

TASK FORCE TO STUDY CONSOLIDATION OF
KEANAE AND HANA SCHOOLS

Minutes of Meeting
September 17, 2009

Task Force Members Present

Bob Carroll, Chair
Gary Davidson, vice-principal, Hana School
Kehau Kimokea
April Pettit, ASA, Hana School
Marilyn Tau`a

Member Absent

Terry Akuna

Department of Education Staff Present

Lindsay Ball, Complex Area Superintendent
Randy Moore, Assistant Superintendent
Richard Paul, Principal, Hana School

Community Members Present

Wesley Ah Koi, Meiling Akuna, Geraldine Carroll, ShanaLee Kaikala, Aileen Lee, Janet Redo, Anuheia Sylva, Elaine Wender

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by chair Bob Carroll at 4:20 pm.

Discussion of Draft #2b of the Task Force Report

Mr. Carroll led a page-by-page review and discussion of the draft report. The following comments and questions were offered:

- Hana School administrators will confirm the number of homeschooled children that are on record at Hana School. Ms. Kimokea will further refine the number of Keanae children who are attending schools other than Hana School.
- The complex area superintendent was asked to widely publicize the public hearing.

- It should be clarified that the “furniture” for \$12,000 in the table in the middle of page 4 is furniture for both students and teachers.
- The figures in the table at the bottom of page 4 (the number of students and teachers at Hana School) should be checked. The number of teachers is supposed to include all teachers, not only those funded through the weighted student formula. The number should be used consistently throughout the report.
- The statement that there would be no bus savings if the elementary students stayed in Keanae should be checked. If there were fewer students on the bus to Hana, could a smaller bus be used?
- There is a statement on page 5 that “Keanae students now attending Hana School who transferred back to Keanae would not receive the same level of programs and support services.” Are there programs and support services that could be initiated at Keanae? Maybe the wording should be changed to “For Keanae students to receive similar programs at Keanae, resources would need to be obtained from volunteers or nonprofits willing to provide them.”
- Students from Keanae sometimes arrive late at school if a bus driver is absent and the Keanae bus must detour to pick up other students. Add this to the “advantages” of re-opening Keanae School.
- The word “mothball” on page 6 and elsewhere should be changed to “inactive.”
- “Bussed” – is it spelled with two s’s or one? (page 6 and elsewhere).
- Is there asbestos at Keanae School? Ms. Pettit will check in the Hana School files.

Public Testimony

Meiling Akuna said the report presented at the previous meeting by the committee on the social impacts of closing Keanae School showed the negative effects of continuing to take children to Hana on the bus. They are exposed to danger on the bus ride. The state is exposed to liability if the children are injured on the bus. The cost of a lawsuit could exceed the cost to fix Keanae School. Keanae children who ride the bus to Hana arrive to school tired and disinterested in learning, who become middle school and high school dropouts.

Geraldine Carroll spoke in favor of keeping Keanae School open. When she was young, there were four schools in the district – Hana, Keanae, Kipahulu, and Kaupo. Parents and grandparents are willing to help if Keanae School were reopened. Keanae students miss school when it is rainy. She was a health aide at Hana School and traveled weekly to Keanae for two hours to attend to the children there.

Mr. Carroll read two testimonies that were faxed.

One was from Debbie M. Tanaka, who testified in favor of keeping Keanae School open for the safety of the children and for their educational benefit, so they do not arrive at school too tired to learn. Keanae School should be made available to Keanae residents as an emergency shelter. It could also be used as a community resource, as a venue for community activities. Closing the school will contribute to the decline of the community. There are funding opportunities through (i) federal funds for native Hawaiian educational services and the rehabilitation of facilities [CFDA 84.362A] and (ii) the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act [CFDA 84.395].

The other was from Jan Yagi Buen, who testified in favor of keeping Keanae School open for the safety of the children. She recounted a school bus accident in which students were scared, but not injured. Children riding the bus experience motion sickness and arrive at school unable to learn. Health and safety should not be compromised, even if the educational services at Keanae would be less than those available at Hana.

Discussion of Draft #2b of the Task Force Report

Mr. Carroll resumed the page-by-page review and discussion of the draft report. The following comments and questions were offered:

- DOE officials were asked to research and determine the DOE's eligibility of federal funds that might be available through the federal programs cited by testifier Debbie Tanaka above.
- DOE officials were asked to determine the possibility and feasibility of having meals supplied by the Camp Keanae YMCA. [discussion: contracting for meals may be permitted by USDA, but state law prohibits the contracting out of work normally performed by public employees.
- It should be made clear that the \$1,343,000 future facility costs need not be spent before Keanae School can be reopened.
- There should be an "and" near the bottom of page 9 to read "Costs to address deferred maintenance *and* non-compliance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The text near the bottom of page 10 is incorrect. The projections are for K-12 students, not elementary students.
- DOE officials will follow up with DHHL/Oahu on plans for development of its 242.3-acre Keanae landholding.
- Language on a timetable and a transition plan will be developed after the public hearing.

- The “other issues” section of the report should include a discussion of the federal programs identified by testifier and also in the financial implications section of the report.

Date, time and location of next task force meeting

Thursday, October 8, 2009 at 3 p.m. at Keanae School.

The task force members also set the public hearing required by Chapter 38 for Thursday, October 22, 2009 at 5 p.m. at Keanae School, to be followed by a task force meeting to determine a recommendation to the complex area superintendent.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.