

2022 HawaiiKidsCAN Action Fund Candidate Survey

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<https://www.instagram.com/elect.elijahpierick.district39/>

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

We do well by having a Department of Education that provides education to children in the state. The athletic department helps kids learn discipline, exercise, learn leadership skills, teamwork, and sacrifice.

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

Hawaii's education department is ranked near last out of 50 states in the country. This can be because of a culture of being relaxed and not striving for being the best, or it could be the leadership structure in the schools and the philosophy of achievement. Being raised homeschooled in Hawaii, my parents transitioned me from pedagogy to andragogy as early as 3rd grade. I have had all of my college work paid for by academic and merit-based scholarships. In college, I graduated Magna Cum Laude, and my bachelor's and two masters' degrees were with 4.0 GPA's. I now have a doctorate as well. This is thanks in large part to my parents raising me from an andragogy perspective. If we helped our Department of Education transition to a more andragogy learning style, I think this would help our students own the learning process and chief higher goals. Also, public schools are not the ultimate answer. States like Arizona have a voucher system where parents can choose grants to have their kids in montessori education, private, charter, or homeschooling. Parents should have the rights and access to their tax money being used for the education that they prefer for their children.

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.)?

For every child, there should be an equal amount of funds allocated. From there, parents should have the rights to choose if the child goes to public school, or is given a grant to have that same amount of money used on montessori, private, charter, or homeschooling. Studies are showing that students in these latter options are outperforming a majority of public-school children. For the families that choose public school, the funds that those children bring should largely be aimed towards the teachers. Then, the teachers can choose how they orient their classes and develop their curriculum.

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

No

4.a Comment

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While federal funding is an excellent idea for students pursuing higher education after high school, not every student desires this. Some students will follow in their family business and not need a college degree. Other students will become entrepreneurs and avoid college altogether. While Free Application for Federal Student Aid is a great tool for students, it should be optional. I used it for my benefit, and it helped pay for some of my college. However, students who do not desire to go to college should not be mandated to pursue options that they do not intend to execute. Public high schools will do well by promoting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid though. CLEPing is also a good idea.

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.

I believe the framers of the Hawaii constitution intended for “establishment, support and control of a statewide system of public schools” to be of high quality. The fact that the Hawaii state education system is ranked near the last in the country is not because of a phrase in the constitution. It is a much larger problem than this.

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

The Hawaii Superintendent of Education is a state executive position in the Hawaii state government. The superintendent is the administrative head of the Hawaii Department of Education, which runs the state's K-12 public education system. The superintendent is appointed by the Hawaii Board of Education. Board Members are volunteers, who serve without pay and are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the senate. A public high school student serves as a non-voting student representative and the senior military commander appoints a non-voting military representative. Therefore, this makes the Hawaii State Board of Education primarily an extension of the executive branch of government. The House of Representatives can propose bills that benefit the Department of Education, and individual members of the House of Representatives should facilitate relationships with board members.

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

If elected to become the next Representative for district 39, it would be an honor to be invited to board meetings or to foster relationships with individual board members through having lunch with them.

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?

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The University of Hawaii is a very expensive school. The university can look at ways to decrease its tuition, making higher education more affordable, and thus making going to college a more feasible option for students. Also, culturally, being a high achiever and being the best at whatever you do is not always promoted in every household in Hawaii. Hawaii has a culture of being relaxed and enjoying the island life. This is a great perspective for being calm and enjoying life. For students who desire to achieve goals that require higher education, Hawaii's culture needs to change to promote attaining high goals. Perhaps, teachers and the Department of Education can be encouraged to promote college more. What encouraged me to get a doctorate was knowing that it would open up doors for the future. Perhaps, we can encourage students with they can achieve anything they set their mind to. We can help them establish what goals they have in life and then coach them on how education can help them get there.



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