

Responses to Questions from Hale`iwa Elementary's Informational Meeting on March 23, 2010

Note: The school consolidation study may be referenced in responses to these questions. The study is still in draft form and continues to change on a weekly basis as more information is shared from each school. However, if anyone would like a copy of the draft in its most current form, please contact the Hale`iwa Elementary School office and a copy will be forwarded to the requestor. The draft report is also available on the Department of Education website – www.doe.k12.hi.us. On the DOE homepage, click on the School Consolidation Studies icon partway down the right side of the page. The click “Waialua complex” on the left side of the page.

1. Has anyone considered the population increase, including elementary age students, when Kamehameha completes their housing development across the street?

- Answer: According to a presentation by a representative from Kamehameha Schools, an optimistic timeline for the housing development, of approximately 350 units, is within 7 – 10 years. Nonetheless, the impact of the possible population increase in the area will be considered in the school consolidation study.

2. Hale`iwa Elementary is on the State and National Historic Registers. How will this listing effect possible closing of the school?

- Answer: This fact is included in the school consolidation study. When the BOE reviews the study, it will be considered.

3. Why would there be any option other than # 3 (adjustment of attendance areas to even out the enrollment at the two elementary schools)? Please keep in mind there is history and community at stake here. We need our teachers in our community and not forced out because of something that was not their fault.

- Answer: All 3 options mentioned in the school consolidation study are being considered. The Waialua Complex Principals and SCCs have agreed that to keep our community united, we will work towards the goal of “status quo” or NO change to our existing schools. However, it is the BOE who will make the final decision.

4. What is the current policy on school designation / choice for residents of Waialua / Hale`iwa?

- Answer: Students are currently designated to go to either Waialua or Hale`iwa depending on where they live. If a student lives in Hale`iwa's geographic area but wants to attend Waialua, he must apply for and be granted a “geographic exception” by Waialua Elementary. Likewise, a student living in Waialua's geographic area who wants to attend Hale`iwa must apply for and be granted a “geographic exception” by Hale`iwa.

5. The school consolidation study does not show making one of the schools an intermediate school as an alternative? Why was this not considered as an alternative?

- Answer: One of the goals of the school consolidation process is to ultimately save the Department of Education money. Converting one of the schools to an intermediate or middle school would result in excess space at the high school and would not achieve that goal.

6. Why are our children and community so expendable? If Hale`iwa is closed, we are continuing to show our children that money is more important than they are. Do you feel this is appropriate?

- Answer: The children and community are not considered expendable. The State of Hawaii (like most of the nation) is in the throes of one of the worst economic crises in many years. This has affected all state -run programs, including the Department of Education. During these difficult financial times, everyone is forced to make difficult decisions. The simple truth is that the state and the DOE do not have enough money to continue to do “business as usual”. However, the school consolidation study will allow the Waialua complex to examine the feasibility of closing a school OR adjusting the attendance areas. The study will allow for input from all schools in the Waialua complex and their families and community members. The BOE will render its decision based on the findings in the study. There is NO pre-determined outcome.

7. How does No Child Left Behind affect this decision?

- Answer: The No Child Left Behind mandate ensures achievement accountability for all schools. Currently, both Waialua Elementary and Hale`iwa Elementary are “In Good Standing, Unconditional”, meaning that they have met all of the requirements of No Child Left Behind. It is essential that both schools continue to meet these requirements.

8. Why are the 6th graders the ones that are being relocated to the high school environment? Why can't they remain with the rest of the elementary kids?

- Answer: The proposal is to move the 6th graders to WHIS IF one of the elementary schools is closed. With the current combined enrollment of Waialua Elementary and Hale`iwa Elementary, the only reasonable way that the schools could be combined and possibly fit on either campus would be to move the 6th graders to WHIS.

9. What will happen to the Hale`iwa Elementary buildings if the school is shut down?

- Answer: At this time, there is no plan for the use of the buildings. However, this will be an important consideration in the school consolidation study and will be addressed in the study.

10. If consolidation of Hale`iwa happens, what will happen to the faculty, admin, custodians?

- Answer: DOE guidelines for staff reductions for teachers are set forth in the DOE's School Code for Certificated Personnel on pages 5700-19 – 33 (amended December 2005). Staff reductions for school administrators are addressed in the DOE's contract with HGEA, Unit 6. Staff reductions for custodians are addressed in the DOE's contract with UPW. More specific information is available in the school consolidation study.

11. Why is Hale`iwa being considered for closure when there are many smaller schools in enrollment now being considered? (Hickam Elem, Kaawa Elem, as well as others)

- Answer: There are several other schools in different districts being considered for consolidation, not only the Waialua Complex Schools. Hickam Elementary's official enrollment for SY09-10 is 627. With its current enrollment, it is not a candidate for school consolidation. Ka`a`awa Elementary is currently undergoing the school consolidation study / process.

12. Why is Hale`iwa being considered when Waialua does not have the space for all of the students?

- Answer: The current school consolidation study is examining the feasibility of closing Hale`iwa OR Waialua.

13. Is the student/teacher ration going to go higher if schools are consolidated? Is there a guarantee that it will not go higher?

- Answer: There is a possibility that the student / teacher ratio may increase slightly. There is no guarantee that it will not go higher.

14. I was wondering if it is possible to get the stats on how many kids there are already in the Waialua Elementary classes.

- Answer: Kindergarten: Three classes: 22, 20 and 21
Kindergarten-First grade transition class: 14
First grade: Three classes: 21, 21, 18
Second grade: Three classes: 19, 19 20
Second/Third grade combination class: 17
Third grade: Three classes, 19, 23, 22
Fourth grade: Three classes: 27, 24, 26
Fifth grade: Three classes: 29, 27, 23
Sixth grade: Three classes: 25, 25, 20

15. How much is enrollment expected to increase? (to take Hale`iwa out of consideration of closing)

- Answer: Concern has been expressed that the Waialua Elementary campus would not be able to accommodate the students who would be transferred from Haleiwa if Haleiwa were to close and all 6th graders transferred to Waialua High

& Intermediate. If this had taken place at the beginning of SY 2009-10, this would have been the result:

	Haleiwa Elem	Waialua Elem	Waialua High & Inter.
Official enrollment	168	530	609
6 th graders to Waialua High & Inter.	-27	-68	95
K-5 graders from Haleiwa to Waialua	-141	141	
Pro forma enrollment	0	603	704

16. As a community member, what can we do to support the school? Is the school planning to organize a rally or something of that sort?

- At this time, there are no plans for a rally but that does not negate the possibility of one being planned in the near future. Community members who signed in at the informational meeting will be mailed more information from the school as it becomes available. Spreading the word through the community and encouraging others to testify at the public hearing and the BOE meeting would be very helpful to the schools.

17. What does the study consist of and what exactly are they studying to make their determination?

- Answer: The study is prepared pursuant to Chapter 8-38, Hawaii Administrative Rules, on the possible consolidation of schools in the Waialua complex. As provided by Chapter 8-38, the study will consider the following:

- (1) The advantages and disadvantages of consolidation in respect to efficient school administration and providing equal educational opportunity;
- (2) The adequacy of facilities, equipment, programs, transportation service, and other support services at the school which may be closed and the school to which students may be transferred;
- (3) Social impact on the children, schools, community and those involved in the consolidation;
- (4) The net financial savings that may be realized from consolidation, including projections of additional expenditures at the school which may receive transferred students;
- (5) Potential new residential developments, projected changes in enrollment, and other relevant demographic considerations;
- (6) Suitability of using portions of the school facilities to accommodate space requirements of other department or state activities; and
- (7) A suggested timetable for implementation if consolidation is recommended.
- (8) Other issues not specifically addressed in Chapter 8-38.

For more specific information, a copy of the study, in its current draft format, may be requested at the Hale`iwa Elementary School office.

18. How much money will the DOE actually save with the closure of one of the schools – facilities and/or total resources?

- Answer: An exact figure is not available at this time. However, these numbers will be included in the final draft of the school consolidation study for consideration in the final decision by the BOE.

19. What procedures are in place to ensure the information received at this meeting and distributed to Hale`iwa parents is able to be shared by all of the complex? How are subsequent meetings going to be advertised?

- Answer: The information shared at the March 23 meeting was shared with all of the complex area principals. While the complex is united in its efforts to work towards the goal of “status quo”, each school has different tasks to help achieve that goal. Each principal will tailor information to meet the needs of his/her school community. Each school works diligently to keep their families and community members informed. Subsequent meetings will be advertised through flyers sent home to parents, mail outs, signs on the school campuses and through other media outlets if time permits. This “response to parents” will also be posted on the DOE website.

20. If they made it that each elementary school had 350 students K- 6, how many students would be in each classroom?

- At this time, it would be difficult to give an exact figure of how many students would be in each classroom because it would depend on the number of students per grade level and the staffing.

21. Why are we having this meeting when I heard from the “mynah bird” that the “big meeting” with the Governor (or BOE) already saying that the school is closing in a year or two?

- The school consolidation study will be what the Board of Education will consider in rendering a decision about closing Hale`iwa Elementary or Waialua Elementary or readjusting the attendance areas. NO decision has been made at this time. NO decision will be made until the school consolidation study is completed and presented to the BOE. The final decision will be made by the BOE.

22. What is the petition going to do?

- The petition being circulated by a Hale`iwa parent will communicate to the BOE (if there are many signatures) that a great number of people in the Hale`iwa / Waialua communities are opposed to Hale`iwa Elementary School closing. It may be another consideration for the BOE when they make their final decision.