

# 2022 HawaiiKidsCAN Action Fund Candidate Survey

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

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Hawaii has not done much right in regards to education. We ranked 48th in ACT scores, 32nd in school safety, and 40th in overall educational quality. It's hard to be positive in the light of these sobering statistics.

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

For the past six decades Hawaii's keiki have been let down. With some of the highest spending but some of the lowest educational quality in the nation; it is clear that we are lacking. I believe that the biggest problem facing our school system today is the lack of choice. Hawaii's families have not been given the opportunity to select the best educational environment that suits their needs. If elected, I will work to revamp our state's "one-size -fits-all" school system, and empower parents through school choice. I believe that when parents are given more opportunities to take their child's education into their own hands we will see an improvement in our educational quality.

## 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.)?

If elected, I will prioritize our spending by establishing ESAs (Educational Savings Accounts) that take a child's state educational dollars & creates an account parents can use to pay for education related expenses. The money must follow the backpacks! I will also work to create Tax Credit Scholarships that will allow individuals & businesses to reduce their liability by supporting community partners that disperse funds to families; this way the state can put more focus on ensuring that the needs of our K-12 teachers are met. I will also work to see tax credits & deductions that help families pay for educational expenses.

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

Unsure

### 4.a Comment

Not every student want to go to college. I believe that Hawaii should encourage students to seek programs that will help them gain higher education, but ultimately the decision should be left to the student. If a student is worthy of graduating but does not feel that college is the right fit for them, I don't believe the government has the right to force them into that box. My feeling is to let each individual decide for themselves.

## 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.

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I believe a quality education should go without saying. Our tax dollars should have been enough to ensure that Hawaii's students have that right. And if elected, my administration will work to see that right implemented in all schools (public, private, and charter). We will also work to see that all schools are equipped with curriculum that will raise proficiency in the fundamentals (reading, writing, and math), so that each family can be sure that their child will be ready to face the real world with confidence once they graduate.

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

If elected, one of the many steps I would take to improve the relationship between the BOE and the legislature would be to see that all departments are working with the same level of transparency. My administration will also work to see that communication across all branches are clear and concise. I believe this will give everyone a clear understanding of their positions and duties, and it will show that my administration doesn't play favorites. We will all be held to the same standard.

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

As stated before, I believe transparency and clear communication is what will lead to a healthier and more effective work environment. My administration will work to ensure that all branches, schools, and employers are working together to serve the People to the best of our abilities.

## **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?**

I believe one of the many things we can do to make Hawaii more competitive is to rethink our attitude towards the standard 4 year college path. Not all high school graduates see traditional 4 year college as viable option. I believe the state should encourage students to engage in all forms of higher education (ie Community Colleges and trade schools). I believe that when given the support and opportunities needed we will see an increase in enrollment in the higher educational space.