

2022 HawaiiKidsCAN Action Fund Candidate Survey

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1. What does Hawaii do well with regards to K-12 public education?
Hawaii's education system is extraordinarily equitable compared with other states. While other states fund public education through local property taxes, leading to vast disparities between wealthy neighborhoods and poor ones, Hawaii's public schools receive roughly equal funding per pupil. In fact, poor neighborhoods receive more funding due to the federal Title I program.
2. What should Hawaii do better with regards to K-12 public education?
Teacher recruitment and retention are very difficult with Hawaii's housing shortage. We need to offer better housing opportunities, like the ALOHA Homes model I've proposed. Additionally, Hawaii should offer better student to teacher ratios, better facilities overall, and there needs to be safer routes to school, especially for those students who walk and bike
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.)?

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I would prioritize teacher salaries first, the programs to address learning loss, then technology, then community partnerships and projects, then computer science education, then distance learning

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

Yes

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.

Yes, it should. Other states include “quality education” in their constitutions, and it has been used in successful impact litigation there.

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

Visit members of the Board of Education more regularly and invite them to visit the Legislature. Better relationships create an environment that is more conducive to cooperation.

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 believe that providing high quality preschool and childcare to Hawai'i's children is an essential investment in the state's future. Studies have shown that there is no better indicator for academic success than whether a student was educated at a preschool age. Thus, I support early childhood education to ensure all children have access to quality educational resources and childcare costs are not a barrier to a parent who wants to return to work.

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 support the state of Hawaii increasing funding to the University of Hawaii for tuition support, thus making school more affordable and keeping students here.