

TASK FORCE TO STUDY CONSOLIDATION OF
KEANAE AND HANA SCHOOLS

Minutes of Meeting
July 23, 2009

Task force members present

Bob Carroll, chair
Terry Akuna
Kehau Kimokea
Rick Paul, principal, Hana School
Marilyn Tau`a

Department of Education staff present

Lindsay Ball, complex area superintendent
Randy Moore, assistant superintendent

Community members present

Wesley AhKoi, Pearl Ahupuaa, Meling Akuna, John Blumer-Buell, Sara Mitchell Boeche, Lesley Ann Bruce, Geraldine Carroll, Kathryn Childs, Gail Ching, Ohia-Lehua Crozier, Jana Frame, Alaina Hinau-Neeham, Andy Justus, M/M Todd Kaikala, Mehau Kaililaau, Patsy Kaina, Alii Kimokeo, Aileen Lee, Constance Lee, Stanley Lee, Wendy Miguel, David Ponter, Janet Redo, Claudine San Nicolas, Smith, AnnLea Sylva

Call to order

Mr. Carroll called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

Introduction of task force members

The members present introduced themselves.

Public testimony

- Aileen Lee: played a tape recording of an interview of the last teacher (Florence Harrow), a parent and grandparent of students at Keanae before the three remaining students were transferred to Hana in September 2005. In the recording Mr. Paul stated he closed Keanae School because he needed the teaching position at Hana. Ms. Lee said closing the school takes away the heart from the community. The school facility is used by a church on Sundays.
- Leslie Ann Bruce: asked whether the Board of Education would make a decision about this next week? [answer by Mr. Ball: “no.”]

- Meiling Akuna: said several years ago there was a meeting about the closing of Keanae School. It was closed. She thought it was permanently closed. She believes it will be difficult to find the funds to reopen Keanae School.
- Janet Redo: said she had been fighting to keep Keanae School open for the past 20 years. It used to be a K-8 school, but grades gradually were transferred to Hana. Mr. Paul did not confer with the community when he transferred the remaining students to Hana. A family member donated the current school property to the state for a school. Church was suspended for about four months because the property was going to be transferred to DLNR. She and other community members met with Mr. Ball about keeping the school open. She doesn't want her grandchildren on the dangerous road every day. There used to be two small buses; now the DOE uses one large bus. Keanae was selected for a video production because it was the smallest school in the U.S. There are now more than 20 children who should be going to Keanae School. One of her granddaughters has missed a lot of school because it's hard to get up so early to go to Hana and she hates the bus ride. We have a building; we need a teacher. If money is a problem, we are willing to forego hot lunches from Hana. The students can bring home lunches. They don't need a bus. Parents will bring them to school.

Review of agenda

Mr. Carroll reviewed the agenda.

Purpose of task force

Mr. Moore said the purpose of the task force is to conduct a study of the possible consolidation of Keanae and Hana Schools, and to make a recommendation to the complex area superintendent, Mr. Ball.

Review of Chapter 8-38, Hawaii Administrative Rules

Mr. Moore reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on Chapter 8-38, Hawaii Administrative Rules, "Consolidation of Public Schools." There were questions and discussion of how the task force members were appointed.

Review of Hawaii's "Sunshine Law"

Mr. Carroll reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the Hawaii Sunshine Law.

Adoption of Rules of Procedure

Mr. Carroll reviewed the Proposed Rules of Procedure, and added that public testimony would be accepted at the end of the meeting as well as at the beginning of the meeting. He said he intended to run the meetings using common sense. [Note: the Rules of Procedure will be posted on the task force website, accessible from the Department of Education homepage.]

Discussion/Action on Proposed Draft Report of the Task Force

Mr. Moore reviewed Draft #1 of a task force report. Suggestions included:

- Determining whether closing Keanae School is consistent with the constitutional requirement for equal educational opportunities for all children.
- Appointing a subcommittee to study and report to the task force on the social impacts on the committee.
- Reopen Keanae School for approximately 20 Keanae students one last year of school.

Upon motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the task force approved the establishment of a subcommittee consisting of Ms. Kimokea and Ms. Tau`a to meet with interested Keanae community members to study and recommend for inclusion in the task force report a discussion of the social impact on the children, schools, community, and those involved in the consolidation. The subcommittee will also determine the number and ages of children in Keanae that could attend Keanae School. The subcommittee will meet Wednesday, August 5 at 5 p.m. at Keanae School. Mr. Paul will provide clerical support to the subcommittee.

Public Testimony

- Andy Justus: The YMCA Camp Keanae could provide hot meals for Keanae students.
- Pearl Ahupuaa: She was an educational assistant at Keanae School prior to the students being transferred to Hana School. There were two teachers at Keanae School. Haiku School sent frozen meals weekly, which were heated at Keanae. Students were transferred to Hana beginning in grades 7-8 to give the children a better social life. Then 5th and 6th graders were transferred for the same reason. Then 3rd and 4th graders, and finally the remaining K-2 students were transferred.

Date, time, and location of next task force meeting

Thursday, August 27, 2009 at 5 p.m. at Keanae School.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Randy Moore