa or coming on board, this is an extremely competitive program to get into the United States as part of hiring as a teacher.

- Just to put this in comparison, the highest earning teachers in the Philippines may earn between \$15,000.00 and \$25,000 a year. The \$25,000 range is for those educators that are highly experienced at a career ladder so this is a very competitive process.
- The organization that we partner with does provide an employment related background check on each employee which we also are provided with so we know whether or not they've had any kind of disciplinary issues at work and so forth. Those educators who do, unfortunately, are not accepted into the program from the beginning. We wouldn't even have had the chance to interview them.

- Committee Member Kawazoe stated to Mr. Urbaniak that he went and recruited seventy-eight (78) candidates already and we didn't even approve this New Business Item.
 - He asked what was promised to them, given that we didn't approve it yet.
 - What kind of licenses were promised to them?

 - Could he give some background on what all these candidates are expecting?

- Mr. Urbaniak provided the following response:
 - Please know that for us, we handle the employment aspect and you, all the licensing and it's all tied together, right?

 - But, there was no promise of employment for these candidates.

 - Our initial screening and interview was to meet candidates and to essentially, conditionally offer them employment to the public school system as a teacher, pending hiring from a school administrator and so forth.

 - So, with regards to employment, simply just a conditional offer of employment pending all the other required paperwork which obviously includes licensure and so forth.

 - We make that very clear to our candidates, that aspect.

 - We had a planned the trip for this recruitment event and we had them all captured in one location so for us, it was a great opportunity for recruitment which is why we went through with our meet.

- Committee Member Kawazoe spoke to the HTSB staff:
 - Of the ten (10) teacher licenses that were given out to these ten (10) teachers, six (6) out of ten (10) went to our most vulnerable, the special education population.

 - And, given that there must be some differences in criteria in terms of meeting standards for the educators, he asked if Executive Director Villalobos or the Licensing Specialists could speak to the differences, laws or things of that nature.

- Executive Director Villalobos responded to Committee Member Kawazoe's question.
 - Usually when people come in with a NACES evaluation courses, and she's going to say probably "Special Ed" and she hasn't seen transcripts from the Philippines that she can speak to but usually in different countries, Special Education (SPED) laws are different.

- If we look at their NACES evaluation, they would actually get, if this NBI passes, an American Hawaii license with SPED on the license itself.
- She is not sure how familiar they are with SPED laws in the United States, or if they are trained in SPED law and U.S. law.
- However, again, she has not seen any transcripts from the Philippines or if any Specialists have, and really looked at their courses.
- Mr. Urbaniak added the following comments in regards to Committee Member Kawazoe's question:
 - When we do get the NACES evaluation, we do see the course work that they do participate in and have taken.
 - Again, that evaluation does deem whether or not their program meets the equivalencies of U.S. programs.
 - So, we feel confident in those teachers, having that they've worked in these areas for almost three (3) years now.
 - We also rely on conversations with our school administrators as well as their evaluations within the system and they've all done extremely well with effective and highly effective ratings.
 - We trust our evaluations that have been provided to us by those providers, that they have a basic understanding of the rules, laws and so forth.
 - The education training system in the Philippines was actually modeled off of the U.S. system of education and training. There are so many similarities which is why not only we utilize them as a place to recruit educators and just similar because our systems are very close.
- Chairperson Sanders asked Mr. Urbaniak if they are accredited in any way. Because again, any institute that we have, is accredited for teaching. That would be a concern for her that yes, it might say they're the same model but are they actually doing what is actually written there.
- Mr. Urbaniak responded to Chairperson Sanders.
 - That's what the NACES evaluation does deem.
 - It looks at the actual school that they've come from and whether or not that school is accredited in that program.

- Chairperson Sanders shared her experiences when she relocated here.
 - Coming here, she had four (4) licenses and she still had to take PRAXIS tests. And, she is a U.S. citizen.
 - It concerns her that if she, coming from different states, have to take PRAXIS tests and prove that she is a justified teacher after fifteen (15) years of teaching before she came to the State of Hawaii.
 - It concerns her that as a principal, to be hiring people that may not be as qualified and yet we're letting them go without having to prove that qualification. Whereas, as Americans, we don't even look at all of our American states to do that. This is a concern for her.
 - If it's working with the ten (10) that have come and they've had to do the PRAXIS tests to prove that we do have the same alignment, she doesn't see an issue with that.
 - Especially, if we're going to be giving them differentials and more pay than what we do sometimes for some of our own state employees.
- Committee Member Mew shared information on SPED training.
 - On the Special Education side, the training here includes Hawaii and national laws.
 - If we do pass this NBI and the person does have a Provisional License in SPED, he thinks that we would have to alert the districts. The districts have excellent workshops for new teachers in Chapter 16 and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA.)
 - When they come to his school, they're expected to hold Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings. Unless you know the law, it's going to be tough.
 - It's just so that we can provide additional training that is specific to our state. He thinks it would be helpful.
- Committee Member Kawazoe had three (3) questions for HTSB staff:
 1. Will this be a "Year-to-Year Contract?"
If so, does it fit with the Provisional License which is three (3) years?
 2. Can the J-1 teachers be given an Emergency Hire Permit and be paid the same as a licensed teacher?
 3. Are you asking that these Provisional Licenses be treated as our normal Provisional Licenses? (Reciprocity, good for three (3) years, ability to convert to a Standard License.)

- Executive Director Villalobos answered Questions #1 and #3:
 1. Yes, it is a “Year-to-Year” limited term contract. This is in line with our Emergency Hire Permit and not a Provisional License. A Provisional License is good for three (3) years so we don’t do Year-to-Year” on a Provisional license.

If it didn’t work out and they had to move back to the Philippines after Year Two, they would still have our provisional license. Unless this NBI passes, they would have to surrender it. The surrendering of it would not go into the NASDTEC Clearinghouse.

3. If they taught here for three (3) years, they would be under our Provisional License and then they could actually convert it after three (3) years to a five (5) year Standard License. Even though they only get two, one-year extensions, they would actually have our license if they don’t surrender it, for an additional three (3) years after that in the Philippines.

Executive Director Villalobos yielded Question #2 to Mr. Urbaniak because HIDOE is the employer and it is an employment question.

- Mr. Urbaniak answered Question #2:
 2. As a practice, they do not pay those teachers who have an Emergency Hire Permit at a higher pay level. Typically, we pay teachers who have an Emergency Hire Permit at the Emergency Hire salary range which for us would be problematic for recruitment and employment purposes.

We find that these educators are highly trained. I believe HTSB has board policy that they trust the NACES providers to determine whether or not these individuals have completed an equivalency of a U.S. training program (SATEP.)

In addition to that, he understands some of the feedback about the fact that many of us, including himself, have had to take numerous tests prior to HTSB having the correct reciprocity with other states.

However, he does know that we now have reciprocity with other states and the acceptance of the licenses. Unfortunately, the board policies do not allow for their license, which they have in the Philippines through an accredited program that has been evaluated by NACES as an accredited program, to accept that license as equivalent and therefore not having to take PRAXIS exams.

He does understand some of the concerns that were addressed but should their program be considered a license program which they do get licenses in the Philippines, theoretically they would have to take a PRAXIS, similar to our counterparts across the United States.

But, in answer to this specific question, no, if they receive an Emergency Hire Permit, they would be paid at the lower rate of pay which we find to be problematic. As it is, they are transitioning into the United States and we wouldn't want to put them at a disadvantage by paying them at a lower salary level.

- Committee Member Kawazoe had additional questions to gain more information.
 - If all things are equal and as Chairperson Sanders said, she had to meet the Hawaii standards with the PRAXIS exams.
 - If everything is equivalent, why can't they just come in and take the PRAXIS exams if they're trained the same?
 - How does hiring other international candidates that aren't a part of this type of program, how does that work? What has to be met? What is the procedure for that?
- Executive Director Villalobos answered Committee Member Kawazoe's questions:
 - When we get an international, whether they have a license or they completed a program, we do the NACES evaluation as well to make sure they completed a program in teacher education.
 - Then, they would have to take the all the PRAXIS tests to ensure that they have the basic skills in:
 - a. The equivalency of the three (3) content areas of reading, writing and math; and
 - b. Their main content area that they will get their license in.
 - c. In addition, to the PRAXIS tests in "a." and "b." above, they must take the *Principles of Learning and Testing* (PLT) exam.
 - If a person, say graduated from UNLV but did not get a license in Nevada, they also would have to take the PRAXIS tests to ensure quality. This is because the board does not monitor every single program in the United States or worldwide. We only monitor the programs within our state.
 - To ensure quality, if the person does not achieve licensure in another U.S. state, they have to take all the PRAXIS exams.
 - For international folks, even more so because international schools are completely different than the U.S. model. They actually have to take all of the PRAXIS tests as well after getting a NACES evaluation for both a Bachelor's degree and that they finished a program.
 - We've had people come in with an Emergency Hire Permit to take all the PRAXIS tests, and then convert their license to a Provisional License.

- That's both for international folks as well as U.S. folks who come in without a license and who have just completed a program.
- Committee Member Mew stated that he previously focused on the Special Education side and is now focusing on the PRAXIS side which is secondary to the SPED side.
 - The teacher needs to be Highly Qualified (HQ) in both the content that they will be teaching as well as SPED, for example. The only way to get the HQ, he believes, is to take the PRAXIS exam in that area.
 - As an example, if the teacher is teaching Special Education math, the teacher needs to be HQ in math plus have the SPED designation. He can't hire the teacher without this.
 - How will this be different for someone in the Philippines in SPED, knowing that they have the content background? He asked Licensing Specialist Rodriguez for input on this.
- Licensing Specialist Rodriguez replied that:
 - A question earlier in this conversation was, have we reviewed any transcripts that have SPED. He thinks this is relevant to what Committee Member Mew is talking about. He started going back through the people that have gone through/originally came from the Philippines prior to the pandemic. He thinks they are whom Mr. Urbaniak is talking about.
 - He has identified a couple of transcripts where SPED was identified as a major so that's how we typically look at prior to *NBI 21-13 The HTSB Plan to Accept Out-Of-State Completers in Accordance with Hawaii Revised Statutes*. Prior to that, we were identifying transcripts in their content area for the content knowledge.
 - To the question earlier, there are transcripts that did identify Special Education as a content major. He believes this Board adopted NBI 21-13 to verify content knowledge through the licensure exam if they have not gone through the programs that HTSB has adopted.
 - To your question, we typically would require licensure exams for anybody that is coming from a preparation program outside of the State of Hawaii. This NBI is asking for an exception to that.
 - He also wants to point out the second section of this NBI where after employment has ended with HODOE, these licensees would surrender this license. That's what is written into this NBI.

- Licensing Specialist Rodriguez shared information on licensing that is specific to international people that was brought up.
 - Other states such as Arkansas, North Carolina, and Florida, have a license that is specific for international teachers.
 - People have applied for licensure in our state holding this international license that some places call an International Faculty License.
 - We have had to inform them that we do not currently have an International Faculty equivalent license in our state.
 - This is just another way that other states are licensing people from outside of the United States.
 - This is not something that this Board holds.
- There being no further discussion, Chairperson Sanders called for a vote on NBI 22-54 to either recommend or not recommend this NBI to the full board.
 - If it is approved, the NBI will be recommended to the full board.
 - If it is not approved, the NBI will not be recommended to the full board.
- The Committee voted unanimously to not approve NBI 22-54. Therefore, NBI 22-54 was not recommended out of committee and will not be recommended to the full board.

DISCUSSION/Action:

NBI 22-55: Adoption of the 2022-2023 Hawaiian Focus Workgroup Recommendations (Part 2)

- Chairperson Sanders reviewed NBI 22-55.
- The committee voted to recommend approval of NBI 22-55 as written, to the full board.

DISCUSSION/Action:

NBI 22-56: License Affirmation (October and November 2022)

- Chairperson Sanders reviewed NBI 22-56.
- The committee voted to recommend approval of NBI 22-56 as written, to the full board.

DISCUSSION/Action:

NBI 22-57: Formation of the 2022-2023 Career and Technical Education Workgroup

- Chairperson Sanders reviewed NBI 22-57.
- The committee voted to recommend approval of NBI 22-57 as written, to the full board.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS: No additional testimony.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairperson Sanders adjourned the meeting at 10:56 a.m.

Recorder: *Elaine Hutchinson* Date: January 13, 2023
Elaine Hutchinson