

K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION REDESIGN – HAWAIIAN STYLE

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The actual or perceived condition of Hawaii's Public Schools (K-12) is, in my view, both our State's biggest social injustice and our State's biggest business problem. Somewhere in the vicinity of 10,000 native Hawaiians and their supporters marched in Waikiki in support of Kamehameha Schools and Hawaiian programs. The critical importance of Kamehameha Schools is that it gives native Hawaiians a chance for a good education and therefore upward mobility and opportunity. Left unsaid is that this is not provided for native Hawaiians in Hawaii public schools. Native Hawaiians represent 26.1% of K-12 public school students and have the lowest educational attainment of all racial groups in Hawaii.¹ Military leadership has considered establishment of Department of Defense schools in Hawaii. The percentage of military families in Hawaii that home school their children is dramatically higher than in other military locations in the United States. Business leaders advise me of the problems with Hawaii high school graduates testing for entry-level positions in their companies –failure rates are high and the applicants are unable to pass the mathematics and language sections of entry-level tests. Similar problems are experienced by labor unions in Hawaii who find that Hawaii high school graduates are unable to pass apprentice examinations due to inability to successfully complete the mathematics requirements. A labor leader acquaintance said to me, "Mitch, what am I supposed to do with these high school graduates who are unable to do the algebra required on our test?" Make no mistake about it, education system redesign is needed – and needed now.

I lack the education required to reach the conclusions stated herein. I am just a reformed lawyer who has spent the last 12 years in the world of business. I am public school educated through law school. I have been blessed over the last two years to work for the family of Harold Castle, with 25% of my time devoted to a foundation he established in 1962, the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation. The Foundation has recently decided to undertake a

¹ "Just the Facts" 4-5 (Hawaii Educational Policy Center 2003). ("JTF")

proactive effort in public education reform and enhancement. I am also blessed, I think, to be the current chair of the Hawaii Business Roundtable, an organization that has focused on education reform since 1988. I have learned that the easiest way for me to grow is to surround myself with people smarter than I am. In these capacities, I have had the privilege of engaging in conversations with a number of national educational leaders who have shaped my views and provided a framework for my thoughts. Not all the news is bad.

Professor Tony Wagner, Co-Director of the Harvard Graduate School of Education Change Leadership Group, pointed out we have a public education system nationwide that was designed for a time when children needed to take the summer off to pick crops and work on the farm, and where less than 10% of the school aged population graduated from high school. We have entered the 21st century with a knowledge based economy where our youth are required to “read, write and compute” but are operating an education system designed for a different time.” Dr. Wagner urges that involved groups (teachers, principals, parents, citizens and politicians) should not get angry with one another over public education reform as systemic redesign is required nationwide to meet the challenge of the 21st century realities for education of our children. I would add that once again we face a problem that is not unique to Hawaii.

Dr. William G. Ouchi, in his recently published book “Making Schools Work – A Revolutionary Plan to Get Your Children the Education They Need”, makes the happy observation that “(t)here’s nothing wrong with the students or the teachers and most, (though not all), school systems already have enough money to do the job well”.² Governor Linda Lingle’s senior advisor for education, Professor Randall Roth notes, “we are convinced that students in Hawaii are capable of performing at a much higher level and ... that we have excellent teachers...”³

Dr. Stephen R. Portch, Chancellor of the University of Georgia education system who came to Hawaii to advise our State’s P-20 Task Force, convinced me with his view that all school reform must be tested against whether the action would produce an increase in measurable student achievement. He also advised me as a foundation grantmaker that the

² W. Ouchi, *Making Schools Work*, 8 (Simon & Schuster 2003) (“Ouchi”).

³ *Pacific Business News*, 55 (October 17, 2003).

biggest returns on investment could be secured in early education. Professor Edward J. Kameenui of the University of Oregon College of Education counsels that school reform actions need to be research based. Professor Tony Wagner also advises that actions taken now for public school redesign will be part of a 20-year process to create institutions and systems that provide education appropriate for the 21st century. Against this background, we should consider some surprising (to me) things that affect measurable student achievement.

- **Leadership Really Matters**

My friend / teacher – Randy Moore – highlighted the importance of public education leadership in his December 1998 essay “Help for the Public Schools – A Modest Proposal”. He noted that, in almost every case, superior schools in Hawaii could be attributed to leadership from a current or past school principal.⁴ On the basis of a series of interviews in public schools, Randy noted that successful principals share a common characteristic – namely, their total commitment to the success of their students, teachers and the school. They know the resources available to them are inadequate. They know they are hampered by union contract provisions that are not in the best interests of the schools. They know the governance of the school system is fractured and flawed, and other workings in the State bureaucracy, all within both the Department of Education and the Department of Accounting & General Services, are not responsive to the individual schools’ needs...nevertheless, they “plow on”. Randy cited an Education Week article suggesting that “some 20 years of research strongly suggests that [principals] make a big difference in shaping the education that goes on in a school”. The paper went on to suggest creation of a principals institute, modeled on the Weinberg Fellows program which, due to a lot of hard work, grew into a program now known as the Principals Leadership Academy to be mentioned later.

A report on public school leadership by education think tank McREL, published in 2003, connects public education leadership to student achievement. The study, an analysis of 70 separate studies on school leadership and educational achievement, finds a substantial relationship

⁴ R. Moore, “Help for the Public Schools – A Modest Proposal”, 5 (Social Science Association 1997) (“Moore”).

between leadership and student achievement.⁵ The McREL Report suggests educational leadership can cause a 10-20% positive difference in student achievement.⁶ The report highlights two primary leadership variables: 1) whether leaders properly identify and focus on improving the school and classroom practices that are most likely to have a positive impact on student achievement; and 2) whether leaders understand the magnitude of change they are leading and adjust their leadership practice accordingly.⁷ The McREL Report put to rest my worry that my conclusion that leadership matters was merely a personal bias. Appended hereto is a table showing leadership responsibilities that can impact student achievement and a second table which modifies leadership approaches for different subject areas based on the amount of change involved.⁸

The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices brief dated September 12, 2003 concluded that “school leaders exert a powerful if indirect influence on teaching quality and student learning”.⁹ The report notes that “schools of the 21st century will require a new kind of principal ... one whose main responsibility will be defined in terms of instructional leadership that focuses on strengthening teaching and learning”.¹⁰ The report suggests that three primary modes of leading promote student learning:

- Principal as entrepreneur – leaders focused on instructional improvement and student learning while protecting teachers from intrusions of the outside environment.
- Principal as organizer – principals bring to the school innovative individuals, ideas, programs and instructional strategies that improve teaching ... and also engage teachers, parents and community members as collaborators and leaders in school improvement efforts.

⁵ T. Waters, R. Marzano & B. McNulty, “Balanced Leadership: What 30 Years of Research Tells Us About the Effect of Leadership on Student Achievement”, 1 (McREL 2003) (“McREL”)

⁶ McREL at 3, 6.

⁷ McREL at 6.

⁸ McREL at 4, 9.

⁹ NGA Center for Best Practices Issue Brief, “Improving Teaching and Learning by Improving School Leadership” (September 12, 2003) (“NGA”); P. Hallinger and R. Heck, “Exploring the Principal’s Connection to School Effectiveness: 1980-1995,” *Social Effectiveness and School Improvements*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 157-91 (1998).

¹⁰ NGA at 11.

- Principal as instructional leader – effective school leaders build data-driven professional communities that hold individuals accountable for student learning and instructional improvement.¹¹

The NGA Report also focuses on staff development for principals’ leadership. It makes five research key based suggestions for creation of appropriate importance of professional development programs:

- Focus on the student learning and the specific problems practitioners face;
- Reinforce and sustain group work and collaboration among teachers, principals and district personnel;
- link directly to day-to-day work in real schools and classrooms;
- sustain a consistency of focus over time; and
- use feedback from teaching and learning to inform program development and evaluation.¹²

The report also recommends the removal of barriers for talented individuals to enter the principal and vice principal professions and the development of alternative principal preparation programs.¹³

The importance of principals leadership in schools turnaround efforts was highlighted in a recent study undertaken for the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.¹⁴ After nothing that strong administrative leadership is among the most tangible and indispensable characteristics of effective schools and that principals who are free to use their financial and curricular resources to our schools are among the traits associated with successful schools, the article notes that good school-level leadership is a common thread found in successful school turnarounds.¹⁵ So, principals’ leadership is connected to student achievement and turnarounds of low performing schools.

- **The Role of Early Childhood Education – Universal Pre-School**

It’s hard to think about public education in Hawaii without thinking of Bob Midkiff, Liz Chun and the work being done by the Good Beginnings

¹¹ NGA at 2.

¹² NGA at 5.

¹³ NGA at 7, 8.

¹⁴ R. C. Brady, “Can Failing Schools Be Fixed?”, 1-3 (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation 2003), (“Brady”)

¹⁵ Brady at

Alliance. They have taught me that all three- and four-year-olds need to have access to high quality preschool programs so that they can begin school fully prepared and ready to learn. I understand from them that approximately 50% of Hawaii's children enter kindergarten "school ready". As I mentioned earlier, Dr. Stephen Portch counseled that the best investment a foundation could make in public education was in the area of early childhood – where student achievement gains could be the greatest. He also noted that a child who enters first grade without knowing colors and numbers probably would not go to college.

As was the case with leadership, research on early childhood education strengthens my resolve. Preschool's newest supporter is an economist.¹⁶ Arthur Rolnick, the head of research at the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank, concludes, "a good pre-school is economic development, offering a 12% annual return, after inflation."¹⁷ Mr. Rolnick and the Minneapolis Federal Reserve analyst, Rob Grunewald, published a paper on preschool investment as economic development last spring. This argument has a new friend. James Heckman, University of Chicago's Nobel Prize-winning economist, concludes, "there is a lot of evidence for a high rate of return on investments at an early age and for a fairly low rate of return on investments at older ages."¹⁸ The conclusions are based on studies of the Perry Pre-School project in Ypsilanti, Michigan where 123 low-income three- and four-year-olds were followed from the 1960s through adulthood and a second study of the Chicago Parent Child Centers published in 2002 covering 1,300 children that seems to suggest that the Ypsilanti model could be applied across a broad spectrum of children.

- **The Role of Charter Schools**

A final Hawaii phenomenon to keep our eyes on is charter schools. There are 258 regular public schools and 25 public charter schools. The Harold K.L. Castle Foundation has supported two charter schools. Through Summer 2003, the charter schools appear to achieve test results similar to public schools with less funding. I am a board member of Kamehameha Schools' conversion charter school non-profit, Hookakoo Corporation. In

¹⁶ M. Beckstrom, "Invest in Kids Taken Literally", Twin Cities, Com., 2 (Pioneer Press October 24, 2003), ("Invest").

¹⁷ Invest at 2-3.

¹⁸ JTF at 3, 19.

that role, I have appreciated support from legislators and Hawaii's superintendent of schools and have been dismayed by mid-level DOE and public labor opposition. Waimea Middle School on the Big Island is the first Hookakoo conversion charter school. Its principal just noted at a conference that he controlled 5% of his budget in June 2003 and 97% of his budget in September 2003 as a conversion charter school. Through Kamehameha Schools' effort to spread the reach of Princess Pauahi's legacy, Waimea Middle School will receive one dollar from Kamehameha Schools for every four dollars of public budgeted funds, a 25% budget increase. We would do well to watch the native Hawaiian charter school movement.

- **The Role of Community**

In my idealized view of public education "long ago and faraway" in my own "little kid time" (I grew up playing at my school playground after school), communities were engaged in their schools, participated in their activities, provided financial and volunteer support – in fact, communities and schools were inseparable. In Hawaii 2003, communities are not allowed in school because of legalisms like liability risk and lack of supervision. As a result, it is the rare case where communities regularly gather at public schools and students are allowed to stay and play on school grounds.

Part of reconnecting communities with schools is listening to communities on issues of public education. One of the blessings of my volunteer role as Chair of the Hawaii Business Roundtable has been to work on a collaboration between the Roundtable and Pacific Resource Partnership (itself a collaboration between organized contractors and the Carpenters Union) on a project known as The People's Pulse. The idea behind The People's Pulse is to poll the community on public issues and share community views with governmental, business and labor decision makers. The People's Pulse is a quarterly publication based on research conducted by OmniTrak Group, Inc. The issues are based on a random sample of 700 adult citizens of Hawaii (400 on Oahu, 100 on Maui and 100 on Kauai). Results are weighted by island. A sampling error for the poll is $\pm 3.7\%$.

The Spring 2003 issue of The People's Pulse focused on public education. The polling showed significant interest in raising the quality of education in Hawaii and supporting principals' leadership.

“Residents clearly favor decentralization including more authority for principals. ... This is reflected in support for change in school governance and shifting the authority for decision making from the Department of Education (DOE) to individual school principals.”¹⁹ A staggering 67% of those polled favored shifting most decisions from the DOE to principals. The poll also indicated that residents clearly believe that performance standards for teachers, principals and DOE administrators will help improve the quality of education.²⁰ Finally, the poll indicated that more transparent funding based on weighted student counts is preferred rather than the DOE or the legislature allocating individual school budgets as is currently done.²¹ The drill-down specifics on the principals issue are revealing. “By a margin of 2.5 to 1, residents support shifting decisions on school budgets and personnel from the DOE to principals. When residents are asked if they favor “continuing to have the DOE make most decisions” on an individual school’s budget and personnel or giving decision-making authority to principals instead, a large majority of 2 in 3 favor the latter.”²²

Following Tony Wagner’s urging to understand the State’s educational problems deeply, the Summer 2003 issue of *The People’s Pulse* also focused on what residents perceive as the problem with education. The bad news was that “Hawaii’s residents (whether parents of children in K-12 or not) rate public schools poorly with a mean score of 5.3 on a 10 point scale. Ratings for neighborhood public schools were only marginally higher than for state schools overall.”²³ This was troubling as it had generally been thought that Hawaii residents had higher views of their own school than of the system generally. This did not come through in the polling and, in fact, the neighborhood schools rated only ½ percentage point higher than state schools overall. The good news was the public had strong consensus on what needs improvement – reading and writing skills, and school facilities.²⁴

The Summer 2003 issue also polled on performance contracts for principals. The principals proposal resonated especially strongly with the public with 3 in 7 (44%) strongly favoring the proposal and 73% of the

¹⁹ *The People’s Pulse*, 1 (Spring 2003) (“Pulse”)

²⁰ *Pulse* 1.

²¹ *Pulse* 1.

²² *Pulse* 1.

²³ *The People’s Pulse*, 1-2 (Summer 2003) (“Summer Pulse”).

²⁴ *Summer Pulse* 1.

population being either moderately or strongly in favor of performance contracts for principals.

- **“Just the Facts”**²⁵

As of Fall 2003, Hawaii public school enrollment is 184,360 – spread among 258 regular public schools and 25 charter schools.²⁶ Of that population, 31.8% (or 58,422 students) are identified as living in poverty.²⁷ Exactly half of Hawaii’s public school students are considered disadvantaged – either by poverty, special education, limited English or multiple disadvantages.²⁸ Native Hawaiians represent 26.1% of the K-12 public school population.²⁹ This population tends to fare relatively poorly in terms of educational attainment. 15% of Native Hawaiians have a four-year college degree compared to Caucasians and Chinese-Americans, which groups have 42% completing at least four years of college, and Japanese-Americans who have 35% completing at least four years of college.³⁰ Per pupil spending in Hawaii is \$6,391.³¹ I suspect this number is taken from the DOE budget and ignores educational costs included in other departmental budgets, including DAGS, Budget & Finance, Retirement System and numerous others. Harold K.L. Castle Foundation has partially funded (\$10,000) a study by Professor Bruce Cooper of Fordham University that is attempting to document total state spending on education, both in the aggregate and on a per pupil basis. Results of this study will be interesting and relevant to the redesign issues discussed herein. It is certain that state spending on public education is significantly higher than the amount in the DOE budget. Randy Moore’s 1997 paper noted that the annual direct DOE operating budget was about \$700 million and guessed that the real public cost was probably near \$1 billion a year once public school costs in budgets outside the DOE are included.³²

For 2002, SAT scores for high school seniors in public schools in states with 50% or higher participation rates were ranked. The state of

²⁵ Just the Facts – A Citizen’s Primer on Hawaii K-12 Public Education (Hawaii Educational Policy Center – January 2003) (“JTF”).

²⁶ JTF at 3.

²⁷ JTF at 3.

²⁸ JTF at 3.

²⁹ JTF at 4.

³⁰ JTF at 5.

³¹ JTF at 6.

³² Moore at 5.

Washington ranked highest with a total SAT mean score of 1,050 – and the state of Hawaii ranked last among this grouping of 23 states with a total SAT mean score of 955. The other significant college admission test is the American College Test (ACT). According to the “Just for the Facts” book, Hawaii’s students do better on the ACT than the SAT. The average composite ACT score for Hawaii residents is 22 when compared to a national average of 20.8.³³ With respect to both the ACT and the SAT scores, it is unclear whether the data includes only public school students or public school and private school students together. On the National Assessment of Educational Progress test, used by the federal government to compare states on student achievement, Hawaii’s fourth and eighth grade students score below the national average.³⁴

There are 21,220 total DOE employees of whom 7,839 or 36% are not teachers, principals or superintendents.³⁵ Roughly, for every teacher in the public schools, there is 7/10s of a person (FTE) working for the DOE in support other than principals, vice principals or superintendents. Dr. Cooper’s study will also try to determine how many administrative and other non-teacher personnel currently work for the DOE or full-time in a public school related state job.

- **Focus for 2003 in Hawaii**

Against this backdrop of research, history and data comes an interesting book written by a local boy now teaching at UCLA’s Anderson School of Business. Dr. William G. Ouchi’s new book *Making Schools Work* concerns leadership and management of public education. It interests me as it weaves together several themes surrounding school redesign that have come to my attention in my volunteer and non-volunteer life. Dr. Ouchi’s book proposes a burning focus on student achievement, as did Dr. Stephen Portch. The centerpiece of the book was leadership, Randy Moore’s theme in 1997 and which has been confirmed in research to increase student achievement. Dr. Ouchi’s proposal for empowerment of principals is equivalent to the proposal that received overwhelming community support in The People’s Pulse surveys. Dr. Ouchi believes, along with Dr. Tony Wagner and Randy Moore, that there is nothing wrong

³³ JTF at 15.

³⁴ JTF at 16.

³⁵ JTF at 7.

with the students or the teachers.³⁶ Dr. Ouchi contends “[I]t’s the management of school districts that needs to be changed”.

Making Schools Work lays out seven keys to success for schools as follows:

“Seven Key to Success:

1. Every principal is an entrepreneur. *(Rule bound administrators are replaced by empowered, customer driven managers.)*
2. Every school controls its own budget. *(This is a journey from 5% budget control to over 90% as is the case at Waimea Middle School.)*
3. Everyone is accountable for student performance and budgets. *(Accountability here means openness, so that everyone from parents to teachers to the community gets regular, understandable and credible accounts of what is going on in the school. These categories matter most – student performance, budget performance and customer satisfaction.)*
4. Everyone delegates authority to those below.
5. There is burning focus on student achievement. *(The proposal isn’t about decentralization; the decentralization is a means to the end of increased student achievement with the principal as chief education leader.)*
6. Every school is a community of learners. *(This is a vision for schools reaching out through principal leaders to communities – to learn what the community wants and needs, and to create a plan to meet the needs.)*
7. Families have real choices among a variety of unique schools. *(This allows transfer within the public school system (first dibs to neighborhood kids) which is an important component of student weighted funding and which measures school success by an ability to attract students (customers)).*

These conclusions are drawn from significant research and a detailed study by Dr. Ouchi of school redesign accomplished in three North American cities – Seattle, Washington; Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; and Houston, Texas. Finally, Dr. Ouchi sees teachers and principals as the answer and not the problem.³⁷ He cautions readers – “As you travel down

³⁶ Ouchi at 8.

³⁷ Ouchi at 21.

the road to revolution, ... remember to pack your humility. For although you have armed yourself ... with ... knowledge ... , you still won't know as much as the teachers and principals know."³⁸

Based on the research, my opportunity to have conversations with educational leaders, Dr. Ouchi's book *Making Schools Work* and Dr. Wagner's book *Making the Grade*, I humbly suggest several action steps for Hawaii's schools. My proposed action steps are as follows.

* Empower principals. Give principals authority over management and school budgets. I think we should set a goal of each principal being in charge of 90% of his/her school's budget. Principals should have authority to select and assign school personnel, repairs and book purchases. Both these items were overwhelmingly supported in The People's Pulse poll. Dr. Ouchi's book shows that in Edmonton principals and local schools control 91.7% of their respective budget – in Seattle it's 79.3% and in Houston it is 58.6%. Dr. Ouchi argues for principals that control 90% or more of their school's budgets, just like the principal of Waimea Middle School. The Fordham Foundation study confirms that principals who are free to use financial resources is a trait associated with successful schools.

* Funds need to be allocated to schools based on a weighted student formula. A weighted student formula is a new way to give budgetary control to a principal. It was pioneered in Edmonton, Canada over a period of 25 years. It means dollars follow students directly to schools. Students with no disabilities are assigned less dollars than students with severe disabilities. Poor students are assigned more dollars than students from a middle class family as poverty is a disability under a weighted student formula system. The student formula achieves significant equity and decentralization by giving dollars to principals and schools. This concept turns the current system of legislative and DOE budgeting on its head and also moves authority now in DAGS and B&F to principals. A business parallel is pushing decision making closer to the customer.

* Staff development. The proposal in this paper tasks principals with significant, new leadership responsibilities and challenges. Before any responsible business assigns a task to an employee, it trains the employee for the task. There is a significant staff development piece that needs to be done

³⁸ Ouchi at 21.

to prepare principals for this assignment. Two great models are underway in Hawaii – one is the Principals Leadership Academy being operated by a collaboration of funders with support from the Hawaii Business Roundtable. A second is a partnership between the University of Hawaii College of Education and the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools who have jointly designed a curriculum intended to train leaders for private schools in Hawaii for the future. Both systems could be parts of and serve as models for a redesigned staff development curriculum to be put in place to allow public school leaders to be trained for success.

* Staff Encouragement. There is a staff encouragement piece to be added to this. Randy Roth has noted that Hawaii has excellent teachers. I believe that, given the tools and freed from rules, Hawaii's teachers, principals and administrators can excel. Principals, teachers and employees of the DOE need to be seen by themselves and by the community as the solution and not as the problem. Only when they and the community see teachers and principals as the solutions will they act to reinforce a decentralized system in a successful way.

* Accountability of Principals. With greater authority comes greater responsibility and a need for accountability. Principals should, as reinforced by The People's Pulse poll, be placed on 3- or 4-year performance-based contracts. This would end tenure for principals but not necessarily remove principals from unions. In fairness, a compensation increase should be part of this package for principals, in recognition of the new accountability system. To me, for an accountability system to be successful, it needs to include surveys of parent, teacher and student attitudes toward the principal (done an annual basis). It needs to consider things like attendance and graduation rates, and community engagement. Finally, test scores and progress towards "No Child Left Behind" (not necessarily the progress required by the Federal act, but progress), should be factors in principal evaluations. This type of accountability program will drive a system of public education that puts student achievement first.

The foregoing principles will affect monumental change in the Hawaii public school system and push control to principals / leaders who can control their own destiny and encourage community involvement.

* Free movement Among Public Schools – 1st Dibs to Neighborhood.

* Early Childhood Education. As stated in the beginning of my paper by Dr. Stephen Portch, early childhood education cannot be ignored. Action needs to be taken to reduce the gap in school readiness in our State. We need to develop an action plan to take school readiness from 50% of students entering public school up to a 75% level. This will take public and private sector funding, and creative use of facilities. As noted, this may be the best economic development money our State spends.

* Charter Schools. Charter schools are working and should be supported. Barriers to the success of charter schools should be eliminated.

* Education Governance. A final question that should be addressed in connection with the current round of school redesign is what to do about the DOE and multiple school boards. One proposal is that we should change from a single, unified district into seven school districts and bring decision making closer to the people. Dr. Portch's caution that every action we take be based on demonstrable changes in measurable student achievement gives me pause about the school board question. While there is research that indicates that smaller school districts have higher student achievement than larger school districts. I am not aware of any research that suggests that changes in governance affect measurable student achievement. I am worried, however, about what the DOE should look like after a principals empowered system is put in place. At a minimum, in my view, what is needed is a redesign of the Department of Education. Happily, there are experts in our business community who have significant knowledge about organizational redesign. Both of our major banks have undergone redesign and reinvention efforts with considerable success. Talent and knowledge exists in those organizations to assist with a redesign, re-engineering process for the DOE. Perhaps such a redesign process will end up in multiple school boards – perhaps not. A redesign effort is needed and perhaps the business community should provide consultants for such a process if governmental (legislative and executive) commitment to follow a redesign process is in place. I have a final bias on the multiple school boards issue – a bias towards many boards, perhaps one for each of our 46 high schools.

I need to close in reference to Dr. Tony Wagner who reminds us that a redesign process will not involve any “silver bullets” and thus that the thoughts in this paper are not silver bullets. It is my hope that these thoughts may lead to important steps on the road to redesign of a school system

created more than 100 years ago and being employed for the 21st century. It is what I think we should do now.

Significant school redesign is possible and necessary in Hawaii – now. Political and community forces are combining to create an almost historic opportunity. Just do it! I would suggest that at a minimum the school redesign suggestions in this paper, which are based on Dr. Ouchi’s book, be implemented. I would also suggest that all of us remain dedicated to the redesign of the school system more appropriate for the knowledge-based times in which we live. Among this process we must affirm the hard working public school teachers, principals and DOE workers in the school system. We need to convince them that they are the solution to our problems and that with a redesigned system we can make inroads towards significant increases in measurable student achievement for Hawaii’s children.