

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Richard Gardenhire and it is my dream to educate and empower high school students from marginalized populations. I discovered this dream while working with local youth groups in Massachusetts and getting my bachelors degree in Intercultural Studies. It was too late in my college career to switch my major to education, but then I discovered Teach for America and was overwhelmingly grateful for the opportunity to work with teens again in such meaningful ways. Now, I am a 2022 Teach For America corps member and a teacher at Wai'anae High School. I teach Algebra 2 and have exceeded the licensure requirements of 450 clinical hours teaching Secondary Math which is the license I am seeking. As an inclusion teacher, I teach in a general education setting that is inclusive of both students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers; I therefore understand and teach to grade-level math standards and curriculum.

I receive training and support in both my subject area and special education through TFA, Wai'anae High School, and the Nanakuli-Wai'anae Complex. As a TFA first year teacher, I have been held to the same standards of rigor and excellence in demonstrating content knowledge as my general education counterparts. I have passed the praxis in my content area of Secondary Mathematics(5165) as well as in Special Education Core Knowledge and Applications(5354). I have completed 100 hours of teaching in a general education classroom for summer practicum, completed weekly training in content knowledge, curriculum design and lesson planning, and attended professional development and new teacher trainings at Wai'anae High. Moreover, I have embraced further educational and self betterment opportunities with our Chaminade University. This includes taking EDUC 635: Long and Short Range Planning and EDUC 660: SPED Introduction to Exceptional Children.

I also received intentional and formal observations by teachers of record, TFA coaches, and our school administration. I have demonstrated my competency as a classroom teacher by receiving a rating of Proficient on my Danielson observations. As a Special Education teacher, I received additional training during the summer for developing individualized education plans, attended monthly SpEd department meetings, held monthly conferences with our SpEd leads, and received asynchronous training for IDEA knowledge and compliance. During my time at Wai'anae High School, I have ascertained approximately 70 hours of training through instructional coaches, administration, professional consulting partners, and district supervisors. Additionally, I acquired educational preparation through over 40 TFA courses, including over 60 hours in instruction on

scaffolding, differentiation, culturally relevant pedagogy, curriculum planning, anti-racist teaching, and trauma-informed practices.

It is my understanding that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements for SATEPs, outlined in [NBI 12-27](#), to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area, sufficiently meets the internship requirements, regardless of whether this was in a general education setting or special education setting. I relied on this interpretation when accepting my teaching role at Wai'anae, completing my licensure requirements, and planning my finances. If I am not licensed on-time, I fear that I will simply not be able to continue my dream of teaching here at Wai'anae because I cannot afford to do so. I have been anticipating these bonuses/differentials all year while serving as a care coordinator/SpEd teacher in the Gen Ed setting for no extra pay in hopes that I would finally be compensated and recognized for my countless hours spent in service to our students with disabilities. Lastly, if such a drastic and sudden change is made regarding licensure requirements, I fear it will have widespread implications for each and every Wai'anae student who qualifies for special education services.

There's a reason TFA teachers are in these positions. Nobody else is coming. Hiring SpEd TFA teachers may not be the most ideal option, but it is certainly our best option right now. Without TFA teachers in these positions, they will most likely go unfilled. That reality will undoubtedly harm our students who have a legal right to the SpEd services that we will be wholly unable to provide without the quality, well-trained candidates that TFA provides.

Sincerely,
Richard Gardenhire

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Gardenhire". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

*Inclusion Teacher, Wai'anae High School
TFA Hawai'i 2022 Corps Member*

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha, members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Julia De Jong, and I am a 2022 Teach For America corps member currently serving as an elementary resource teacher at Maili Elementary School. My teaching responsibilities encompass the subjects of elementary English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. I have surpassed the mandatory licensure criteria of completing 450 clinical hours of teaching in an elementary setting (grades K-6), which aligns with the specific licensure I am pursuing. As an inclusion teacher, I teach in a general education setting that is inclusive of both students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers; I, therefore, understand and teach to grade-level 3 ELA and mathematic standards and curriculum. These plans incorporate appropriate accommodations to ensure all learners can access and engage with the content effectively.

I have benefited from valuable educational experiences and resources provided through various channels for training and support in my subject area and special education. These include guidance from my special education site coach, participation in additional professional development opportunities offered in PDE3, Goalbooks, district events, and TFA, and direct engagement with special education students in both the general and special education settings. I am currently enrolled as a graduate student in the Masters of Education Program at Johns Hopkins University. Within the scope of my coursework, I have undertaken a range of classes that have proven instrumental in my academic development. These include but are not limited to *Effective Practices in Teaching and Learning I*, a course that supports new teachers with the knowledge and skills of research-based effective practices in teaching and learning. This course examines the laws that govern special education and the categories of students served by it. I have proven my proficiency in multiple subjects by achieving a passing score on the Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) Praxis II examination. Additionally, my effectiveness as a classroom teacher has been affirmed through a Proficient rating across all Danielson domains during the most recent Educator Effectiveness System (EES) evaluation cycle.

To further enhance my qualifications and provide optimal support to the students of the Maili community, I am actively engaged in deepening my understanding of Special Education laws and services. This commitment is in preparation for the Praxis II 5354 (SPED) examination, as my aspiration is to become a highly qualified educator in the field of Special Education. Based on my understanding, Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements outlined in NBI 12-27 for SATEPs (State Approved Teacher Education Programs) to indicate that possessing clinical experience in a specific subject area satisfies the internship requirements, irrespective of whether the experience was gained in a general education or special education setting. This interpretation guided my decision to accept a special education teaching position at Maili Elementary and diligently pursue the completion of my licensure obligations.

If not licensed, I predict this will have a chain reaction not only to my professional and academic life but also to my personal life. Having the expectations and relief of knowing by year 1, I would be certified in lessened external stressors that follow living and teaching on Oahu. Living here for the past six years and receiving my Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts at the University of Manoa, I have experienced the beauty and culture of teaching plays a role here on the island. I have also recognized that teachers are not doing this job because of the money. As you read this, I ask that whoever gets to read this you can support me and other fellow teachers in my position. Getting licensed, in turn, feels like I am to be seen and recognized for the extensive work I have dedicated to my students, school, and community this past year.

Help us continue to support and foster strong relationships with our students by ensuring and recognizing that we have done what we can to become better and qualified. This past year I have learned that for everybody, every student, we need consistency to grow. Just like plants/crops, they need consistent irrigation, rotation, and care, or they'll die, leaving the community that relies on that source of nourishment to struggle. The teachers are the crops, and our students are the community. We came from the same seedling packet as those who filled these positions before us. Please help us continue to be a consistent factor for our keiki. Let it be our kuleana and laulima to ensure that our keiki have teachers from diverse backgrounds and continue to uplift and support them. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Julia De Jong
3rd-grade resource teacher, Maili Elementary
TFA Hawai'i 2022 Corps Member

[EXTERNAL] Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Josh Manansala <joshmanansala15@gmail.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 6:38 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Josh Manansala, and I am a teacher at Waianae High School. I teach in the subject area of math and have spent 2 years in Secondary. The following is a written testimony for the general business meeting.

As an inclusion teacher, I teach in a general education setting that is inclusive of both students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers; I therefore understand and teach to grade-level math standards and curriculum, as do the other special education teachers seeking licensure.

During my time teaching at Waianae High School, I have worked with TFA Special Education Teachers in many professional development and training opportunities. These include professional development sessions, department meetings, and course-alike meetings. TFA Special Education Teachers also regularly attend and complete new teacher training via instructional coaches and demonstrate competency as a classroom teacher by receiving positive ratings on Danielson's Educator Effectiveness Scale. I have also worked closely with [REDACTED] in course alike meetings.

It is my understanding that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements for SATEPs, outlined in [NBI 12-27](#), to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area, sufficiently meets the internship requirements, regardless of whether this was in a general education setting or special education setting. TFA Special Education Teachers relied on this interpretation when accepting their teaching role at a partner school, and they have spent the past year actively working to complete their licensure requirements. If they are not licensed on time, these teachers may be asked to switch content areas entirely, unable to remain in a teaching position, and lose out on necessary financial support to remain a teacher in the state of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Josh Manansala

Math teacher, Waianae High School

May 18, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

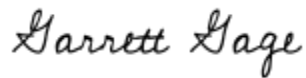
My name is Garrett Gage and I am a 2022 Teach For America corps member and teacher at Waianae High School. I teach in the subject area of secondary English and Language Arts and have exceeded the licensure requirements of 450 clinical hours teaching English and Language Arts, which is the license I am seeking. As a community based instruction teacher, I utilize grade-level standards and ELA specific curriculum in my classroom to design instruction that includes appropriate accommodations based on students' individual needs. Additionally, in order for me to appropriately implement an IEP I have to make sure that students are making progress to their annual goals, which are aligned to specific content standards. Adding on, I have aligned content standards and tied them to relevant lessons that my students will need upon completing high school. I have created learning opportunities by having students participate in a class thrift store, where they learned valuable skills, such as persuasive writing and using key details and evidence to explain why decisions need to be made. Not only are content and standards being taught in my class, they are being used in a way that is beneficial to the needs of my students, which will help them find success later in life.

I receive training and support in both my subject area and special education through multiple observations by Nanakuli-Waianae complex staff, along with debrief conversation with specific feedback for improvement. Additionally, I've had over 60 hours of training and PD provided by Waianae High School coaches and administration, school consulting partners, and district staff members. This does not include the many hours of training that was provided to me by Waianae High School special education leads. There are also the 34 courses that I completed for TFA, the online trains that needed to be completed to show IDEA compliance, and the courses that I am actively taking at Chaminade University. I have also demonstrated ELA content knowledge by receiving a passing score on the English and Language Arts Praxis II. I have also clearly and effectively demonstrated my competency as a classroom teacher by receiving a rating of Proficient during this year's EES cycle. I have been actively deepening my knowledge of Special Education laws and services in preparation for the Praxis II 5354 (SPED), as it is my goal to be a highly qualified teacher in order to best serve students within the Waianae High School community.

It is my understanding that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements for SATEPs, outlined in [NBI 12-27](#), to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area, sufficiently meets the

internship requirements, regardless of whether this was in a general education setting or special education setting. I relied on this interpretation when accepting my teaching role at Waianae High School and working to complete my licensure requirements. If I am not licensed on-time, I would likely have to find a new career path, which absolutely crushes my heart. I moved from Augusta, Georgia to teach Hawaiian students, because I believe that their voices hold so much value that they are not heard. I want to support our students in getting their voices heard, but I need to be able to survive living here in order to provide the support our students desperately need. The money that is associated with getting licensed is vital to my ability to live here sustainably. More importantly than my personal circumstance, if the TFA special education teachers do not get licensed it will only serve to hurt our students. The only reason I have the ability to teach at Waianae High School, or in Hawaii in general, is because there is such a desperate need for special education teachers. There is a high need for special education teachers and almost no one is willing to fill those positions, except for the many of us TFA teachers who are fighting for the betterment of our students. My dream is to eliminate the need for TFA teachers because there are enough local qualified teachers who want to teach the young minds in our community, but that dream is far from being a reality. Our students need and deserve teachers who will fight for them with everything they have to offer. By preventing effectively trained and experienced teachers from getting licenses you would be removing teachers from high need positions that they want to be in. At this point in the year, these empty special education roles would likely be filled by long-term substitute teachers who are not held to the same standard of knowledge or training that current TFA teachers have experienced. Meaning our students have less effective teachers and do not get the quality of education they deserve.

Sincerely,
Garrett Gage

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Garrett Gage".

Teacher, Waianae High School
TFA Hawai'i 2022 Corps Member

[EXTERNAL] Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Madi Mazzola <madi.k.mazzola@gmail.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 7:33 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Madeleine Mazzola and I am a teacher at Wai'anae High School. I teach in the subject area of fine arts and have spent four years as a secondary teacher on the Leeward coast. As a fine arts teacher, and more generally an electives teacher that serves *all* students on campus- students with disabilities and their non disabled peers, across all grade levels- it has been incredibly important in the development of my teaching practice to have a grasp on best practices for delivering fine arts instruction that both engages rigorously with standards and also responds to a diversity of student needs, strengths and challenges through the employment of inclusive practices.

During my time teaching at Wai'anae High School, I have worked with TFA Special Education Teachers in many professional development and training opportunities. These include professional development sessions, meetings with instructional coaches, department meetings, course-alike meetings, and collaborative training from partnering educational consultants. TFA Special Education Teachers also regularly attend and complete new teacher training via instructional coaches and demonstrate competency as a classroom teacher by receiving positive ratings on Danielson's Educator Effectiveness Scale. I have also worked closely with current TFA Corps Members through academy meetings, professional development and professional learning, as well as in collaboration to better accommodate the students with disabilities that I teach for whom they serve as care coordinators. In my experience with each of these teachers, they performed their role with the utmost professionalism and care for their students and the school.

It is my understanding that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements for SATEPs, outlined in [NBI 12-27](#), to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area, sufficiently meets the internship requirements, regardless of whether this was in a general education setting or special education setting. TFA Special Education Teachers relied on this interpretation when accepting their teaching role at a partner school, and they have spent the past year actively working to complete their licensure requirements. If they are not licensed on time, these teachers may be asked to switch content areas entirely, unable to remain in a teaching position, and lose out on necessary financial support to remain a teacher in the state of Hawai'i. In addition to their personal circumstances, this will have a long term impact on our ability to meet the needs of our students with disabilities. Our school is designated as hard to staff, and those special education and care coordinator positions that are often left unfilled through traditional recruitment pathways are integral to ensuring an equitable and inclusive learning environment for all of our students. It would be incredibly disruptive to our school and our students to so abruptly make such a change without another immediate solution to the dire need for special educators in the Wai'anae community.

Such a change would put undue stress on our already stretched special education and would ultimately harm students.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Mazzola
Wai'anāe High School
Fine Arts Teacher

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Renee Lovell and I am a concerned teacher (4 years) and alumni of Wai'anae High School and former Teach For America, TFA, alumni (2 years). I am testifying on the behalf of the special education teachers at Wai'anae and all across the state of Hawai'i. I am testifying about the potential withholding of licenses for the special education teachers that came from the TFA program for the upcoming school year. As an inclusion teacher, I teach in a general education setting that is inclusive for both students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. I therefore understand and teach to grade level English Language Arts, ELA, standards and curriculum, as do the other special education teachers seeking licensure.

During my four years of teaching at Wai'anae High School and have worked with TFA including their TFA Special Education Teachers in many professional development and training opportunities. When I was still a co-member I remember the many different professional developments and training that I went through with the school on top of TFA training and professional developments. Many included multiple sessions and collaborative training with coaches and staff of TFA that have worked in their setting for multiple years. Not only that but I had to include Wai'anae High School's many professional development courses, meetings with instructional coaches, department meetings, course-alike meetings, and collaborative training from many different partnering educational consultants. I also have worked closely with [REDACTED] through classroom collaboration as she is my co-teacher for English Language Arts as the special education teacher in the inclusion classroom. She works closely with me and we together make goals to help all students (students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers) reach the standards set forth by the Department of Education. She and I prepare lessons that are standards and curriculum based. In our course-alike meetings with all the other 11th grade English Language Arts courses, she is regularly prepared to share ideas and collaborate with all teachers to help her students both our inclusion and her resource class to meet the standards and curriculum of all students at the 11th grade level.

It is my understanding that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements for SATEPs, outlined in [NBI 12-27](#), to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area, sufficiently meets the internship requirements, regardless of whether this was in a general education setting or special education setting. TFA Special Education Teachers relied on this interpretation when accepting their teaching role at a partner school, and they have spent the past year actively working to complete their licensure requirements. If they are not licensed on time, these teachers may be asked to switch content areas entirely, unable to remain in a teaching position, and lose out on necessary financial support to remain a teacher in the state of Hawai'i. In addition to their personal circumstances, students will be impacted by the loss of these teachers. Especially speaking for [REDACTED]. She has been an asset in the classroom. She has been able to teach curriculum to all our students in the classroom. She is able to connect with the students of Wai'anae and make them feel smart and cared for. As a teacher, alumni and a member of the Wai'anae community, [REDACTED] and many other special education teachers work hard and contribute greatly to the community and our students. [REDACTED] takes the time to learn from each student which is rare to find in all the new teachers that come to Wai'anae. She has truly made many students feel seen and heard. She advocates for all students, not just the ones who are part of her care coordinator role. She helps in all curriculums as well trying to help them understand the material. If Wai'anae were to lose these many Special Education Teachers we will lose more than just teachers. Many students will find themselves negatively impacted by the loss or removal to another subject. Students will find it troubling to see their teachers in new settings and feel that they cannot trust the education system and their teachers due to the many losses of teachers at Wai'anae.

Sincerely,
Renee Lovell

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Renee Lovell', written in a cursive style.

Wai'anae High School
English Language Arts Teacher, Class Council Advisor, Anime Club Advisor, Alumni of
Wai'anae High School

[EXTERNAL] TESTIMONY (Comment on NBI 22-102- Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Nicole Clapson <nicole.clapson@k12.hi.us>

Fri 5/19/2023 8:00 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Nicole Clapson and I am a 2016 Teach For America Hawai'i alumni. During my two years as a Teach for America Hawai'i corps member and Elementary Special Education teacher, I received licensure from the HTSB. I continued to teach Special Education for three more years, at Kipapa Elementary School and I affirm that I taught my students using the same standards used by other general education teachers. I am now a second-grade teacher at Lehua Elementary School and this year will be my seventh year in the classroom.

While in Teach for America Hawai'i, I received training and support in both my subject area and special education. I had a great mentor who helped me during my first two years of teaching as well as a special education mentor, specifically to help me in the area of special education. Through Teach for America, I was able to take courses at Johns Hopkins University and work towards my Master's Degree in Elementary Education. I have demonstrated my competency as a classroom teacher by receiving overall effectiveness in my Danielson ratings as a Teach for America corps member.

Thinking back on my days as a first-year Special Education teacher, I was scared and anxious, but also excited to continue my work as a teacher. I felt safe and capable of doing my job, thanks to Teach for America Hawai'i and the resources they provide for corps members. There is nothing easy about being a teacher, and it takes a lot of work to choose to stay in the education field. Teach for America Hawai'i works with the DOE and various Title 1 schools to help work towards equitable public education. Many of the schools and teaching lines are hard to fill positions, yet corps members get hired there, and Teach for America Hawai'i supports them to ensure they are qualified and meet standards to support all students. As a Special Education teacher, I was told that the setting does not determine the student's success, yet ironically, HTSB is saying a Special Education classroom is not the same as a General Education classroom.

To take away the ability for first-year Teach for America Hawai'i corps members to receive their license is heartbreaking and discouraging for all educators. Teach for America Hawai'i is putting in the work every day and showing up for students because they want to make a difference.

As an alumni of Teach for America Hawai'i, I am excited about the ways in which our current Teach for America corps members will continue to contribute to the growth and success of our students and school communities in Special Education settings.

Sincerely,

Nicole Clapson

Teacher, Lehua Elementary

TFA Hawai'i Alumni

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May 18, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

Meeting: Hawaii Teacher Standards Board General Business Meeting on May 23, 2023

Agenda Item: NBI 22-102 Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America

Candidates

Position: Comment

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Stephany Makizuru and I am a 2014 Teach For America Hawai'i alumni. As a Special Education upper department lead supporting the 11th and 12th grade special education teachers at Waianae High School, I received licensure from the HTSB in the subject area of English through Teach for America Hawai'i. As a Special Education teacher, I affirm that I taught/teach my students 10th grade ELA using the same standards used by other general education teachers.

While in Teach for America Hawai'i, I received training and support in both my subject area and special education. I was very lucky when I started at Waianae High School as they had an awesome special education department that supported me both as a care coordinator and also as a special education teacher within my content area. I was also lucky to have specific coaches to where they were able to guide me and train me on how to better my skills as a special education teacher within my ELA classroom. Through TFA, HIDOE, and also having taken classes from the University of Chaminade it has prepared me with all the skills necessary to be a very effective teacher in the special education setting in 10th grade ELA. I was also blessed to have an awesome course alike within the 10th grade academy in ELA where we meet on a weekly basis to make sure that my recourse special education class was meeting the standards that the general education classes were hitting. Working closely with my course alike and all the support that was provided throughout my experience I was able to develop skills such as understanding how to provide specially designed instruction within the special education setting to make sure that all my students were meeting the general education curriculum, and state standards. I have demonstrated my competency as a classroom teacher meeting proficiency throughout my years here at Waianae High School. Based on my EES that was given to me every year while in the Teach For America program I was able

to show proficiency within the classroom based on the following criteria; showing my learning outcomes for my lesson and how those outcomes fit into the larger sequence of learning for my class which was based on component 1C-> 3C; also being able to show ways of communication and the importance of my content and be able to encourage my students to show pride in their work which covered components 1A -> 2B; followed by the expectations for my students based on their behaviors along with how I monitored their behavior which was based on component 1B -> 2D; while also covering components 1E -> 3B which discussed questions that I might use in my lesson to involve my students and lead student lead discussion, and lastly component 1E -> 3C which identified how I engaged my students in the learning, and what specifically will my students be doing during the lesson. Without the support from my ELA coursealike, my TFA support staff I would not be able to hit proficiency within the content ELA subject that I was teaching.

Since receiving my licensure through the HTSB in the subject area of English (ELA) , I have also passed the Special Education Praxis and added a field in Special Education. This has allowed me to continue to play an important role in my school community. After being in the classroom for a total of 5 and a half years; I have then decided to take the opportunity to become a special education upper department lead. I have been blessed to be in my current role for the past 4 years. Being able to support the new and upcoming TFA teachers within my role has been great. I have seen many develop as teachers in their different content areas that they have been placed in. I have seen many of them strive in building relationships with the community and also their students being able to make a difference in each of their kids' lives, special education or resource teacher it did not matter

As an alumni of Teach for America Hawai'i, I am excited for the ways in which our current Teach for America corps members will continue to contribute to the growth and success of our students and school communities in Special Education settings. I have seen first hand how hard the first year TFA teachers that come through our school have worked. They were never short of taking the easy way out even though they were not licensed yet. I saw tears, dedication, and hard work in each classroom that I have stepped foot in. The first year TFA teachers have accomplished everything that a regular first year teacher was asked to do. They completed the mandatory special education certification that the state has mandated, they have completed the required EES observations, they have required and finished all the professional development hours that were asked of them while on top of that holding down an average caseload of 10-15 students at our school while on top of that learning and teaching their own classes;

providing curriculum where their students must meet the state standards in order to pass the appropriate grade level. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Stephany Makizuru

Special Education Upper Lead, Waianae High School
2014 TFA Hawai'i Alumni

[EXTERNAL] Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Madeline McKinnon <mckinnonmadeline@gmail.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 8:33 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Madeline McKinnon and I am a special education teacher at Waianae High School, I teach in the subject area of biology and have spent 4 years teaching in the high school setting.

As an inclusion teacher, I teach in a general education setting that is inclusive of both students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers; I therefore understand and teach to grade-level biology standards and curriculum, as do the other special education teachers seeking licensure.

I was blessed to be able to become a special education teacher here at WHS through the TFA certification program. Since my commitment, I have spent an additional 2 years at my placenet school, and worked alongside 5 different general education co-teachers.

During my time teaching at WHS, I have worked with TFA Special Education Teachers in many professional development and training opportunities. These include professional development sessions, meetings with instructional coaches, department meetings, course-alike meetings, and collaborative training from partnering educational consultants. TFA Special Education Teachers also regularly attend and complete new teacher training via instructional coaches and demonstrate competency as a classroom teacher by receiving positive ratings on Danielson's Educator Effectiveness Scale. I have also worked closely with TFA teachers, teachers from the community, special education and general education instructors, and held a case-load of 15+ special education teachers since joining the WHS team. I have seen equally phenomenal performance from the wide variety of teachers I have worked so close with, and did not witness a correlation of quality based on their program training, rather a passion for teaching determined who excelled with students.

It is my understanding that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements for SATEPs, outlined in [NBI 12-27](#), to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area, sufficiently meets the internship requirements, regardless of whether this was in a general education setting or special education setting. TFA Special Education Teachers relied on this interpretation when accepting their teaching role at a partner school, and they have spent the past year actively working to complete their licensure requirements. If they are not licensed on time, these teachers may be asked to switch content areas entirely, unable to remain in

a teaching position, and lose out on necessary financial support to remain a teacher in the state of Hawai'i. In addition to their personal circumstances, the reason TFA has to staff special education teachers, and the reason I got this job as a special education teacher, is because these positions are hard to fill, and they generally allow for lots of collaboration and learning opportunities along the way.

Sincerely,

Madeline McKinnon

WHS Special Education Teacher

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Madeline McKinnon

10th Grade Biology and Special Education

Wai'anae High School

360-558-8151

"Research is what you are doing when you do not know what you are doing"

[EXTERNAL] Testimony TFA SpEd Teachers

Joseph Gulisao <gulisao@yahoo.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 8:39 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

May 18, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Joseph Gulisao and I am the Sophomore Academy Special Education Lead. I train and help both new and veteran teachers in special education. As a lead I support teachers from training to running and implementing the supports and services in an IEP, tracking progress and communicating with team members (parents/guardians, service providers, other team members and transportation. I have worked for 17 years in Secondary Education primarily at Waianae High School.

During my time teaching at Waianae High School, I have worked with TFA Special Education Teachers in many professional development and training opportunities. These include professional development sessions, meetings with instructional coaches, department meetings, course-alike meetings, and collaborative training from partnering educational consultants. TFA Special Education Teachers also regularly attend and complete new teacher training via instructional coaches and demonstrate competency as a classroom teacher by receiving positive ratings on Danielson's Educator Effectiveness Scale. I have also worked closely and trained many these teachers including [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and many more. Together we addressed classroom collaboration, course alike meetings, department meetings and trainings, participated in IEP meetings as general education and special education teachers. Our goal is to support and guide each student so that they are on course reach their life goals and become positive community members.

It is my understanding that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements for SATEPs, outlined in [NBI 12-27](#), to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area, sufficiently meets the internship requirements, regardless of whether this was in a general education setting or special education setting. TFA Special Education Teachers relied on this interpretation when accepting their teaching role at a partner school, and they have spent the past year actively working to complete their licensure requirements. If they are not licensed on time, these teachers may be asked to switch content areas entirely, unable to remain in a teaching position, and lose out on necessary financial support to remain a teacher in the state of Hawai'i. In addition to their personal circumstances, their being here matters to our students, our school and the long term impact on the availability of qualified educators.

Throughout the school year teachers build rapport with their students and for many student these connections have a lasting impression on their lives. Teachers are sometimes the only adults that are consistent in their lives. We providing education, teachable moments, encouragement, praise, guidance and sometimes consequences. As with anything in life, the key to success is consistency and hard work.

The teachers from TFA that I work with at Waianae High School in the special education department have done an amazing job with their students in the classroom, providing supports and services, remaining compliant with all special education paperwork (Re-evaluations, Individual Educational Program (IEP) and communication. Not allowing these special education teachers back in the classroom will for next school year have serious repercussions to all our students.

Mahalo,

Joe Gulisao

Teacher

Waianae High School

Sophomore Academy Lead

[EXTERNAL] Testimony - NBI 22-102

Griffin Bolan <gkbolan@gmail.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 8:40 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

I have worked at Wai'anae Highschool as both a Gen-ed and resource teacher for the last six years. The idea that through this update you are retroactively taking away licensure from teachers who have spent this entire academic year serving our kids is ridiculous. When was the last time you observed a classroom at one of our schools? Do you have any idea what we are dealing with on a day-to-day basis? Many of these teachers had no choice in the subject area that they were placed in yet they gave it their best shot, and again, if you have actually witnessed what is happening in our schools you know exactly what I mean. If you don't, then this decision makes a lot of sense I guess.

Sure, change the rule for next year. That's fair. But to drop this on numerous teachers this year who will now have to switch their roles, learn new content, and be stuck with emergency hire pay for another year? So shame. You are unfairly punishing educators and schools by implementing this change in this fashion.

Please correct this! Change the policy for next school year so that folks can do their due diligence by the book. If not, I hope every single person involved in this decision signs up to work in a resource or CBI classroom at Wai'anae Highschool since you clearly have no idea what we are dealing with and we will inevitably have no one to fill our special education lines.

Our kids receiving services are going through enough. Please leave the politics of this profession and issues with TFA out of decisions that are ultimately going to screw over our schools with the most challenges. There is a reason why we have a hard to staff bonus out here. Fun fact, it's not just the drive.

Appreciate your time,
Griffin Bolan
Wai'anae Highschool
10th grade Resource ELA Teacher

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Griffin Kanoa Bolan
Phone: 808-594-7431

May 18, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Alec Lazor and I am a 2022 Teach For America corps member and Special Education resource teacher at Aiea High School. I teach Geometry, Modeling Our World 1, and Modeling Our World 2 and have exceeded the licensure requirements of 450 clinical hours teaching Math in Secondary (6-12), which is the license I am seeking. As a resource teacher, I utilize the same exact grade-level standards and math-specific curriculum as other math teachers in addition to the implementation of accommodations and modifications for my special education students.

I receive training and support in both my subject area and special education through Teach For America, Johns Hopkins, Aiea High School colleagues, and HDOE professional development workshops. I have demonstrated math content knowledge by receiving a passing score on the Praxis II 5165. I have also demonstrated my competency as a classroom teacher by receiving a rating of Proficient on Danielson domains 1-4 during this year's EES cycle. I am also in the process of deepening my knowledge of Special Education laws and services in preparation for the Praxis II 5354 (SPED), as it is my goal to be a highly qualified teacher in order to best serve students of the Aiea community.

It is my understanding that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements for SATEPs, outlined in [NBI 12-27](#), to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area, sufficiently meets the internship requirements, regardless of whether this was in a general education setting or special education setting. I relied on this interpretation when accepting my teaching role at Aiea High School and working to complete my licensure requirements. It came as a complete shock to find out in my last month of this school year that I might not be certified in my content area. If I am not licensed on-time in the content area of math, there are several ramifications. The financial implications of staying as an emergency hire for an extra year would make life living as a teacher difficult in Hawaii. It would also affect not only my immediate salary in SY 23-24 but for future reclassification and earning tenure. With my career advancement delayed, I am strongly considering leaving teaching behind. If I was to continue teaching and attempt to earn my certification through TFA, I'd be forced to leave Aiea High School due to only SPED lines being available. Besides my personal circumstance, this potential disallowance of certification would worsen our teacher shortage as those like myself who want to teach but are unable to due to the financial implications would be forced to leave the profession.

Sincerely,
Alec Lazor
Teacher, Aiea High School
TFA Hawai'i 2022 Corps Member

[EXTERNAL] TESTIMONY (Comment on NBI 22-102- Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Christen Wilson <christenmywilson@gmail.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 9:16 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

Meeting: Hawaii Teacher Standards Board General Business Meeting on May 23, 2023

Agenda Item: NBI 22-102 Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates

Position: Comment

My name is Christen Wilson and I am 2015 Teach for America Hawai'i Alumni.

"Where do you see yourself in ten years?" The dreaded interview question. Coming straight out of college, I knew I wanted to be a teacher and had a vision of a slightly older me with the Pinterest perfect classroom with my 15-20 students who were all raising their quiet hands eager to share the answer to the riveting question I had just asked. I thought that Teach for America was going to be the perfect path to make that vision a reality and then I got hired as a Special Education Teacher at Maili Elementary School. I never wanted to be a SPED teacher. I told myself that I just had to complete the two years in special education and then I could try to find a general education job. My uncle, who was a teacher, told me that I would learn everything I needed to be a teacher in the job since special education is just good teaching, but warned me against getting licensed in special education because then I would be stuck.

My first year in the classroom was hard, but it pushed me to grow. I was lucky that I had support in both my subject area as well as in special education from both Teach for America and the DOE. At Content Learning Communities with Teach for America, I learned strategies such as using small group instruction to support reading groups, and I learned from our school's data teams how to invest students in their math fluency by having them track their own data. I learned tips on how to implement accommodations for my students from my Teach for America Coach and learned how to navigate ecsss at our district's new SPED teacher training. For my very first IEP meeting, I spent weeks preparing seeking out advice from my Teach for America Content Specialist on how to take effective data and seeking out support from other teachers and coaches at Maili on how to word this objective just right. At the end of the meeting, as I gave a big sigh of relief, this parent stopped and said "You know, this is the first meeting where I feel like this plan actually reflects what my child needs." I'll never forget that moment, and it was the start of a passion for special education that I never knew I had. This passion continued to grow as I became a better teacher and I found that I enjoyed specially designing content to fit the unique needs of my students. I enjoyed the added challenge of thinking about how I would give my students access to the priority standards that we talked about in grade level meetings

and I enjoyed showing off my student assessments when they were able to demonstrate mastery of the grade level content with some accommodations and modifications. At the end of my first year of teaching, I knew I wanted to continue to be a special education teacher and was grateful for the path to be able to do so.

Since receiving my licensure through the HTSB in the subject area of Elementary Education K-6, I have also passed the special education praxis and early childhood education praxis and added a field in both areas. Over the last eight years, I have had the opportunity and privilege to teach in a resource special education setting as well as in a fully self-contained preschool setting. My passion for special education really grew in this space, and I have been able to support students in ways that I had never previously thought possible. From advocating for and teaching students to use AAC devices to writing behavior support plans and supporting students with the foundational skill of giving joint attention. This passion has led me to continue my education to become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and has led me to my current position as Student Services Coordinator and RTI coach at Lehua Elementary School. It has also led me to work with Teach for America as a Coach and Content Specialist to support our new and incoming teachers.

In my role as a Teach for America Coach and Content Specialist, I have had the opportunity to support many Corp Members who have been placed in special education lines. These Corp Members are expected to complete the same coursework as their peers who are teaching in general education lines, but they understand that they have an additional duty to specially design that content for their students. In their work they are able to demonstrate knowledge of the grade levels that they teach while also considering the unique needs of their students. This is apparent in some of their lesson plans where they add in paragraphs on how they are planning to differentiate the learning for their students. Not only are they teaching 1.RL.2 “retell stories including key details,” they have a plan to incorporate a token economy for one student who has off task behaviors, a core board for one student so he can communicate during the lesson, and have visuals printed for two others students so that they can demonstrate their understanding by sorting instead of writing. In their reflections, they talk about and reflect on how some students have already internalized that they “can’t do something” and are reflective in their plan to make learning fun and meaningful again for these students by celebrating growth, finding student strengths, incorporating student interests, and helping their students make connections. These are all qualities of excellent teachers.

What impresses me the most with these Corp Members is their willingness to learn and their commitment to doing what it takes for their students. While they diligently listen in content learning communities about co-teaching, writing SMART goals, student led IEP’s etc... Many of these Corp Members go the extra mile to seek out additional learning opportunities to support their students. Corp Members who have asked to meet on Saturday so that they could figure out a data collection system to try to get their student a 1:1, Corp Members who have stayed late after meetings to ask about how they might be able to make their lesson on measuring weight more culturally responsive for their students with special needs. These Corp Members deserve the opportunity to find their own answer to who they want to be and what they want to do in ten years.

“Where do you see yourself in ten years?” The dreaded interview question. My current reality is very different from what I envisioned for myself eight years ago, but now I can’t

imagine where I would be now if I wasn't placed in that Special Education Classroom. If you ask me that question now, this time I don't have an answer, but I do have a vision. My vision for my own career path is to continue to support our public school students with disabilities. However, this work cannot be done alone. We need new innovative teachers with grit and heart who are willing to learn and grow for their students. I see that with our first year corps members. As an alumni of Teach for America Hawai'i and a current Department of Education teacher, I am excited for the ways in which our current Teach for America corps members will continue to contribute to the growth and success of our students and school communities in Special Education settings.

Sincerely,

Christen Wilson

Student Services Coordinator, Lehua Elementary School

TFA Hawai'i Alumni

[EXTERNAL] TESTIMONY (Comment on NBI 22-102- Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Deborah Moon <deb.ji.moon@gmail.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 9:19 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

Meeting: Hawaii Teacher Standards Board General Business Meeting on May 23, 2023

Agenda Item: NBI 22-102 Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates

Position: Comment

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Deborah Moon and I am a 2015 Teach For America Hawai'i alumni. I began my journey as a Special Education teacher at Nānāikapono Elementary. I received licensure from the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) in the subject area of Elementary Education through Teach for America Hawai'i. As a Special Education teacher, I affirm that I taught my students using the same standards used by other general education teachers.

While in Teach for America Hawai'i (TFA-HI), I received training and support in both my subject area and special education through Content Learning Communities, individualized coaching and mentoring from my TFA-HI managers, and pedagogical, theoretical, and practical knowledge through my Johns Hopkins University (JHU) coursework. These complemented the continuous professional development I received through the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) in both Elementary and Special Education specific content. For example, as an Integrated Self Contained (ISC) Special Education teacher, I participated in my grade level data teams meetings. I used the same curricula that were used in general education classrooms such as ReadWell, Wonders, and Stepping Stones. I was able to apply my learnings to the discussions we were having in data teams to determine how to bring the grade level standards and content to life in my classroom and identify what supports they may need to access the content in their general education classrooms.

While at my undergraduate institution, I was on the path to pursuing an Elementary Education teaching license through a ninth semester and so had taken the necessary coursework in areas such as literacy, math, and science. My initial doubts about applying my undergraduate learnings to my Special Education classroom were quickly erased as I began to work with my students and colleagues. Additionally, in reflecting on my time in the corps and the decision to move to Hawai'i, on time licensure was a critical motivator which allowed me to begin my professional career with the HIDOE while pursuing licensure simultaneously.

Since receiving my licensure through the HTSB in the subject area of Elementary Education, I have also

passed the Praxis in the areas of Special Education and Early Childhood Education, and added the teaching fields Special Education and Early Childhood Education, respectively. This led me to take on different teaching and leadership roles within my school community as a Medically-Fragile teacher, Special Education Department Chair, Special Education Instructional Coach, and Student Services Coordinator. One of my most memorable roles was as an instructional coach to a first year Special Education TFA-HI teacher at my school. In this role, I could see a bird's eye view of how the different pieces of the first year Corps Member experience came together. In addition to the support and training all Elementary Corps Members were receiving, Special Education teachers also had additional communities and specialists to work with. In other words, I saw this teacher receiving all of the professional development a General Education Elementary teacher was receiving, plus Special Education specific support. With this foundation in Elementary standards and content knowledge, this teacher brought an ability to see the bridge between the general education classroom content and the special education classroom which supported the school's goal of integrating more inclusive practices.

As an alumni of Teach for America Hawai'i, I am excited for the ways in which our current Teach for America corps members will continue to contribute to the growth and success of our students and school communities in Special Education settings.

Sincerely,

Deborah Moon

TFA Hawai'i Alumni

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Moses Magno III and I am a Homegrown teacher at Wai'anae High School, I teach in the subject area of Special Education-Community-Based Instruction and have spent six years in secondary education and this will be my tenth year of public service to the Department of Education.

As a Community-Based Instruction Teacher, I utilize grade-level standards and special education specific curriculum in my classroom to design instruction that includes appropriate accommodations based on students' individual needs.


During my time teaching at Wai'anae High School, I have worked with TFA Special Education Teachers in many professional development and training opportunities. These include professional development sessions, meetings with instructional coaches, department meetings, course-alike meetings, and collaborative training from partnering educational consultants. TFA Special Education Teachers also regularly attend and complete new teacher training via instructional coaches and demonstrate competency as a classroom teacher by receiving positive ratings on Danielson's Educator Effectiveness Scale. I have also worked closely with all the TFA Teachers through providing an instructional strategies session on how to work with our children within the Nānākuli/Wai'anae Complex area. These vibrant teachers have the passion, grit, and drive to stay and continue to impart an influential impact on our students. Their hearts are vested into our kids and I am so honored that these young, passionate teachers would want to stay and support our children.

It is my understanding that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements for SATEPs, outlined in [NBI 12-27](#), to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area, sufficiently meets the internship requirements, regardless of whether this was in a general education setting or special education setting. TFA Special Education Teachers relied on this interpretation when accepting their teaching role at a partner school, and they have spent the past year actively working to complete their licensure requirements. If they are not licensed on time, these teachers may be asked to switch content areas entirely, unable to remain in a teaching position, and lose out on

necessary financial support to remain a teacher in the state of Hawai'i. In addition to their personal circumstances. This matters to me because HTSB is making drastic changes and decisions in the midst of a teacher-shortage crisis. I am flabbergasted at how these changes are coming in a time where we are about to close out the school year and the teacher-shortage crisis. It will also cause a travesty to our students as they will suffer the consequences due to the decision that is being made by executives who no longer serve in a teacher capacity. It will also cause a wide-range of issues such as heavy workloads for licensed SPED teachers, and more requirements for Care Coordinators to meet. I hope that you will take into consideration all of these testimonies and hear what others have to say in support of our TFA SPED Teachers.

Sincerely,

Moses Magno III, AA, BAP, PBCE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Moses Magno III', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Wai'anae High School
Teacher Leader, CBI

[EXTERNAL] Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Julianna Grainge <jgrainge7@gmail.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 9:41 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

I am Julianna Grainge, a 2022 Teach For America corps member and teacher at Waianae High School (WHS). I teach in a 12th-grade English inclusion classroom and taught last semester in the resource English setting. I have exceeded the licensure requirements of 450 clinical hours of teaching English in Secondary Education, which is the license I am seeking. As an inclusion teacher, I teach in a general education setting that is inclusive of both students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers; I, therefore, understand and teach to grade-level English standards and curriculum while also being able to scaffold to meet the learning needs of all students. As a resource teacher, I utilized my classroom's grade-level standards and English-specific curriculum to design instruction that includes appropriate accommodations based on students' needs.

I received training and support in both my subject area and in special education through various trainings offered by TFA, WHS, and through the coursework completed through our licensure programming at Chaminade University. I have demonstrated English content knowledge by receiving a passing score on the English Praxis II. I have also demonstrated my competency as a classroom teacher by receiving a rating of Proficient on all Danielson domains.

My understanding is that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements outlined in NBI 12-27 for SATEPs to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area fulfills the licensure requirements. This interpretation applies regardless of whether the experience was in a general education or special education setting. I relied on this interpretation when accepting my teaching role at Waianae High School, relocating the west side of Oahu, and working to complete my licensure requirements. If I am not licensed on time, there are several personal impacts, specifically financial concerns that will make it difficult for me to stay in this position. Regardless of my personal circumstances, this decision will greatly impact the teaching and care of our students. This is of the utmost concern.

As it stands, Waianae High School greatly relies on TFA teachers to fill Special Education roles. In fact, current and former TFA teachers make up more than half of the teachers in the department. We are supported and receive comprehensive guidance by our SPED leads. They provide us with training to ensure we are competent in all the requirements of our jobs. They provide support during meetings and walk us through the plan writing we need to complete. Additionally, they diligently check and provide feedback on the work we accomplish, fostering our growth and effectiveness as SPED teachers.

As a care coordinator, I have the privilege of regularly engaging with students and families, creating opportunities to understand their experiences in and outside of school, identifying their ongoing support needs, and providing assistance accordingly. This direct connection allows me to foster meaningful relationships and deliver targeted support.

This proposed decision demonstrates a lack of awareness and understanding of the needs of students and the potential consequences it will have for various stakeholders in the Hawaii Department of Education (HI DOE). While there are arguments against Teach For America (TFA) as a long-term solution to teacher shortages, implementing this decision without an alternative plan in place seems irresponsible and not aligned with the best interests of Hawaii's students.

Sincerely,
Julianna Grainge

*Teacher, Waianae High School
TFA Hawai'i 2022 Corps Member*

[EXTERNAL] TESTIMONY (Comment on NBI 22-102- Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Shook, Paoakalani <Paoakalani.Shook@teachforamerica.org>

Fri 5/19/2023 9:56 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

Meeting: Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board General Business Meeting on May 23, 2023

Agenda Item: NBI 22-102 Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates

Position: Comment

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Paoakalani Shook and I am a 2015 Teach For America (TFA) Hawai'i alumni. As a Special Education teacher at Leihoku Elementary from 2015-2017, I received licensure from the HTSB in the subject area of Elementary K-6 through TFA Hawai'i. While in the TFA Hawai'i ARC program, I received training and support through coaching, university coursework, and other development opportunities, in both my subject area and special education that allowed me to develop my competency as a classroom teacher. Teaching in my position provided an opportunity for me to more deeply understand and experience first-hand the inequities that are at play in our education system and I have since continued to live out my commitment to helping expand access to equal yet individualized and contextualized education for all of our keiki – especially for those coming from similar backgrounds as me as a low-income, first-gen, Native Hawaiian. And so after receiving my licensure through the HTSB and humbly serving the Leihoku school community (not only as a classroom teacher and advocate for my students, but also as a cheer club advisor, May Day hula coordinator, and more), I was recruited by the DOE's Office of Hawaiian Education (OHE) to serve as the State Resource Teacher for Nā Hōpena A'o and aid in the statewide implementation of HĀ (BOE Policy E-3) allowing for the contextualization of learning outcomes to our culture here in Hawai'i. I have since worked for the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu as Project Director for Hoakalei Scholars, a Kamehameha Schools grant program that expanded access to early college opportunities for Native Hawaiian and other students in the Ewa moku. And now I serve on TFA Hawai'i's staff as a Manager of Regional Team Initiatives – which has been a full circle experience as I believe so deeply in our organization's mission of building a coalition of equity-oriented leaders working to expand opportunities for all children. Being able to become a licensed teacher through my experience as a TFA Hawai'i corps member served as the critical foundation for my journey in what has become and will continue to be a life-long career in education. As a proud alumni of TFA Hawai'i, I am excited for the ways in which our current TFA Hawai'i corps members will continue to contribute to the growth and success of our students and school communities – many of whom are in dire need to fill their many vacant teacher positions in special education settings with not only competent teachers, but teachers such as our corps members who truly believe in the potential of each child and will serve as passionate life-long advocates for students and long-term leaders of educational and community advancement. I thus conclude with strongly advocating that our candidates have met the criteria needed to obtain licensure through the same training and support that I received in order to obtain my licensure – and I believe that through our program, our past, current and future corps members have and will be equipped with the solid foundation needed to deepen their impact in schools and communities across Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Paoakalani Shook

Paoakalani A.M. Shook (she/her/hers)

Manager, Regional Team Initiatives

paoakalani.shook@teachforamerica.org

(808) 285-6797

TEACHFORAMERICA | Hawai'i



[EXTERNAL] Testimony NBI 22-102

Hannah Thornton <hpthornton1@gmail.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 10:07 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

Good Morning,

My name is Hannah Thornton and I am a second year TFA corp member. I am also a general education teacher at Waianae High School. I work in an inclusion setting with a fellow TFA corps member and care coordinator who goes above and beyond in her role while also teaching a full class load. Her licensure resulted in a pay raise that I feel, while not nearly sufficient, begins to recognize the extensive amount of work that care coordinators do.

I have seen my first year TFA colleagues work tirelessly at their job and to not allow them to gain the certification that they did all the work for would be so severely undervaluing these fantastic educators. It would also prohibit them from accessing the pay raise that these teachers deserve, especially in these trying financial times. Furthermore, these teachers have spent all year building the overwhelming amount of skills it takes to teach special education and I know that all of them greatly looked forward to continuing to refine their practice in their second year. If this rule change went into effect, it would not allow them to do so. As a result, our students will not be receiving the services that they so deserve as well.

HTSB should allow the current first year Teach for America corps members to become licensed and continue teaching special education in their second year. They have already spent an entire year doing this work and if HTSB was serious about finding qualified teachers to teach special education, this group of individuals should be at the top of the list.

Best,

Hannah Thornton

Josh Green, M.D.
GOVERNOR



Keith T. Hayashi
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
WAI'ANAЕ HIGH SCHOOL
85-251 FARRINGTON HWY
WAI'ANAЕ, HAWAII 96792

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

I am writing to you in my capacity as the Vice Principal of Waianae High School (WHS) for the past 22 years. I am compelled to provide this testimony in support of Teach for America (TFA) and their placement of members in Special Education Teacher positions. Having worked with and hired TFA teachers since 2007, I firmly believe in their mission to serve underserved communities and promote educational equity.

At present, Waianae High School's Sophomore Academy is facing a significant challenge. Out of the eight Special Education Teachers in our academy, three will be leaving, one will be on sabbatical for Semester 1, and if TFA members are precluded from being placed in SPED roles, two more will need to be switched to general education positions for next school year. This would leave us with only two certified non-TFA teachers in the academy, and they specifically cater to our CBI and Medically Fragile students. Consequently, we would be compelled to hire five additional SPED-certified teachers to fill the resulting vacancies.

Even before being informed of the proposed rule change, we had already interviewed and offered three TFA candidates positions as SPED teachers for the upcoming year. I must emphasize the dire consequences that would ensue if TFA teachers were not allowed to work as emergency hires in SPED positions. Historically, the traditional hiring process has yielded little success in filling our SPED vacancies. Despite the statewide SPED differential of \$10,000 and the \$8,000 hard-to-fill differential for schools on the Leeward Coast, we have not seen an influx of SPED teachers seeking positions here. Since being informed of the rule change, we have requested candidate lists, communicated with the candidates, and conducted only a few interviews. We offered one teacher a position, but they still have not responded.

The TFA candidates we have hired as SPED teachers at WHS benefit from the guidance of our full-release New-Teacher Coach, as well as support from a full-release content-area coach and three full-release SPED leads. These mentors assist them in navigating the intricacies of SPED and the overall SPED process. Given the challenges we face in hiring SPED teachers, our SPED department has developed professional development training sessions, reference binders/materials, and videos covering various aspects of the

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

roles and responsibilities of a SPED teacher. By the end of their first year, our newly-hired SPED teachers have acquired extensive knowledge and demonstrate proficiency in all aspects of the role. Our Sophomore Academy SPED lead is particularly concerned about the upcoming year. He holds our current SPED TFA teaching crew in high regard, describing them as "Hammahs!"—a testament to their strength, knowledge, inquisitiveness, and willingness to learn.

I implore you once again to reconsider the proposed rule change for this year. If left unchanged, I foresee significant difficulties in finding certified SPED teachers to fill our vacancies. If we are fortunate, we may secure a long-term substitute teacher, the majority of whom lack a Bachelor's Degree, to cover the class. However, they would not be able to manage any IEP cases, leaving the remaining certified SPED teachers with the additional burden of handling these cases. This would lead to overworked teachers, low morale, and eventual teacher burnout. Ultimately, it is our most vulnerable students who will suffer the consequences. I earnestly request that you prevent such an outcome from transpiring.

Please, do not let this happen.

Sincerely,



Ryan Oshita
Vice Principal
Waianae High School

[EXTERNAL] Testimony

kristin.lindquist10@yahoo.com <kristin.lindquist10@yahoo.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 10:08 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

My name is Kristin Lindquist.

I am a special education teacher at Waianae High School

I am writing because I have had the opportunity to work with some wonderful TFA teachers over the 18 years that I have taught at Waianae High School. We have desperately needed their skills and dedication because our school is constantly under employed by licensed teachers. Thank goodness we have had their support over the many years that I have taught here.

All the TFA teachers get training and support while they are doing their jobs at our school. I have always been impressed with their adaptability and hard work. They have always met the needs and expectations required to be a special education teacher. The experience and training that they receive at Waianae High School has led to many teachers committing to the field of special education along with a subject area of expertise. I will feel the detrimental impact of not having TFA teachers work alongside me in Special Education at our school. Our needs are significant and I fear that our students will suffer.

I am writing in hopes that TFA teachers will continue to support the special needs of the students in my community. The TFA teachers have been invaluable in supporting the education of our students. Thank you for taking my concerns into consideration when making this important decision regarding TFA placement and licensure.

Sincerely,
Kristin Lindquist
Special Education Teacher
National Board Certified
Waianae High School

May 19, 2023
Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Valerie Romero and I am a 2022 Teach For America corps member teaching in a 1st grade inclusion classroom at Kaimiloa Elementary School. As an inclusion teacher I have exceeded the licensure requirements of 450 hours teaching in Elementary (K-6) as I teach in a general education setting that is inclusive of both students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. My current position aligns with the licensure I am seeking as I not only understand and teach to grade-level standards and curriculum but I also incorporate appropriate modifications and accommodations to meet the needs of all learners, not just those with already identified needs.

As a current graduate student pursuing a Masters in Education at Chaminade University, I am continuously assessed on learning outcomes that support both my subject area and special education. Some of these learning outcomes include synthesizing knowledge of learner development, learner differences, and the learning environment to optimize learning for Elementary and Special Education students, evaluating tools of inquiry and structures of the subject matter disciplines for Elementary and Special Education students, and utilizing assessments to determine, select, and implement effective instructional strategies for Elementary and Special Education students. In conjunction with engaging in my graduate coursework and TFA requirements, I receive an exceptional amount of support from my school site through the special education coach, the instructional coaches, and professional development opportunities.

In order to meet the licensure requirements, my site and TFA have provided ample support and training opportunities. In addition, my masters program provided supplemental support, supervision, and assessment of my training in general education. Other learning supports I engage in are the professional development opportunities provided through PDE3 as well as by TFA. These are not all but some of the ways I am currently being supported and trained in both the general education curriculum and standards and special education. I have also received a passing score on the Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects Praxis II exam that demonstrates my knowledge in Elementary (K-6) content. My competency as a classroom teacher is also demonstrated by receiving a rating of Proficient on Danielson Domains during this year's EES cycle.

It is my understanding that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements for SATEPs, outlined in [NBI 12-27](#), to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area, sufficiently meets the internship requirements, regardless of whether this was in a general education setting or special education setting. I relied on this interpretation when accepting my teaching role at Kaimiloa Elementary and working to complete my licensure requirements. If I am not licensed on-time I will not be able to teach in my current position where I am in fact in a general education setting teaching the general education standards and

curriculum but most importantly I will not be able to stay at my current school site where I have made valuable contributions and connections.

Accepting and committing to two years and TFA has been both a great honor and sacrifice. I have moved away from home and created a home and community here because I am passionate about my role in bridging the education gap. I have found a highly supportive environment at my school site that has provided me with ample training and opportunities that I use both in the general education setting as well as in the special education setting. I believe that taking away the opportunity to continue in my position would be a disservice to my education and would take away from the impact I would like to make alongside my colleagues, at this site. To take away this year of service would deter me from my goals in education and would contribute to the burn out that is being experienced in educators across the country. If I am granted my license on-time, this would allow me to not only remain in my current position but I would be returning to the position as a newly highly-qualified teacher with the intent of continuing to make an educational impact.

Sincerely,
Valerie Romero

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Valerie Romero". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Teacher, Kaimiloa Elementary
TFA Hawai'i 2022 Corps Member

[EXTERNAL] Testimony

Williammoran 16 <williammoran16@gmail.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 10:12 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

May 19th, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

Hello, My name is William Moran, I am currently a teacher at Waianae High School and I am addressing the General Business meeting regarding NBI 22-102. , I teach in the subject area of Social Studies and have spent 1 year in Secondary Education.

I am currently a Gen ed teacher, which is inclusive of both students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers; I, therefore, understand and teach to grade-level World History standards and curriculum, as do the other special education teachers seeking licensure.

During my time teaching at Waianae High School, I have worked with TFA Special Education Teachers in many professional development and training opportunities. These include professional development sessions, meetings with instructional coaches, department meetings, course-alike meetings, and collaborative training from partnering educational consultants. TFA Special Education Teachers also regularly attend and complete new teacher training via instructional coaches and demonstrate competency as classroom teachers by receiving positive ratings on Danielson's Educator Effectiveness Scale.

It is my understanding that Teach For America, the Hawaii Department of Education, and historically HTSB have interpreted the clinical experience requirements for SATEPs, outlined in NBI 12-27, to mean that having clinical experience in a subject area, sufficiently meets the internship requirements, regardless of whether this was in a general education setting or special education setting. TFA Special Education Teachers relied on this interpretation when accepting their teaching role at a partner school, and they have spent the past year actively working to complete their licensure requirements. If they are not licensed on time, these teachers may be asked to switch content areas entirely, be unable to remain in a teaching position and lose out on necessary financial support to remain a teacher in the state of Hawai'i. In addition to their personal circumstances, I have also been very close with the teachers that are being affected by this ruling and they have told me that it will be affecting all teachers that have to teach Sped students because some of these students will not be meeting their legally required hours.

Sincerely,

William Moran

[EXTERNAL] Testimony regarding NBI 22-102 for May 23, 2023 General Business Meeting

Dale Fryxell <dfryxell@chaminade.edu>

Fri 5/19/2023 10:13 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

TESTIMONY

May 19, 2023

To: Hawaii Teacher Standards Board

From: Dr. Dale Fryxell, Dean of the School of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Chaminade University, and member of the AAQEP Quality Review Team for Teach for America Hawaii

Re: May 23, 2023 General Business Meeting, Agenda Item NBI 22-102

Position: Comment

I am writing this testimony in regards to the proposed NBI 22-102. I was a member of the recent AAQEP Quality Review team reviewing the Teach for America program this past January. In total, I invested many hours reviewing TFA's program, collecting additional evidence during the site visit, and meeting with the quality review team members. I must say that based on all of the evidence provided by TFA in their self-study (QAR) and the information that we collected through our interviews and meetings during the site visit, the entire team was extremely impressed with the quality, rigor and training provided by TFA to all their candidates. I believe this outcome was affirmed by a unanimous decision of the AAQEP Commission in recommending full 7-year accreditation.

I was very impressed with the great opportunities that TFA candidates have where they are able to be hired full-time to fill open positions that would otherwise mainly go unfilled or would be filled by unqualified, untrained, long-term substitutes who often do not even have any college training at all. TFA candidates mainly teach in some of the toughest underserved schools in Hawaii. Not only does TFA have great pre-training and ongoing training and support during their program, as evidenced by the data that they compiled for their AAQEP self-study, but their candidates are able to be hired and mentored very often in inclusion settings where they can gain valuable knowledge and experience teaching in specific content areas but also being able to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students who have IEPs. Inclusion placement is identified in a student's IEP as a general education classroom setting. What better way to prepare candidates for the future classrooms that they will be in than to have the opportunity to teach side-by-side with a skilled general education teacher in an inclusion setting for an entire year which is way more than the required 450 hours!

I am very familiar with the inclusion model of teaching as I worked at the University of Hawaii on the first federally funded grant to bring inclusion to the State of Hawaii over 30 years ago. I spent several years introducing the model to schools around the state. The beauty of the team-teaching model of inclusion is that the teachers are able to support and learn from each other while teaching the content that they are assigned to teach (i.e., Math, English). In other words, this is an ideal mode

of training future teachers who can teach the content and also meet the needs of diverse students. It is best practice in an inclusive classroom for the students to not actually know who the regular education teacher is and who the special education teacher is. They are both just the “math teachers” or “social studies teachers.” Just as a side note, my wife has been a high school inclusion special education teacher for the HDOE for the past 13-years, so I have some good insight into how the model is currently working.

The fact that some TFA candidates are hired as Special Education teachers or Care Coordinators is a great thing as it helps everyone! It meets the needs of the people of Hawaii and the HDOE by putting a person with a college degree, training, and support into a hard to fill position, and most importantly, as I have often seen and heard including during the AAQEP site visit, the TFA teachers are some of the most passionate, caring, well-liked, and admired teachers at their schools. Just ask the students and they will tell you!

In regard to NBI 22-102, special education isn't a subject area, it is a way of supporting students. The TFA candidates are teaching in a specific subject content area (Math, English, Social Studies, or Science) and differentiate that content as needed in a general education setting to meet the needs of all students in the class. It is my belief that the model that TFA is currently using to train some of our future teachers is in line with the current licensing requirements as even though they may be hired as special education teachers, they are receiving excellent training and experience to be well-rounded teachers who can teach at specific grade levels in specific content areas.

--

Dale Fryxell, Ph.D.
Dean, School of Education and Behavioral Sciences
Professor of Psychology

Chaminade University of Honolulu
3140 Waialae Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96816-1578
www.chaminade.edu

I

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[EXTERNAL] Testimony

Danielle Brown <daniellemargaretbrown@gmail.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 10:13 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this formal letter to bring to your attention the urgent matter of advocating for the ongoing licensure of special education teachers who possess licensure in another subject area. As an educator specializing in Secondary Math education at Waianae High School, I hold deep conviction in the vital role that special education teachers play within our esteemed school district. It is imperative that we extend unwavering support and provide ample opportunities for their professional growth and development.

In my capacity as an inclusion and resource teacher, I have been privileged to work within an inclusive general education setting that promotes the integration of students with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers. This inclusive educational environment empowers me to deliver instruction aligned with grade-level Geometry standards and curriculum, mirroring the practices of other special education teachers pursuing licensure. Such an approach ensures equitable educational experiences, granting my students access to the same educational opportunities as their peers.

With unwavering dedication, I have committed the past two years to teaching students with special needs, with a distinct focus on geometry. My efforts included a comprehensive overhaul of the geometry curriculum for 10th grade, meticulously tailored to address the unique learning needs of my students. The fruits of my labor have been consistently recognized through distinguished evaluations on the esteemed educator effectiveness scale. Furthermore, my involvement in the Teach For America accreditation process has equipped me with the requisite skills and knowledge to excel as an exceptional educator.

At present, the Hawaii Department of Education, in close collaboration with the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board (HTSB), has diligently interpreted the clinical experience requirements stipulated within NBI 12-27, specifically relating to Specialized Alternative Teacher Education Programs (SATEPs). According to this interpretation, clinical experience acquired in a specific subject area fulfills the necessary internship requirements, irrespective of whether it was obtained in a general education or special education setting. This interpretation has served as the foundation upon which Teach For America Special Education Teachers accepted their roles at esteemed partner schools, wholeheartedly committed to meeting their licensure requirements throughout the preceding year.

Delaying or denying licensure to these dedicated special education teachers may force them into an abrupt transition to different content areas or, worse yet, jeopardize their ability to continue their noble profession altogether. The consequences of such actions would be twofold: detrimental to the teachers themselves and with lasting ramifications for our students and the overall quality of education they deserve. The availability of qualified special education teachers is undeniably essential in our collective endeavor to provide equitable educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

Moreover, it is incumbent upon us to acknowledge the existing shortage of special education teachers throughout our island. By proactively facilitating the acquisition of licensure for those teachers who

already possess licensure in other subject areas, we can effectively address this dearth and ensure that students with special needs receive the specialized instruction and unwavering support necessary for their optimal growth. Our school district's unwavering commitment to recruiting and retaining highly skilled special education teachers necessitates the facilitation of additional licensure acquisition within this domain.

In conclusion, I implore the esteemed school district to duly recognize the invaluable contributions of special education teachers and to earnestly endorse the continued licensure acquisition for those teachers who possess licensure in another subject area. By doing so, we can alleviate the shortage of specialized educators, provide the necessary support for these dedicated professionals, and secure an educational environment conducive to the academic and personal growth of students with special needs. Your attention and consideration regarding this pressing matter are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Danielle Brown Secondary Math Teacher Waianae High School



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – LEEWARD DISTRICT
JAMES CAMPBELL HIGH SCHOOL
91-980 NORTH ROAD
EWA BEACH, HAWAII 96706

May 19, 2023

Dear Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board Members,

Please allow me a few minutes to share why I feel strongly that Teach for America (TFA) should be allowed to prepare Special Education Teachers for licensure. James Campbell High School, like many other schools regularly face a severe shortage of qualified teachers and the field of Special Education is especially difficult to fill. Our school is right on the border of the Waianae Coast which makes it even harder to recruit and retain teachers when they have the standing option of driving an additional 10 minutes to qualify for an \$8,000 annual bonus on top of their SPED bonus.

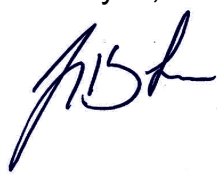
Serving as a Special Education Teacher essentially requires you to do multiple jobs for one paycheck. You must be a content and pedagogical leader for group of students who have documented learning disabilities. You must be proficient in Special Education law and procedures and use that knowledge to effectively facilitate meetings with multiple stakeholders and service providers. This means our Special Education Teachers have to be among our best, but the majority of the time because of the workload and unrealistic expectations placed on the role these positions are filled with unqualified emergency hires who are not enrolled in any type of State Approved Teacher Education Program.

Since I have been here we have hired approximately 30 TFA teachers in Special Education positions and this school year alone we were already in agreement to hire 3 more until we received notification that they would not be allowed to become licensed. Our school has a built a strong relationship with TFA and have actively worked with them to ensure that our teachers are properly supported with content knowledge and effective instructional strategies. The majority of our Special Education students are in Inclusion and Resource settings. This means that they are taking credit bearing classes that are equal to regular education classes so they can earn the same high school diploma as everyone else. In order to ensure the content and rigor is symmetrical our Special Education Teachers work with their course alike groups, meet with our Full Release Mentor, meet with their TFA Mentor and regularly participate in school wide professional development. This partnership with TFA has resulted in a steady

pipeline of much needed teachers to our campus. They have moved on take coveted leadership positions and are directly responsible for helping to move us forward as a school.

I appreciate your time and hope that reconsideration can be made for allowing TFA to license Special Education Teachers. They have always demonstrated flexibility and responsiveness and I am confident they will adjust to concerns that have been raised. This is a crucial time for us to build momentum toward our State Strategic Goals and I feel that this would be a step in the wrong direction for our system if it was not allowed to continue and evolve. If you would like more information please feel free to reach out to me via email at JonHenry.Lee@k12.hi.us .

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JHL', is written over a faint, circular official stamp.

Jon Henry Lee
Principal

May 18, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
htsb@hawaii.gov

Subject: Testimony (Comment on NBI 22-102 – Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Gabriella DeRossi and I am an 8th grade English teacher at Wai'anae Intermediate School. I work closely with TFA Hawai'i licensure candidates who are currently in Special Education roles, both in the corps and within the school English Department.

Over the course of the past year, I have worked closely with these TFA candidates in Special Education roles, observing them lesson planning, lesson planning and then differentiating those lessons based on the unique needs of their students - adapting said lesson plans to the rigorous curriculum using the ELA Hawai'i States Standards. I have personally spent time with them while they were grading the assignments their students have completed and if a student had not met that expectation, I would observe them creating a new method of instruction to help their students grasp the material and content knowledge they needed to succeed in achieving the standard. In our ELA 8th grade Department meetings, they have made valuable contributions when discussing rigorous curriculum based instruction and they have helped me to scaffold some of my own lessons for my students, to make them more engaging and adaptable for all of my students when I had been struggling with differentiation - I would seek out their advice and input and then come away with a lesson that my students readily enjoyed doing.

These TFA corps members have spent hours in various trainings, in classes, educating themselves, attending multiple Professional Developments, studying, building portfolios, having different levels of observations in their classrooms while they have lead instruction. They have completed the same curriculum and are held to the same standards that non-Special Education TFA candidates are held to (i.e., passing the Praxis in their content area; completing and submitting 8 part portfolios, completing summer practicum; maintaining a 3.0 GPA in their licensure courses as well as attending summer courses and being recognized as effective teachers via Danielson observations conducted by their Admin. throughout the school year). Any one of us TFA corps members could have been placed in a Special Education role, based on the hiring needs of a Title IX school, but every member accepted our positions within TFA with the understanding that that once we achieved the criteria, that we would be recommended and then recognized as fully licensed educators by the state of Hawai'i - as it has been for the past decade.

In conversation with fellow TFA corps members in Special Education roles, they have whole-heartedly expressed their passion for the learning that happens in their classrooms. They have also shared their desire to continue serving the Wai'anae community through their roles as educators. Receiving their teaching license would ensure that their excellence in meeting licensure criteria is recognized and they remain in this work, many of whom have also expressed their future plans of remaining here and teaching in the Wai'anae community long term. By failing to recognize them as the educators that they are and keeping them from the license, this decision will directly impact these first-year teachers who have planned, studied, and have been held to the same standards as all of the TFA corps members - we will no doubt lose out on the insightful and effective teachers who have achieved wonderful things in their classrooms.

I would like to leave you with one last thought. Personally, as a TFA member, my fellow corps members and I have been learning and reflecting all year on how to best provide a rigorous, standards-based education while supporting our students to access and master their learning. This I ask you, shouldn't we lead by example?

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Gabriella DeRossi
Teacher, Wai'anae Intermediate School

[EXTERNAL] TESTIMONY (Comment on NBI 22-102- Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates)

Grace Brown <gracekb@hawaii.edu>

Fri 5/19/2023 11:28 AM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board

[650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268](#)

[Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817](#)

Meeting: Hawaii Teacher Standards Board General Business Meeting on May 23, 2023

Agenda Item: NBI 22-102 Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates

Position: Comment

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Grace Brown and I am a 2020 Teach For America Hawai'i alumni; I received licensure from the HTSB in Elementary Education. As a corps member, I returned to my alma mater, Hōnaunau Elementary, to teach 3rd-5th grade special education. After receiving a BA in sociology from the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, I knew my passion was educational equity, and Teach for America Hawai'i gave me an avenue into that work directly within my community.

While in Teach for America Hawai'i, I received training and support in both my subject area and special education. Teach For America Hawai'i provided me with an excellent mentor who I was able to meet with weekly for support. My mentor aided me in planning and preparing to teach several content areas as well as navigating the intricacies of my role as a special education teacher. In the licensure courses I took at Chaminade, I studied both general education and special education. My classes were no different than those of my peers who were not in special education. This program gave me a wealth of knowledge on teaching strategies, curriculum development, and teaching to a diverse group of learners. Additionally, my Hōnaunau school 'ohana offered endless support; my Special Education department head and academic coach both consistently observed me, met with me for planning, and helped me understand the complex legalities of Special Education.

While in the classroom, I demonstrated my competency as a classroom teacher in many ways. In my first year in the midst of the pandemic, I taught all elementary subjects - math,

language arts, science, social studies, and extracurriculars - to my 4th and 5th grade Special Education students. 100% of my students made progress on all of their IEP goals. In my second year of teaching, I worked alongside my 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade counterparts to teach all subjects. In inclusion, I worked either as a lead instructor for the whole class or in small groups of both general education and special education students. In addition, I taught a reading class every morning to a mixture of general education and special education students. In my final quarter, I taught reading to a class of exclusively advanced general education students in the 1st and 2nd grade. My administration and academic coach requested I teach this course because of my excellence in the subject area and the progress my other students had made throughout the year. All of my students with IEPs grew in their reading ability by at least one grade level, and made significant progress on all of their IEP goals.

Since receiving my licensure through the HTSB in the subject area of Elementary Education, I also took the Praxis exam in special education - which I passed on my first try in the high 90th percentile - to add the field of Special Education to my license. This has allowed me to continue to play an important role in my community. Although I am no longer teaching, this experience led me to work with a disability services organization, the Arc of Kona, where I am able to use the knowledge I have as a certified special education teacher to advocate for and support individuals with disabilities across all of Hawai'i island. Additionally, my experiences teaching both special education and general education classes have motivated me to return to my alma mater, UH Mānoa, in the fall to pursue a graduate degree in educational foundations in the pursuit of creating a more equitable education system for all keiki. I'm unsure if I would have ever taken this step had I not been a Teach for America Hawai'i corps member.

As an alumni of Teach for America Hawai'i, I know the ways in which our current Teach for America corps members will continue to contribute to the growth and success of our students and school communities in Special Education settings. As a first year corps member, receiving licensure on time is essential. Not only is it costly to pursue licensure a second time; corps members can not afford to live a second year on the emergency hire permit teaching salary. Many of these teachers are already taking out loans or have second jobs just to cover basic necessities like food, housing, and transportation in their first year. Had I not received my licensure on time, I would not have been able to afford to finish my 2 year teaching commitment, which would have been incredibly disappointing and upsetting to myself, my co-teachers, my students, and families. Our communities need teachers who care deeply and are motivated to make a change. Withholding licensure from 1st year corps members in special education will mean sending away teachers who want to

be here, who have worked hard to be licensed in their content area, and who have meaningful relationships and outcomes with their students and school communities.

Being licensed in my content area as well as special education enabled me to create an inclusive environment for students with disabilities to succeed. As a special educator, your role is not simply to work with special education students - it is to support all students to be able to access their general education curriculum. To suggest that Special Education teachers are not qualified to earn licensure in their content area because they work with students with IEPs is blatantly disrespectful to the concept of inclusion and further promotes the ableist division in our schools between students with disabilities and those without. Enabling our first year corps members to earn their content area licensure this year will mean keeping passionate, dedicated, excellent teachers in Hawai'i schools.

Sincerely,

Grace Brown

Service Supervisor at Arc of Kona

2020 Teach for America Hawai'i Alumnus

Note: My internet went down due to the storm on Hawai'i island so I had to drive to a family member's house to submit this; my apologies for it being an hour late. I will also be providing oral testimony over Zoom on the 23rd.

May 19, 2023

Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 268
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

Meeting: Hawaii Teacher Standards Board General Business Meeting on May 23, 2023

Agenda Item: NBI 22-102 Student Teaching Policy Regarding Teach For America Candidates

Position: Comment

Aloha members of the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board,

My name is Kristina M.K. Vilorio and I am a 2016 Teach For America Hawai'i alumni. As a Special Education English language arts resource teacher at 'Aiea Intermediate School, I received licensure from the HTSB in the subject area of Secondary English language arts through Teach for America Hawai'i.

While in Teach for America Hawai'i, I received training and support in both my subject area and special education. I felt thoroughly supported, coached, and prepared to show up everyday and provide excellent learning experiences for my students with exceptionalities. During my time as a Teach for America Hawai'i corps member, I was required to complete rigorous, yet relevant university coursework that prepared me to show up for my students, colleagues, and community.

I have demonstrated my competency as a classroom teacher by increasing building skills based competency for students with exceptionalities with a yearly 10% proficiency increase during my time at 'Aiea Intermediate School on the Smarter Balanced Assessment, increasing reading fluency, school wide, and contributing to the overall growth and performance of our school.

Since receiving my licensure through the HTSB in the subject area of Secondary English language arts, I have also worked hard to gain licensure in secondary social studies and Special Education, mild/moderate to help me further impact and reach more students in my community

This has allowed me to continue to play an important role in my school community. In 2020, I was provided the opportunity to help join the founding 7th grade team at DreamHouse 'Ewa Beach, PCS. I was able to take my knowledge, skills, and talents to help develop the foundation of our Student Success/Special Education department, which systems are still in place now.

As an alumni of Teach for America Hawai'i, I am excited for the ways in which our current Teach for America corps members will continue to contribute to the growth and success of our students and school communities in Special Education settings. I am grateful for the opportunity Teach For America Hawai'i afforded me and the time, effort, and energy invested into me as a young educator. I had the gift and opportunity to be part of the development of students, who statistically would have been underserved and overlooked and although I no longer teach at 'Aiea Intermediate School I know I had a lasting impact, students who I have previously taught are attending college, joining the workforce, and have overall made huge leaps and bounds otherwise would not have.

Sincerely,

Kristina M.K. Vilorio, M.Ed.

DreamHouse 'Ewa Beach, PCS
Middle School Academic Coach,
TFA Hawai'i 2016 Alumnus

[EXTERNAL] Testimony

Maile Shimabukuro <maileshimabukuro@yahoo.com>

Fri 5/19/2023 1:02 PM

To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

Testimony

- Meeting: General Business Meeting
- Agenda Item: NBI 22-102
- Position: Comment

Teach for America (TFA) Special Education teachers are a critical pipeline of teachers for the HIDOE. There is a shortage of Special Education teachers in Hawai'i and schools have relied on TFA to help fill this hard to fill position. If unable to hire TFA teachers in SpED lines, this could have a detrimental impact on schools and students, many of whom would likely have to fill these positions with long-term substitute teachers.

Aloha 🌺

Senator Maile Shimabukuro

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Testimony

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To: HTSB <htsb@hawaii.gov>

As a Teach for America alumni, I am very concerned that the Teachers Standards Board is changing its interpretation of the rules to disallow Teach for American teacher placement in special education classrooms. We do not have an excess of special education teachers- quite the opposite. Our schools will suffer if the board makes this change. Please reconsider doing this, or at least not doing this so drastically. I know special education requires some different skills than my general education classroom did, but the subject matter hours we are teaching should count the same. The board seems to be requiring 450 hours of special education classroom time as it own subject, which is not the way we should be treating teachers, especially if we are encouraging general education teachers to move into special education classrooms. By the board's interpretation, these teachers would not be properly licensed.

Scot Z. Matayoshi

Hawai'i State Representative - District 49

Kaneohe | Maunawili

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