



From: [Jenna Tate](#)
To: [DBEDT LUC](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for Meeting February 9, 2023, RE: Kūlanihākoʻi High School
Date: Tuesday, February 7, 2023 9:46:58 AM

Aloha,

Attached is my written testimony for the LUC Meeting scheduled on 2/9/23.

Mahalo for your consideration,
Jenna Tate



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Aloha Chair Giovanni and Members of the Commission,

I am Jenna Tate, a teacher at Kūlanihāko'i High School in Kihei. I appreciate you taking the time to reconsider the issue of the improvement Condition imposed by your Commission in 2013.

While it is true that the Department of Education failed to construct a grade-separated pedestrian crossing in a timely manner, it continues to be in question pending passage in the legislature of the bill for the capital improvement project, I believe it is important to view all aspects pertinent to this issue while it is under consideration. It is disappointing that this has not yet come to pass, it is even more disappointing to those of us who operate the school at its temporary location on Lokelani Intermediate School's campus that we are not allowed to use our campus buildings currently available, yet empty. We know that eventually a grade-separated pedestrian crossing will be built. In the meantime, it's unconscionable that taxpayer dollars are being used to pay utilities on empty buildings when current students are eager to use them.

Much of the public seems unaware that our school is already operating, that our students understand the importance of safety, and that our students have pledged not to cross the highway on foot but to use the transportation provided by the school and parents. You have received plenty of testimony from adults who believe they know what our students will do and how, but I implore you to listen to the students and adults who work closely with them. Our administration has purchased two buses that will be operated by our staff to allow us to shuttle our students safely to campus. This is a short-term solution to this problem, but I also think it is important to note as it reflects the commitment the school administration has to keep our students safe.

Our students have been eagerly asking for opportunities to start teams and clubs to represent Kūlanihāko'i High School. Through the classes I teach, we have built school-wide systems led by the students' voices and brainstormed many ways to help us bolster our school pride and spirit. These students are adamant that they themselves and the community will feel more connected if we were able to offer sports, after-school clubs, and other enrichment activities the other high schools on Maui are able to offer. Unfortunately, we do not have the space available at our temporary location to do so on a consistent basis. We are grateful beyond measure for the hospitality that Lokelani Intermediate School has shown us throughout this school year. The students and staff understand we would be disrupting the normal Lokelani I.S. operations and practices if we were to be holding our own extra-curricular meetings that would not fit in our portables.

I am teaching the College and Career Readiness class this semester. I am working with community members to schedule presentations for our 9th graders about the careers they've expressed interest in. One of the difficulties we are having is finding two different time slots when a presenter is available to work with our students. Our bell schedule does have a time slot that would support bringing all of the students together for one presentation, the problem is fitting all 34 students, the presenter(s), the administration, and the classroom teacher into one portable. When we do try to do this, there is a noticeable difference in the level of engagement and

participation of our students due to the cramped and sometimes awkward seating. It also limits the types of activities that can be offered, which ultimately could influence a student's decision on whether or not to pursue that career pathway.

We will also continue seeing limited enrollment as long as we are confined to the space we are currently in. We are, again, extremely grateful for the space Lokelani was able to provide us with this year. However, there is no way we will be able to fit the same number of students in our classes as we would at the permanent site if we are still working in five portable classrooms to run a high school. This limited enrollment will impact everything for these students- from funding issued from the Department of Education based on student enrollment numbers, to a depth of talent available as we build our athletics, fine arts, and other after-school programs. The results of this impact will influence these students' entire high school experience. Allowing us to occupy the facilities at the new campus allows us to create these experiences more consistently and of a higher quality for our students.

Please consider those most affected by your decision and amend the 2013 Condition to allow us to safely use our campus while the quest for a grade-separated crossing continues.

Mahalo,

Jenna Tate

Kūlanihāko'i High School