

2022 HawaiiKidsCAN Action Fund Candidate Survey

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1. What does Hawaii do well with regards to K-12 public education?

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We had an 86% graduation rate in 2021.

2. What should Hawaii do better with regards to K-12 public education?

We should never have had to experience "furlough Fridays" as my graduating class did, nor should Education have been forced to take as many budget cuts as it has compared to other departments over the years. Education should take more of a priority. I also believe there should be better stewardship of those funds already appropriated with respect to the operational efficiency of improvement projects, as I have personally seen a lot of waste in these during my project management experience.

3. How should Hawaii prioritize our spending on K-12 public education (for example: teacher salaries, programs to address learning loss, technology, community partnerships and projects, computer science education, charter schools, distance learning options, etc.)?

Funding should not be a primary reason that our state schools are losing teachers and deferring facilities maintenance. I would support increased funding for our educational system. I also want to encourage the modernization of our education to better prepare our keiki for the world. I believe charter schools and STEM programs (for all schools) need to be encouraged more and be better funded.

4. Hawaii should require all students complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid before graduating from high school, or complete a waiver.

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4.a Comment

While I support this in nature, I don't think it should be required. It seemingly would degrade the reality for the need of honest trade workers. However, I would support requiring teachers or counselors to provide a senior year presentation on the benefits of FAFSA programs and educate students on the availability of these opportunities.

5. The Hawaii State Constitution provides for the "establishment, support and control of a statewide system of public schools," but does not guarantee quality education. Should the State Constitution be amended to provide quality education as a fundamental right? Should Hawaii students have a constitutional right to a quality education? Please explain your answer.

Guarantees are very expressly promising words, contractually speaking. I don't believe the state actually has the ability to guarantee this as there are a myriad of reasons why not every child's educational experience can be a guaranteed success.

6. What will you do to improve the relationship between the Hawaii State Board of Education and legislature?

There needs to be more transparency on every level of government. There needs to exist clearer lines of communication and intergovernmental coordination.

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7. What leadership actions will you take for the Hawaii Department of Education, University of Hawaii system, and employers to work more effectively together?

I would champion new legislation and/or co-sponsor anything that would put our families and keiki in a better position. My son is just going to be entering the public school system later this fall as a kindergartener, and my daughter will follow 2 years behind, so I am also a stakeholder in the success of our educational system. I believe that we need to amend our processes to allow for the lawful election of school board members and superintendents just as the majority of the other US states do. This will provide a spark and motive to perform for whomever is holding the position and create accountability.

8. College going remains flat, with roughly 50% of recent Hawaii public high school graduates going on to college (2 or 4 year). How do you propose to raise these levels so Hawaii is more competitive with states like California, which has a nearly 65% rate?

From my experience growing up here, I can see a culture of some kids who want to leave home as soon as possible, but other kids do not want to leave home away from family to go to college elsewhere. We need to implement a tax credit for travel expenses going between school and home (if off island, wherever that may be) for the student or their parents (if a dependent). I grew up on Maui, but even just going to Oahu to attend UH Manoa was difficult for family the connection aspect because I could only afford to return home once a year.

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