

Policy vs. Results: Affirmative Action in the Hawaii Department of Education

July 1983

A statement of the Hawaii Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. This statement will be considered by the Commission and the Commission will make public its reaction. In the meantime, the findings and conclusions of this statement should not be attributed to the Commission but only to the Hawaii Advisory Committee.

THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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Policy vs. Results: Affirmative Action in the Hawaii Department of Education

—A Statement Prepared by the Hawaii Advisory
Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

Attribution:

The findings and conclusions contained in this statement are those of the Hawaii Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights and, as such, are not attributable to the Commission. This statement has been prepared by the State Advisory Committee for submission to the Commission, and will be considered by the Commission in formulating its recommendations to the President and the Congress.

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Hawaii Advisory Committee to the
U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
July 1983

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Dear Commissioners:

The Hawaii Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is pleased to release this statement, *Policy vs. Results: Affirmative Action in the Hawaii Department of Education*, as part of its responsibility to advise the Commission about civil rights issues in Hawaii.

In 1980 the Advisory Committee began receiving information from citizens and community groups in the State that there was an imbalance in the racial/ethnic composition between the Hawaii Department of Education's administrative and teaching staff and the State's population. In 1975 the Hawaii Board of Education, which heads the department, adopted its first policy of racial/ethnic nondiscrimination in employment. It assigned responsibility for the formulation and implementation of the department's affirmative action plan to the State superintendent, the executive officer for the department.

Annual affirmative action progress reports received by the Hawaii Advisory Committee from the department of education, dating from 1977 to 1982, show that many racial/ethnic groups are underrepresented in the department's work force. Little or no changes in the representation of these groups has occurred since the affirmative action plan was first implemented. Further, the department's plan has not been revised since its initial development in 1976 and is based on outdated census figures.

In November 1982 the Hawaii Advisory Committee held a public consultation to obtain information about the effectiveness of department efforts to implement its affirmative action program. During the consultation, the Advisory Committee learned that the Affirmative Action Advisory Council, established by the board of education to monitor and evaluate the progress of affirmative action in the department, had not met to review affirmative action developments in over 2 years.

The Hawaii Advisory Committee raises questions regarding equal employment opportunity in the department of education. The board of education's affirmative action policy has not achieved meaningful results.

The Advisory Committee believes that the board and department should actively utilize established advisory groups in the affirmative action process. By receiving input and reaction from diverse groups, education officials would be able to effectively evaluate progress of affirmative action.

The Advisory Committee acknowledges the board of education's cooperation and participation in its review of affirmative action.

Respectfully,

Helen Nagtalon-Miller
Chairperson
Hawaii Advisory Committee

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Patricia K. Putman
Honolulu

Barry Shain
Honolulu

Oswald K. Stender
Kailua

Donnis H. Thompson
Kaneohe

*No longer a member.

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Policy vs. Results: Affirmative Action in the Hawaii Department of Education

Introduction

In 1980 the Hawaii Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights¹ received information from citizens and community groups in the State that there was an imbalance in the racial/ethnic composition between the Hawaii Department of Education's administrative and teaching staff and the State's population. In 1981 the Hawaii Advisory Committee began to monitor the effectiveness of the department's affirmative action program, recognizing the significance of racial/ethnic group representation and visibility in Hawaii's public education system, the State's largest public employer.²

¹ The Hawaii Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights is one of 50 State Advisory Committees to the Commission (hereafter referred to as the Hawaii Advisory Committee). The Civil Rights Commission was established by Congress under the Civil Rights Act of 1957, as amended, Public Law 83-315, to investigate complaints about deprivation of the right to vote; to study legal developments constituting discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap, or national origin, or in the administration of justice; to appraise laws and policies of the Federal Government with respect to such discrimination; to serve as a national clearinghouse for civil rights information; and to submit reports of its activities, findings, and recommendations to the President and Congress.

² State of Hawaii, Department of Planning and Economic Development, *Data Book 1982*, November 1982, pp. 93, 249.

³ Charles G. Clark, superintendent of education, Hawaii Department of Education, letter to Jeffery Wallace, Western Regional Office, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Mar. 17, 1981 (hereafter cited as Clark Letter). Mr. Clark is no longer superintendent.

⁴ Hawaii Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, "Consultation on Public Education Issues," Nov. 19, 1982, transcript (hereafter cited as Transcript).

The board of education reviewed the transcript of the proceedings. June C. Leong, chairperson, Hawaii State Board of Education, letter

The Advisory Committee requested and received from the State Superintendent of Education annual affirmative action progress reports submitted by the department to the Hawaii Board of Education, dating from 1977 to 1982.³ In November 1982 the Hawaii Advisory Committee held a public consultation to determine department efforts to implement its affirmative action program.⁴

Representatives from the education department and members of the board of education's Affirmative Action Advisory Council participated in the consultation.⁵ Members of the four school district advisory councils located on the island of Oahu were invited to

to Jeffery Wallace, staff, Western Regional Office, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, May 13, 1983 (hereafter cited as Leong Letter).

The department's representative was asked to include:

the effectiveness of the Department of Education's efforts to insure equal employment opportunities within the Department including a review of the Department's commitment to affirmative action.

Helen Nagtalon-Miller, chairperson, Hawaii Advisory Committee, letter to Ozmond Okazaki, Management, Audit and Civil Rights Branch, Hawaii Department of Education, Nov. 1, 1982.

The Affirmative Action Advisory Council representative was asked to include:

the role and function of your organization and a review of your group's concerns in the delivery of educational services including affirmative action in the State Department of Education.

Helen Nagtalon-Miller, chairperson, Hawaii Advisory Committee, letter to Flora Beggs, president, Hawaii Parent-Teacher Association, November 1982. Ms. Beggs also serves as the chairperson of the Affirmative Action Advisory Council to the State Board of Education.

attend this meeting, but they declined to accept the invitation.⁶

Representatives from the Hawaii State Teacher's Association, the Waianae Coast School Concerns Coalition, and the Hawaii State Parent-Teachers Association also shared their views about affirmative action in the department. Their concern about affirmative action was summarized by one participant:

We believe that the children of our community would be better served if the ethnicity of the teacher population were to more nearly approximate that of the community. . . . When our children are denied a culturally appropriate learning environment, they may well be denied equal opportunity to an education—to become self-supporting individuals able to operate effectively in the dominant culture while retaining what they value in their own culture.⁷

The Hawaii Advisory Committee issues this statement in order to inform the Governor, State education officials, and members of the public about its findings.⁸

Hawaii Board and Department of Education

The Hawaii public school system was established as a unified system in 1840 when Hawaii was ruled by a monarchy.⁹ It is the only State-operated public education system in the United States.¹⁰ In 1982 the school system ranked eighth in size to all school districts in the Nation, serving 161,000 students in grades K through 12. It employed approximately

⁶ Following the consultation, information was obtained in writing from these persons concerning the Oahu district councils: Andy Y. Nii, district superintendent of Leeward Oahu District, Hawaii Department of Education, letter to Jeffery Wallace, Western Regional Office, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, December 1982; Ethel N. Hasegawa, chairperson, Honolulu Oahu District Advisory Council, Hawaii Department of Education, letter to Jeffery Wallace, Western Regional Office, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, December 1982; Maurice Ishimoto, chairperson, Central Oahu District Advisory Council, Hawaii Department of Education, letter to Jeffery Wallace, Western Regional Office, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Dec. 20, 1982. Robert C.M. Ottensmeyer, chairperson, Windward Oahu District Advisory Council, Hawaii Department of Education, letter to Jeffery Wallace, Western Regional Office, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Dec. 12, 1982. Letters from Honolulu, Central, and Windward Oahu council chairpersons are hereafter referred to as Oahu Chairperson Letters.

⁷ Presentation by Dixie Padello, coordinator, Waianae Coast School Concerns Coalition, transcript, pp. 8-9.

⁸ The board of education reviewed the draft of the Hawaii Advisory Committee's statement, and its comments are included in the statement where appropriate. Leong Letter.

⁹ Transcript, p. 53.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*; Haw. Const. art. 10, §§1.

¹¹ Transcript, p. 53.

14,500 persons and operated with a budget of \$383.3 million.¹¹

The department of education is an agency of the State's executive branch, which is under the supervision of and subject to the directives of the Governor of Hawaii. The 13-member board of education heads the department. It is empowered to formulate policy and exercise control over the internal organization and management of the public school system. Board members are elected to 4-year terms on a nonpartisan basis from two at-large school board districts.¹²

The board of education conducts public meetings twice a month, and is responsible for calling any special meeting of the board or its committees, such as the Affirmative Action Advisory Council.¹³

The board's policies and programs are implemented by the education department's executive officer, the Hawaii Superintendent of Education. The superintendent administers preschool, primary and secondary school, and adult educational instruction throughout the State. The superintendent is appointed by the board of education, and may be removed from office by a majority vote of the board.¹⁴

The department has seven administrative school districts.¹⁵ A district superintendent heads each of these districts and is appointed by the State superintendent with the board's approval.¹⁶

The Hawaii Board of Education adopted its first policy of racial/ethnic, sex, age, and religious nondiscrimination in employment in 1975.¹⁷ The policy mandated an affirmative action program and pro-

¹² Haw. Const. art. 10, §§2,3; Haw. Rev. Stat. §§13-1, 13-4, 26-4, 26-12, 296-2 (1976 & 1982 Supp.). The first school board district is comprised of the island of Oahu from which 10 members are elected at-large; the second school board district is made up of the islands of Hawaii, Maui, Lanai, Molokai, Kahoolawe, Kauai, and Niihau from which 3 members are elected at-large.

¹³ Transcript, p. 55. Haw. Rev. Stat. §§296-6 (1976) provides that meetings may be called and held by the board's chairman or a quorum of the board "as often as may be necessary for transaction of the department's business."

¹⁴ Haw. Rev. Stat. §§26-12, 296-2 (1976 & 1982 Supp.)

¹⁵ *Id.* at §§13-1(d)(1982 Supp.) These districts are:

1. Hawaii
2. Maui
3. Honolulu, Oahu
4. Central Oahu
5. Leeward Oahu
6. Windward Oahu
7. Kauai

The department's school districts are not comparable to school board districts from which board members are elected.

¹⁶ Haw. Rev. Stat. §§297-6 (1976).

¹⁷ State of Hawaii, Department of Education, Office of the Superintendent, "The Hawaii State Board of Education Policy,

claimed the affirmative action goal of achieving “at all levels [of employment], a Department of Education workforce which is truly representative of the residential workforce.”¹⁸

The board assigned responsibility for the formulation and implementation of the affirmative action plan to the State superintendent. Development of the plan is delegated to the department’s affirmative action officer.¹⁹

Employment Surveys

The department’s affirmative action plan was developed in 1976; it is based on a 1975 survey by the department of its employees.²⁰ This survey compared 1970 U.S. census figures with the department’s work force to determine the extent to which it reflected State population percentages. The department reported to the board of education that in the certificated labor force “the most noticeably underrepresented” group was Filipinos, and that other groups in the department were, to a lesser degree, not represented according to their population proportions, including Hawaiians, part-Hawaiians, blacks, and whites.²¹

Striking differences existed between department employment percentages and general population percentages for Filipinos, whites, and Japanese. While Filipinos and whites represented 12.4 percent and 39.2 percent of Hawaii’s population respectively, they represented 2.3 percent and 17.6 percent of the department’s teachers, and 2.9 percent and 11.4 percent of the department’s educational officers. In contrast, Japanese comprised 29.3 percent of the State’s population and were 58.8 percent of the teachers and 67.1 percent of the educational officer positions.²² Table 1 shows the department’s work force composition by race and ethnicity for 1975.

Goals and Guidelines in the Department of Education for an Equal Employment Opportunity Affirmative Action Program,” Jan. 9, 1975 (hereafter cited as Board Policy and Goals).

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 1, 2.

Because the board and department of education are subject to State laws, the original affirmative action policy was subsequently expanded to prohibit discrimination in employment based on marital status, handicap, and arrest and court records. Transcript, p. 57.

¹⁹ Transcript, p. 58. The affirmative action office is a part of the management, audit, and civil rights branch of the education department. The affirmative action officer designs and conducts annual employment surveys and prepares annual affirmative action progress reports for the department.

²⁰ Transcript, pp. 5, 6, 58, 59.

²¹ State of Hawaii, Department of Education, Office of Personnel Services, *Affirmative Action Plan for Minorities, November 1, 1976 to September 1977*, November 1976, p. 6.

Employment surveys were conducted from 1977 through 1980 with little or no changes in department employment percentages for racial/ethnic groups.²³

In 1982 the department compared its 1976–77 and 1981–82 work force figures. It found “slight gains” in the employment of five groups, an average gain of 0.3 percent. For example, the department reported, “Since 1976, the base year for the department’s affirmative action program, Filipinos in the teacher workforce increased by 69 positions, or 0.7 percentage point.”²⁴ Four groups achieved no gains in representation and 3 groups lost representation, an average decrease of 0.4 percent. Table 2 provides the department’s employment statistics for this comparison survey.

The board of education noted that the department uses several standards—educational labor force availability, residential work force, and State population—to evaluate its work force.

The department of education. . .has used the ethnic composition of the workforce versus the ethnic composition of the pool of qualified applicants seeking employment with the DOE. . .the preferred comparison. . .shows that the DOE has in fact been hiring minorities at or above equity in relation to their availability in the pool of qualified applicants seeking DOE employment.²⁵

The department’s “preferred comparison” shows limited gains in employment of all groups, an average of +0.17 for the data provided on all department employees and an average of +0.19 for educational officer positions reviewed by the Hawaii Advisory Committee. Tables 3 and 4 compare data on the percentage of qualified minorities available for employment to the percentage of minorities employed by the department of education.²⁶

The chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Education wrote to the Advisory Committee in 1983:

²² Ibid. Educational officers include principals, vice principals, and professional employees of State and district offices, except those in classified service, i.e., clerical and janitorial/maintenance.

²³ State of Hawaii, Department of Education, Affirmative Action Program, “Annual Progress Report 1977–78,” Honolulu, Hawaii, Oct. 4, 1978; “Annual Progress Report 1978–79,” Honolulu, Hawaii, August 1979; “Annual Progress Report 1979–1980,” Honolulu, Hawaii, September 1980; “Annual Progress Report 1980–81,” Honolulu, Hawaii, September 1981.

²⁴ State of Hawaii, Department of Education, Affirmative Action Program, “Annual Progress Report 1981–82,” Honolulu, Hawaii, September 1982, p. 17.

²⁵ Leong Letter, pp. 1–2.

²⁶ Department tables VII and VIII, *1976 Affirmative Action Plan for Minorities*; and tables D and I–1, *DOE Affirmative Action Program Annual Progress Report for 1981–82*. Leong Letter, p. 2.

The DOE is aware of the shortcomings of its affirmative action program, and that it has been developing a new affirmative action program plan. . . .the new program plan will incorporate philosophies, principles, procedural guidelines, and data for sound planning of affirmative action which have evolved and become more clearly articulated since 1976.²⁷

The Advisory Committee received this same assurance in March 1981 from the former superintendent of education who stated:

The affirmative action plans are being revised. . .on the basis of current workforce utilization analysis, labor force availability data, and [DOE] experiences with specific affirmative action activities. The revised plans should be available for [the superintendent's] review and ultimately the Board of Education's consideration in May [1981].²⁸

Advisory Councils

In 1975 the board of education established an Affirmative Action Advisory Council (AAAC) to monitor and evaluate the progress of the department's affirmative action program. Members were to reflect a cross section of the State's work force, including racial/ethnic groups and women. Board policy required that the AAAC "meet at least quarterly to review progress in implementation of the Affirmative Action Program. . .and [to issue] quarterly reports in writing to the State Superintendent."²⁹

During the Hawaii Advisory Committee's consultation in 1982, both the chairperson of the Affirmative Action Advisory Council and a representative of the department acknowledged that the AAAC had not met to review affirmative action developments in over 2 years.³⁰ They attributed this situation to the problem of board and department initiative, and "the difficulty of implementing the kind of changes that affirmative action would have meant in our educational system."³¹

Another type of advisory council serves an important function in education department affairs. There is one School District Advisory Council (SDAC) for each of the department's seven school districts.³²

SDAC members are appointed on a nonpartisan basis by the Governor, and their terms of office coincide with the term of office of the appointing Governor. They advise the board of education and the district superintendents on matters of interest to their districts and disseminate information and interpret board decisions and policies to the public.³³

Most school district representatives stated that their district councils met on a monthly basis and were active in making recommendations to State education officials about community concerns and issues.³⁴ At the Hawaii Advisory Committee's consultation, the Waianae Coast School Concerns Coalition alleged that the only communication with district councils occurred at the community's initiative, and that the existence of SDACs was not well publicized.³⁵ Following the consultation, the Hawaii Advisory Committee learned that the Leeward Oahu SDAC had not met in 2 years due to a lack of membership participation.³⁶

The board of education reviewed a draft of this statement and commented that the transcript of the Advisory Committee's consultation suggested that a more appropriate activity for the Advisory Committee would be to address the following issues:

- a. Is the present ethnic composition of the DOE work force a result of past unlawful discrimination?
- b. On what basis should the DOE's affirmative action goals be defined (i.e., should goals be based upon the ethnic composition of the pool of qualified applicants seeking employment with the DOE)?
- c. Should affirmative action by the DOE be mandatory or voluntary?
- d. Should the DOE's affirmative action be based on securing preferential treatment for employment of underrepresented minorities, or ensuring equal treatment regardless of a person's ethnicity, color, race or national origin?³⁷

The purpose of the Hawaii Advisory Committee's review was to question the results of the board's affirmative action policy. The Hawaii Advisory Com-

²⁷ Leong Letter, p. 2.

²⁸ Clark Letter.

²⁹ Board Policy and Goals, p. 3.

³⁰ Transcript, pp. 63, 91.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 64, 89-91.

³² Haw. Rev. Stat. §§296-7(a)(1982 Supp.). This statute specifies the number of members of each district advisory council as seven members for the district of Hawaii and five members each for the other six districts.

³³ Haw. Rev. Stat. §§296-7(b), (c)(1982 Supp.). Each council is to hold meetings "as often as may be necessary to carry out its functions" (§§296-9).

³⁴ Oahu Chairperson Letters; telephone interviews with Mr. Kojo Ikeda, educational specialist, Maui School District, May 3, 1983; Mr. Kenneth Asato, assistant district superintendent, Hawaii School District, May 3, 1983; and Mr. Hashimoto, deputy district superintendent, Kauai School District, May 5, 1983.

³⁵ Transcript, pp. 14-15.

³⁶ Andy Y. Nii, district superintendent, Leeward Oahu District, Hawaii Department of Education, letter to Jeffery Wallace, Western Regional Office, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, December 1982.

³⁷ Leong Letter, p. 3.

mittee believes that the board of education should seek input from its affirmative action advisory council and school district advisory councils on the questions the board raises.

Conclusion

Information collected by the Hawaii Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights raises questions regarding equal employment opportunity in the Hawaii Department of Education. Affirmative action policies have not translated into meaningful results.

Since 1975 most racial/ethnic groups out of such a diversely-populated State have not achieved equality in representation in the department's work force. The department's affirmative action plan had not been

revised since its initial development in 1977, and is based on outdated census figures. Evidence was presented to the Advisory Committee showing nonutilization of the Hawaii Board of Education's Affirmative Action Advisory Council.

The Hawaii Advisory Committee believes that the active involvement of established advisory groups in the affirmative action process would be a valuable tool to the board and department of education in assuring the success of an affirmative action program. By receiving input and reaction from diverse groups, education officials would be better able to evaluate the progress of affirmative action in employment; it would be a major step toward the goal of an educational system which is representative of the State's population.

TABLE 1**Hawaii Department of Education Work Force Composition
October 1975**

	State Population*	Teachers**	Educational Officers***
White	39.2%	17.68%	11.70%
Japanese	29.3%	58.75%	66.83%
Filipino	12.4%	2.30%	2.88%
Hawaiian and Part-Hawaiian	9.3%	7.07%	5.13%
Chinese	6.8%	8.71%	9.78%
Korean	1.3%	1.29%	2.24%
Black	1.0%	.33%	0%
Other	1.8%	3.87%	1.28%

*1970 Census

**Includes counselors, school librarians, registrars, and special teachers

***Principals, vice principals, program specialists, and other State and district DOE officers

Source: State of Hawaii Department of Education, Office of Personnel Services, *Affirmative Action Plan for Minorities, November 1, 1976 to September 1977*, November 1976, p. 5.**TABLE 2****Hawaii Department of Education Work Force Composition
1976-77 and 1981-82**

	1976-77		1981-82	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Black	49	.3%	46	.3%
Chinese	1,054	7.2%	1,103	6.9%
Filipino	639	4.4%	769	5.2%
Hawaiian	154	1.1%	158	1.1%
Japanese	8,162	56.0%	8,209	56.0%
Korean	188	1.3%	185	1.3%
Mixed	530	3.6%	558	3.8%
Part-Hawaiian	1,411	9.7%	1,435	9.8%
Puerto Rican*	51	.3%	56	.4%
Samoan*	71	.5%	60	.4%
White	2,203	15.1%	2,092	14.3%
Others	60	.4%	76	.5%
Totals	14,572	100.0%	14,657	100.0%

*These groups were not listed by the department in table 1.

Source: State of Hawaii, Department of Education, Affirmative Action Program, "Annual Progress Report, 1981-82," table Q, p. 29. Separate totals for each ethnic group listed include educational officers, teachers, and classified staff.

TABLE 3**Total Percentage of all Minorities in Hawaii Employed in the Department of Education in Relation to their Availability in the Qualified Educational Personnel Labor Force**

	% of Qualified Minorities Available for Employment	% of Minorities Employed By the Department of Education
White	23.2%	17.2%
Japanese	54.6%	59.4%
Filipino	2.6%	2.3%
Hawaiian and Part-Hawaiian	6.0%	6.9%
Chinese	8.9%	8.8%
Korean	1.1%	1.3%
Mixed	2.5%	3.2%
Puerto Rican	.0%	.1%
Samoaan	.1%	.1%
Other	.4%	.4%

Source: State of Hawaii, Department of Education, Office of Personnel Services, *Affirmative Action Plan for Minorities, November 1, 1976 to September 30, 1977*, November 1976, table VII, p. 8.

TABLE 4**Total Percentage of all Minorities in Hawaii Employed in Educational Officer Positions in the Department of Education in Relation to their Availability in the Qualified Educational Personnel Labor Force**

	% of Qualified Minorities Available for Employment	% of Minorities Employed in Educational Officer Positions By the Department of Education
White	23.2%	11.35%
Japanese	54.6%	67.10%
Filipino	2.6%	2.91%
Hawaiian and Part-Hawaiian	6.0%	5.19%
Chinese	8.9%	9.88%
Korean	1.1%	2.27%
Mixed	2.5%	1.30%
Puerto Rican	—	—
Samoaan	.1%	—
Other	.4%	—

Source: State of Hawaii, Department of Education, Office of Personnel Services, *Affirmative Action Plan for Minorities, November 1, 1976 to September 30, 1977*, November 1975, table VIII, p. 10.

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