

# 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>
Hawaii is unique in that there is a single school board to service the entire state. This prevents one district from receiving more funding than another due to shifts in wage earners in the area. This allows for greater equality amongst students in the public education system.

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

Hawaii needs to improve the working conditions for teachers (better wages, benefits, and access to training/professional development) and students (reinvesting in infrastructure and developing course content that reflects the current skills required to be successful post-high school). Education is the bedrock of our community and remains the single best way for children to pursue their dreams.

## 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.)?

Public education is seriously underfunded. Finding new sources of income for the State of Hawaii is essential to make the corrective measures needed to reinvigorate our schools. Teachers are underpaid and overworked and we need to support increases in teacher pay if we want to continue to recruit teachers who are dedicated to teaching our Keiki, our world is changing and now more than ever we need to provide education that gives students the skills they need to be successful by supporting programs that adapt to the current advancements in technology while being flexible enough to adapt with the future.

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

Yes

### 4.a Comment

The opportunities that streamlined access to higher education creates for young adults can not be understated. However great care should be taken to not to encourage private interests to institutionalize a school-to-debt pipeline.

## 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.

The right to a quality education should be enshrined as a fundamental right in Hawaii's constitution. This stems not only from the failure of the Federal government to make a quality education a fundamental right but also to protect and enable future generations.

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

The goal of working with the Hawaii State Board of Education is to ensure Hawaii is on the right track and delivering on its promises of quality education for all students. The legislature must take the time to hear from the HBOE and take an in-depth look at the current practices and where there is room for improvement.

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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?

Hawaii has a shortage of workers across the state but it is especially high for teachers and healthcare professionals. We need to bring the mentality of support local into the college experience. By working to create a direct pathway from graduating with degrees in Hawaii to gaining employment with local businesses and the State of Hawaii we will create a process that will promote partnerships between the DOE, UH, and employers.

## 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?

The goal of education is to create critical thinkers while providing pathways to higher wages and gainful employment. As a result, there are many pathways to a college education. Not every student wants to spend another 4 years in classes leading to a job in an office. It is essential to highlight the various opportunities available at the community college program that put students to work in trade fields while earning an associate degree setting them up to potentially return to college to complete their bachelor's at a later date. These active apprenticeships provide Hawaii's recent high school grads an opportunity to get into the workforce earning more than they would without it. This acts as a clear incentive to pursue higher education with real-time results that set students up for success. These programs offered through the Community Colleges are affordable, attainable, and attractive to students who want to work and earn money for themselves and their families.

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