

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



CATHERINE PAYNE
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: 586-3775 Fax: 586-3776

June 24, 2014

VIA: U.S. MAIL

Hālau Lōkahi Charter School Parents and Families

Aloha kākou, parents and families of Hālau Lōkahi students:

Thank you for the support for public charter school education that you have shown by enrolling your student at Hālau Lōkahi Charter School.

In Hawaii’s charter school system, the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission is the public agency that is tasked with protecting the interests of the public, parents, and above all students. The Commission takes its responsibility to you as charter school families very seriously.

As you probably are aware, Hālau Lōkahi is in serious financial trouble. The school is not paying its employees, and it has significant unpaid monetary obligations.

We want to make sure we keep you, the families, informed of the latest news in this fast-developing situation. We all will have some important decisions to make between now and the start of the 2014-2015 school year. The Commission is committed to providing you the candid information you need to make informed educational decisions about your keiki’s future.

At its meeting last week, the Commission voted unanimously to take the following actions:

1. Direct the Commission staff to inspect all school financial records and report back to the Commission, and direct the school’s governing board and staff to cooperate with this effort. This is vitally important so that everyone can understand the full scope of the problem in order to figure out what options there may be for addressing it.

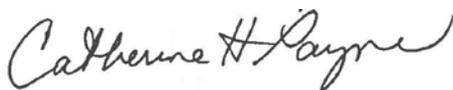
2. Offer the school a new charter contract to replace the old one that will expire on June 30, 2014—on the condition that the school’s current governing board and school director resign, to be effective upon the Commission’s appointment of a new governing board for the school. Under the new law that goes into effect on July 1, the current governing board of Hālau Lōkahi must execute the new contract by June 30, 2014, in order for Hālau Lōkahi to continue to be a public school. The Commission strongly believes that if Hālau Lōkahi is to have any chance of surviving its situation—and have a chance to attract the support from other stakeholders that is needed—new leadership is absolutely necessary. The Commission will consult with your school community before appointing the new governing board.
3. Require the current governing board to implement the financial plan that it submitted to the Commission last week. This plan must ensure that the school meets all of its financial responsibilities, both those that are outstanding and those for the 2014-2015 school year.

To help keep you informed of new developments, the Commission will be setting up an email notification system specifically for the Hālau Lōkahi school community. If you would like to be added to the email distribution list, please send an email message to info@spcsc.hawaii.gov with subject line “Halau Lokahi email list” and provide your name and email address. You also can find information on the Commission’s website, tinyurl.com/halaulokahi.

We owe it to you as families to share with you candidly that the fate of Hālau Lōkahi Charter School is uncertain at this point, even with new leadership. We are very hopeful that with your help, and with the help of the wider community, the new governing board and school leadership will be able to find a viable way forward for the school. But any way forward will not be an easy one, and difficult choices and changes will have to be made.

We want to assure you that the Commission is fully aware of both the pain and uncertainty that this situation imposes on the families of your school. With the kokua of the Hālau Lōkahi school community, other public institutions, and other stakeholders, we look forward to a speedy and positive resolution in the best interest of your children.

Very truly yours,



Catherine Payne
Chairperson



Thomas E. M. Hutton
Executive Director