



State Public Charter School Commission 2018 Recommendation Report

Charter Application for
Kūlia Academy

***Academic Plan, Organizational Plan, and Financial Plan
Evaluation***

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***Academic Capacity, Organizational Capacity, and Financial
Capacity Evaluation***

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Introduction

In 2012, the Hawaii State Legislature passed Act 130, replacing the state's previous charter school law, Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS") Chapter 302B, with our new law, codified as HRS Chapter 302D. Act 130 instituted a rigorous, transparent accountability system that at the same time honors the autonomy and local decision-making of Hawaii's charter schools. The law created the State Public Charter School Commission ("Commission"), assigned it statewide chartering jurisdiction and authority, and directed it to enter into State Public Charter School Contracts ("Charter Contract") with every existing charter school and every newly approved charter school applicant.

The 2018 Request for Proposals and the resulting evaluation process are rigorous, thorough, transparent, and demanding. The process is meant to ensure that charter school operators possess the capacity to implement sound strategies, practices, and methodologies. Successful applicants will clearly demonstrate high levels of expertise in the areas of education, school finance, administration, and management as well as high expectations for excellence in professional standards and student achievement.

Evaluation Process

Following the advice and training from national experts and the experience gained in previous application cycles, the Commission created standardized evaluation forms, provided evaluator training, and assembled evaluation teams based on the national best practices, policies, and standards needed to authorize high-performing charter schools. For the 2018 application cycle, each application was assessed by two evaluation teams. One evaluation team reviewed the academic, organizational and financial plans of each application. Another team assessed the capacity of the applicants to carry out the academic, organizational, and financial plans of each application. The highlights of the evaluation process are as follows:

Proposal Evaluation. The Commission's Applications Committee conducted a completeness check to ensure that both evaluation teams were sent complete submissions of the application to review and evaluate. Both evaluation teams read and reviewed each application. The academic, organizational, and financial plans of each application were assessed by one evaluation team. This team also conducted a clarification interview with each applicant so that the applicant could clarify its application.

Capacity Evaluation. An evaluation team charged with evaluating academic, organizational, and financial capacity reviewed the application, then subsequently conducted an interview with the applicant to further assess applicant's capacity to carry out the plans as stated in the application.

Due Diligence. The evaluation teams considered any other available information relevant to each application.

Consensus Judgment. Members of both evaluation teams reached a consensus in determining whether to recommend the application for approval or denial.

The duty of the Evaluation Team is to recommend approval or denial of each application based on its merits. The authority and responsibility to decide whether to approve or deny each application rests with the Commission.

Report Contents

This Recommendation Report includes the following:

Proposal Overview

Basic information about the proposed school as presented in the application.

Recommendation

An overall judgment regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for approval.

Evaluation Summary

A summary analysis of the proposal based on four primary areas of plan development and the capacity of the applicant to execute the plan as presented:

1. Academic Plan
2. Organizational Plan
3. Financial Plan
4. Evidence of Capacity

Rating Characteristics

Rating	Characteristics
Meets the Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the proposed school expects to operate; and inspires confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.
Does Not Meet the Standard	The response meets the criteria in some respects but has substantial gaps, lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas and does not reflect a thorough understanding of key issues. It does not provide enough accurate, specific information to show thorough preparation; fails to present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; and does not inspire confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.

Evaluation Report

A report, attached as **Appendix A**, provides details on the Evaluation Team's assessment of the applicant's proposal when reviewed against the evaluation criteria.

Proposal Overview

Proposed School Name

Kūlia Academy

Mission and Vision (as described by the applicant)

Mission: *“To prepare a diverse student population for success in college and beyond, especially in the interaction of Science and Humanities. Our goal is to educate contributors to society, by offering a comprehensive learning experience designed to serve the needs of our students, through effective site-based instruction, rich hands-on learning, and foundation skills presented in ways that are relevant and inspiring for our students. The school will particularly try to recruit and meet the needs of socioeconomically disadvantaged and minority students.”*

Vision: *“Graduates of Kūlia Academy are scientific thinkers who contribute to the global community as socially responsible and educated members of society.”*

Geographic Location (as described by the applicant)

“If approved, Kūlia Academy will serve students primarily in west Honolulu, Pearl City, Waipahu and East Kapolei. While searching for a suitable facility, we aim to locate our school close to Honolulu Rail Project, which is scheduled to open in October 2020 coinciding with our school opening, providing easy access to our low-income students and parents through public transportation.”

Anticipated Student Population (as described by the applicant)

“We are expecting a high percentage of minority students, a higher than 50% Free and Reduced Lunch ratio with about 12% ELL and 10% Special Education students. Through our comprehensive educational program and support system, we plan to address the needs of this high need student population efficiently. Through our data-driven instruction model, we aim to track every student individually and make sure every single one of our students make progress through their college and career goals.”

Contribution to Public Education System (as described by the applicant)

“The families of Honolulu County deserve a rigorous, college preparatory school for their children. Our target student population do not only need a comprehensive and effective curriculum, they also need guidance and support mechanisms to ensure they understand and get motivated towards aiming and achieving high. Our school model aligns instruction with college-readiness and Common Core standards and uses high-quality assessments to ensure students are developing the academic skills that they will need for a successful college education and career. By focusing our efforts on understanding and serving the needs of our economically disadvantaged students, we aim to remove barriers to a high quality college education for the underserved communities that we serve. We plan to achieve these results through a strong college-bound culture based on high expectations for our students. Kūlia’s College Program provides the resources that low-income, minority students need to attain a college education, which is not fully achieved for many low-income, minority students at current public school settings.

We are planning to help address Priority I as detailed in SPCSC’s 2018 RFP:

I. New schools that would provide additional school capacity in geographic areas

where existing public schools are already exceeding, have already reached, or are projected to reach or exceed full enrollment capacity

Currently, two area high schools, James Campbell High and Kapolei High, are suffering due to rapid increase in their numbers of students. Kūlia Academy will help address this problem by offering additional seats for the area students. By locating our school close these two high schools (Pearl City, Waipahu, East Kapolei area) and by being close to Honolulu Transit Project and by offering attractive college-prep programs, Kūlia Academy will attract students who would otherwise attend these two schools.”

Enrollment Summary (as described by the applicant)

Grade Level	Number of Students											
	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Capacity	
	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		2025	
Brick & Mortar/ Blended vs. Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual
K	60		60		60		60		60		60	
1	20		60		60		60		60		60	
2	20		20		60		60		60		60	
3			20		20		60		60		60	
4					20		20		60		60	
5							20		20		60	
6	48		48		48		48		48		72	
7	72		72		72		72		72		72	
8			72		72		72		72		72	
9					72		72		72		72	
10							72		72		72	
11									72		72	
12											72	
Subtotals	220	0	352	0	484	0	616	0	728	0	864	0
Totals	220		352		484		616		728		864	

Executive Summary

Kūlia Academy

Recommendation

Deny

Summary Analysis

It is recommended that the application for Kulia Academy be denied since the applicant did not meet the standard for approval in all four core areas of the application. The applicant failed to satisfy the criteria in the academic plan, organizational plan, financial plan, and applicant capacity sections.

The academic plan does not meet the standard for approval. The academic plan provides very little detail in that it describes *what* the school plans to do, however it does not provide information regarding *how* it will be accomplished. Also, the Applicant gave no indication in the application or the clarification interview that it took steps to ensure that these plans and processes are directly implementable in the target community without any modification or adaptation.

The organizational plan does not meet the standard for approval since many sections lacked information or sufficient detail and did not demonstrate thorough preparation and often failed to present a clear picture of how the school expects to operate.

The financial plan does not meet the standard for approval because the Applicant has not provided a complete, realistic, and viable start-up and three year operating budget. Exclusions and incomplete costs render the Financial Plan unreliable and unsound, which affects the viability of the application as a whole.

The applicant’s capacity did not meet the standard because it did not demonstrate that it has the academic, financial, and organizational capacity to launch a successful high quality charter school. The proposed School Director has undemonstrated capacity to lead a new charter school since much of his professional background is not at the school administrator level. The applicant has also not demonstrated that it clearly understands the community that it would like to serve.

Summary of Section Ratings

Opening and maintaining a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan and identifying highly capable individuals to execute that plan. It is not an endeavor for which strengths in some areas can compensate for material weakness in others.

Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must receive a “Meets the Standard” rating in all areas.

Academic Plan

Does not meet the standard

Financial Plan

Does not meet the standard

Organizational Plan

Does not meet the standard

Evidence of Capacity

Does not meet the standard

Academic Plan

Kūlia Academy

Rating

Does not meet the standard for approval

This section of the application contains eight sub-sections. Kūlia Academy’s application received ratings for five of the eight sub-sections:

Section II. Academic Plan - Sub-sections	Rating
A. Academic Plan Overview, Academic Philosophy, and Student Population	<i>This section is not separately rated by the evaluators. However, a strong Academic Plan will demonstrate consistent alignment with the Academic Plan Overview, Academic Philosophy, and Student Population.</i>
B. Curriculum and Instructional Design	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
C. Special Populations and At-Risk Students	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
D. School Culture	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
E. Professional Culture and Staffing	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
F. School Calendar and Schedule	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
G. Supplemental Programs	<i>Not applicable</i>
H. Conversion Charter School Additional Academic Information	<i>Not applicable</i>

Analysis

Because Kūlia Academy’s application did not meet the standard for approval for any of the five rated sub-sections, **the Academic Plan does not meet the standard for approval.**

The Academic Plan includes very little detail -- although the application describes *what* the school plans to do, there is little to no information provided regarding *how* it will be accomplished (see Appendix A). For example:

- The application describes the data that faculty and staff will look at, but not how instructional leaders and teachers will use these data to inform instructional practice and the academic program or the roles and responsibilities of the instructional leadership team in helping teachers to support their students’ progress and to make adjustments to instruction.
- The application states that “Kūlia Academy will address the interests, background, and challenges of its target student population in the following ways: co-teaching; embedded

supports; differentiated instruction; home-school connection; and specific supports for English learners, immigrant students, and foster youth,” but does not describe any interventions or modifications that will be made to instructional strategies if students are not meeting identified goals and targets. Furthermore, in the clarification interview, the Applicant was unable to provide any additional detail.

There are also numerous sections of the application that contain content that is identical or nearly identical to content from charter school applications for several Magnolia Science Academies, which are located in California -- specifically, the sections regarding the school’s:

1. mission;
2. plan for reviewing and updating the school’s academic goals and targets;
3. plan for serving educationally disadvantaged students, one of the school’s target populations;
4. hiring process;
5. formal teacher observation/evaluation process; and
6. classroom walkthrough procedure.

In addition to not citing the content as having originated with Magnolia Science Academies, the Applicant gave no indication in the application or the clarification interview that it took steps to ensure that these plans and processes are directly implementable in the target community without any modification or adaptation, such as:

- researching the needs of the target community on Oahu,
- reviewing the collectively bargained agreements that apply to charter school personnel in Hawaii, or
- conducting a comparative analysis of the target community and the California communities served by the Magnolia Science Academies.

The Applicant also did not provide any evidence regarding whether the selected Magnolia Science Academies’ plans and processes, which the school will essentially be replicating, have been proven effective.

The Evaluation Team commends the Applicant for their willingness to serve keiki in Hawaii -- there is no doubt that countless hours were logged in pursuit of opening a new charter school on Oahu. Nonetheless, the lack of attention given to the relevance of the Academic Plan to the target community, coupled with a notable lack of familiarity with both the target geographic area and target student population, raises questions regarding whether the plan is viable as described or likely to be as effective as anticipated:

- How can a school assess the needs of a particular community if it cannot accurately locate it?
- How can a school understand the needs of a particular community if it has not actively engaged in dialogue with its members?
- How can a school effectively serve a particular community if it is unfamiliar with its members and their needs?

These questions and an insufficient level of detail provided in both the application and clarification interview prevent the Evaluation Team from being able to determine whether the Academic Plan is sound and appropriate to implement in the target community, and indicate that the plan has not met the standard for approval.

Organizational Plan

Kūlia Academy

Rating

Does not meet the standard for approval

This section of the application contains eight sub-sections. Kūlia Academy’s application received ratings for six of the eight sub-sections:

Section III. Organizational Plan - Sub-sections	Rating
A. Governance	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
B. Academic, Financial, and Organizational Performance Management	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
C. Ongoing Operations	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
D. Student Recruitment, Admission and Enrollment	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
E. Geographic Location and Facilities	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
F. Start-Up Period	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
G. Conversion Charter School Additional Organizational Information	<i>Not applicable</i>
H. Third Party Service Providers	<i>Not applicable</i>

Analysis

The Organizational Plan does not meet the standard for approval as the application did not meet the standard for approval for any of the six rated sub-sections sections. Overall, many sections lacked information or sufficient detail and did not demonstrate thorough preparation; often, the Applicant failed to present a clear picture of how the school expects to operate. Specifically, there are serious concerns regarding:

- the governance structure, including legal and conflict of interest matters;
- an undeveloped facility plan, including research, timeline projections and square footage estimations; and
- concerns over the viability of the Start-up Plan.

Weakness in the Governance Structure

Operation of the school by a nonprofit organization

The plan for the governance structure of the proposed school is not in compliance with the governing statute for charter schools in Hawaii, and does not reflect a thorough understanding of key issues. The application states Kūlia Academy “will be operated by a nonprofit organization;” however, the statute that governs charter schools in Hawaii only allows a nonprofit organization to operate a conversion charter school, not a start-up charter school, which Kūlia Academy would be. The Commission cannot approve a charter application whose proposed governance structure does not comply with state law.

Potential conflicts of interest due to shared nonprofit and school governing board

During the clarification interview, the applicant governing board explained that the nonprofit board is the applicant governing board and that, once the school begins operation, the school governing board will comprise the nonprofit board, plus others. This shared membership is a serious concern, as this type of relationship could pose actual or perceived conflicts of interest. A review by the State Ethics Commission is also required to determine whether this arrangement would be in compliance with the State Ethics Code.

Concerns over an an effective governance structure

There is a concern whether there will be an effective governance structure at Kūlia Academy. Kūlia Academy describes the governing board’s role as “The Board is responsible for hiring and supervising the School Principal...The Board approves major school and Kūlia policies, and budgets for Kūlia Academy.” In attachment Q “The Board will discharge its power and responsibility by functioning primarily as a policymaking body.” During the clarification interview applicant board members reinforced the application, reporting that the governing board will dictate school policy, but not micromanage the school, and will oversee school finances. Unfortunately, in both response opportunities there was clearly a focus of the governing board on policy and financial oversight but no mention of the governing body’s responsibilities regarding academic success. Neither response describes a governance structure that fosters an active oversight and evaluative role of the governing board. Rather, the clarification interview made it clear that the governing board will not micromanage the school, and while the board did not provide to what extent it will take a hands-off approach, the responses do not provide confidence in the weak role of the governing board, nor any assurance that it will hold the school accountable to organizational, financial, and academic success

Role of the Principal invites conflicts of interest issues

There are serious concerns over the Principal as “manager”, to both the school board and the school as it appears the Principal will run both the decision-making body of the school, as well as the school itself. There are deep concerns for a plan in which the individual will manage both. In combination with this board’s role as “policymaking body” there are serious concerns for a weak governance structure, as well as an oversight model that facilitates conflicts of interest.

Weakness in the Facilities Plan

The plan is insufficiently detailed and is neither comprehensive, reasonable, nor sound. The Applicant stated that it located three potential facilities, but did not provide any further information, such as addresses, square footage, amenities, previous use, or any assessments for bringing the buildings into compliance for use as a school. Not only does the response not meet the criteria, the lack of detail and needed information does not provide enough specific information to show a thorough preparation. Without details to support the school’s facility estimations, it is unclear whether the applicant conducted sufficient research into the targeted location to determine whether there are feasible

possibilities for a school facility. For example, a range of square footage is provided but no explanation of what the basis of the numbers is. This would be the same for renovation costs and the facility timeline. The succinct response does not inspire confidence in the Applicant's capacity to identify, renovate, and lease a school facility and further, if the proper research has not yet been conducted the charter should not be approved at this time.

Weakness in the Start-up Plan

While the Implementation Plan lists activities and targeted timelines for implementing the school, there is a concern for the viability of the plan. The Principal of Kūlia Academy will work as a volunteer until April 2020 and this person will be the sole individual responsible for all tasks and activities listed in the Implementation Plan. There is a concern that the board will only act as a guide for fiscal management, compliance, and reporting (Attachment Q), and not take on responsibility for any of the implementation activities to open the school. The appearance that the board will act as a delegation body only is reinforced by its plan to meet merely six times, or every other month, during the start-up phase. The board is described as "an exemplary team to lead the school through this project during the critical implementation phase," yet it appears that it will not utilize the skills of its listed members to assist in the implementation of the project. Unfortunately, this does not inspire confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out its plan effectively.

Every new charter school that has been authorized by the Commission has reported that start-up and implementation were significantly more difficult than expected. For this reason, the Commission has placed a strong emphasis on need for the Applicant's to demonstrate that a capable team and committed board will carry out the plan. The failure of the Applicant to identify more than one individual to address all the activities of the Implementation Plan exposes a key weakness that plagued the Organizational Plan section. The governing board is repeatedly referenced in a passive role, and seemingly is comfortable to delegate its responsibilities over to the school principal. As such, the Applicant failed to present itself as a group collectively working to launch a school, and that all individuals have an equal interest. It appears that the Applicant is not adequately prepared to open and successfully run a charter school at this time.

Financial Plan

Kūlia Academy

Rating

Does not meet the standard for approval

This section of the application contains two sub-sections. Kūlia Academy's application received ratings for both of the sub-sections:

Section IV. Financial Plan - Sub-sections	Rating
A. Financial Oversight and Management	✓ Meets the standard
B. Operating Budget	✗ Does not meet the standard for approval

Analysis

Because Kulia Academy's application did not meet the standard for approval for the Operating Budget sub-section, **the Financial Plan does not meet the standard for approval**. Specifically, the Applicant has not provided a complete, realistic, and viable start-up and three year operating budget. Exclusions and incomplete costs render the Financial Plan unreliable and unsound, which affects the viability of the application as a whole. Incomplete or excluded items in the Financial Plan include, but are not limited to:

- Staffing costs,
- Costs for promotional materials printed in multiple languages,
- Renovation and facility improvement costs,
- Costs for experienced teachers capable of teaching AP-level courses, and
- A contingency plan should funding be lower than expected.

The budget submitted does not correlate to the staffing plan (Attachment F). In the budget, the applicant does not report the salaries for the assistant school directors for any of the budget years. According to the staffing plan, the school will have three assistant school directors by Year 2 -- the Dean of Academics, the Dean of Culture, and the Dean of Students -- with an annual salary of \$62,000 (a total of \$186,000). The costs for the assistant school directors' salaries cannot be found in the budget. To further complicate matters, the costs reported on the staffing plan (\$1,482,000) differ from the actual total cost of listed salaries in the staffing plan by \$60,000 (the actual cost is \$1,542,000).

In addition, the staffing plan itself contains errors in the number of full time employees (FTEs) accounted for. For example, in Year 1, the total FTEs on the staffing plan says 16.5; however, the actual number of employees listed in the plan is 18. For Year 2, the total FTEs on the plan says 27, however, the actual number of employees listed is 29. The staffing plan is further convoluted as two part-time educational assistants are included in the narrative proposal and annual budgets, but not in the staffing plan.

Year 2 presents a clear example of the lack of cohesion and correlation of the budget with other aspects of the application. As previously stated, the total count of FTEs provided in the staffing plan is 27; however, the actual number of employees listed in the staffing plan is 29, and the FTE count in the annual budget is 28.5. Because the Applicant provided three different numbers for the Year 2 FTE count, the evaluation team was unable to correlate the salary costs listed in the budget with the staffing plan, even with the \$60,000 discrepancy factored in.

Since personnel costs account for at least 60 percent of the total budget for each budgeted year, the lack of cohesion and accuracy of the personnel costs raises concerns pertaining to the reliability and viability of the budget as a whole. At capacity (Year 6 of operation), the proposed school projects to have 68 to 69 employees; using the information provided in the staffing plan, the discrepancy in personnel costs totals \$118,000.

These discrepancies invalidate the Applicant's budget and raise questions regarding the school's financial health and viability, as well as the Applicant's current procedures regarding fiscal reporting and management. During the clarification interview, the governing board president stated that the application was reviewed and edited multiple times by the applicant governing board before being submitted; however, the application was submitted despite these errors. This raises concerns regarding the board's fiscal experience and capacity.

In addition to these errors, other concerns in the budget include staffing costs for teachers budgeted at \$51,000 to \$53,000 for each teacher in Years 1 through 3 of the budget. Based on the salary schedule for Hawaii public school teachers, the school would be limited to hiring teachers whose qualifications or experience are at the lower levels, which raises doubts as to whether the school would be able to attract experienced teachers capable of implementing the rigorous college preparatory model envisioned and teaching the desired number of AP classes. The budget for teacher salaries would only allow the school to hire three types of teachers, one of which is teachers who are unlicensed, have not completed a State Approved Teacher Education Program, and would only be eligible for an emergency hire permit.

The Applicant has also not provided a sound contingency plan in the event that funding is lower than anticipated or if enrollment goals are not met. The contingency plan relies on budget surpluses rather than cutting costs; according to the Applicant, if the school enrolls 10 students less than projected, the school would still be able to function with little negative impact due to a surplus of approximately \$125,000. Due to the unreliability of the budget, it is impossible to determine the accuracy of this projected surplus or whether there will even be a surplus.

The Evaluation Team would like to note that the described system of financial oversight by the school governing board and the division of operational duties and responsibilities between the school administration provide for a sound system. Though financial policies and internal controls would need to be finalized and adopted by the school governing board, the Applicant has clearly delineated the roles and responsibilities of the governing board and school administration.

Evidence of Capacity

Kūlia Academy

Rating

Does not meet the standard for approval.

This section of the application contains three sub-sections. Kūlia Academy’s application received ratings for all three of the sub-sections:

Section V. Applicant Capacity - Sub-sections	Rating
A. Academic Plan Capacity	X Does not meet the standard for approval
B. Organizational Plan Capacity	X Does not meet the standard for approval
C. Financial Plan Capacity	X Does not meet the standard for approval

Analysis

The applicant does not demonstrate the capacity to open and manage a high quality charter school since the applicant has not met the standards for academic, organizational, and financial capacity. The applicant does not exhibit academic capacity since much of the implementation of the academic plan will rest with the Dean of Academics position, and the School Director position. Given that the starting a new charter school will present itself with many challenges, it is unreasonable for two people to handle a wide range of duties (hiring faculty, leading professional development, overseeing curriculum, fiscal management, building community relationships) in the school’s first year of operations. Furthermore, the School Director has undemonstrated capacity to lead a new charter school since much of his professional background is not at the school administrator level.

The applicant does not exhibit organizational capacity and has shown that it does not know about the community it wishes to serve. There is concern that the proposed school is based on a model that worked on the mainland, but did not take into account how it would serve a community with characteristics that are unique to Hawaii. This was evidenced by plans to mail school marketing materials to households in in Spanish, even though it is not commonly spoken in Hawaii. Additionally, the applicant could not be specific about the location of the school and instead, stated that it would be “near the rail line.” The applicant (who will offer grades K-12 at capacity) is pursuing a school location in an area that already has an innovative school in Waipahu High School which has a program that allows students to take college courses while in high school. This is similar to the applicant’s model which encourages students to attend college after high school.

The applicant does not exhibit financial capacity since the proposed school’s financial team has an

undemonstrated ability to implement the financial plan because it does not have experience starting a charter school.

Evaluator Biographies

Martha Evans

Ms. Evans has over 40 years of experience in education having served as a school administrator, curriculum coordinator, and teacher in both public and private schools. She served as a school administrator at Lānaʻi High and Elementary School, Saint Louis School and McKinley Community School for Adults. Ms. Evans taught at Lānaʻi High and Elementary School, Holy Family School and Mokapu Elementary. She earned both a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and Master's Degree in Elementary Education/Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Hawaii Manoa, a Certificate in Reading Recovery from the University of California San Bernardino, and a Certificate in Educational Administration from the University of Hawaii Manoa.

Patricia Hamamoto

Ms. Hamamoto is the former Superintendent of the Hawaii Department of Education. She has over 40 years of experience in education having served as an administrator at the state and school levels, and as a teacher. She served as a school administrator at Maui High School, Nanakuli High and Intermediate School, Pearl City Highlands Elementary, Princess Miriam Likelike Elementary School, and President William McKinley High School. She has taught at Highlands Intermediate School, Ilima Intermediate School, Pearl City High School, McKinley Community School for Adults, Waipahu Community School for Adults, and Kaimuki Community School for Adults. Ms. Hamamoto has a Bachelor of Arts, Fifth Year Teaching Certificate from Long Beach State College, and a Master of Education from the University of Hawaii.

Jennifer Higaki

Ms. Higaki is the Commission's Academic Performance and Data Systems Manager. She has been involved in education in Hawaii since 2003, working in school-level and state-level positions in the Hawaii Department of Education and at the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and Italian Studies from Wellesley College and a Master of Science in Comparative and International Education from the University of Oxford.

Randolph Moore

Mr. Moore is a Vice Chair of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. He also currently serves as Board Chair and Director of the Hawaii Housing Development Corporation and as a Director of Grove Farm Company, Inc. He also chairs the advisory board of the Hawaii Budget & Policy Center. Mr. Moore is a retired business executive having a career that spanned 35 years which included serving as President of Oceanic Properties, President of Molokai Ranch, and Chief Executive Officer of Kaneohe Ranch. Following his retirement from Kaneohe Ranch, Mr. Moore taught mathematics at Central Middle School, and then became the Assistant Superintendent at the Hawaii Department of Education, Office of School Facilities and Support Services. Mr. Moore retired from the Hawaii Department of Education in 2012. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in mathematics from Swarthmore College, a Master in Business Administration from Stanford University, and completed post-baccalaureate teacher training at Chaminade University.

John Rizzo

Dr. Rizzo has over 30 years of leadership service in the role of Superintendent of Schools, Independent Head of School and as Principal of Public Schools in Massachusetts. He also served as an Adjunct

Professor of Graduate and Undergraduate Education for 17 years at a Massachusetts State University, and has served as a High School Head Football and Lacrosse Coach. While in Hawaii, Dr. Rizzo served as the Founding Head of School at Maui Preparatory Academy and also Head of School at St. Theresa School. Dr. Rizzo earned a Bachelor of Science in History and Education from Springfield College, his Master's Degree in Educational Leadership at Westfield State University, and his Doctorate in Teacher Education and School Improvement with a concentration in Supervision and Evaluation at The University of Massachusetts.

Sylvia Silva

Ms. Silva is the Commission's Organizational Performance Officer. Prior to working at the Commission she worked for its predecessor agency, the Charter School Review Panel. Before her work in charter school authorizing she had seven years of experience in operations at the school level which included school pre-opening/start-up phase systems and policy development, registrar functions, and school bookkeeping. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Chaminade University of Honolulu.

Danny Vasconcellos

Mr. Vasconcellos is the Commission's Finance and Control Manager. He previously worked at the State Office of the Auditor as an Analyst where he worked on or lead projects that required him to identify internal control weaknesses and analyze the effectiveness of state agencies. While at the Office of the Auditor, he worked on the audit of Hawaii's charter schools and a study of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board. He also served as a researcher for the Hawaii State Legislature's House Finance Committee and has extensive knowledge of Hawaii's legislative process and funding. He holds a Master of Public Administration from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.