The Every Students Succeeds Act

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which governs most of the federal funding for K-12 education. ESSA replaces the No Child Left Behind Act. The law requires states and school districts receiving federal assistance to help schools better serve educationally disadvantaged students. ESSA includes significant mandates, particularly on academic standards, student testing, school accountability, and teacher qualifications.

ESSA Public Comment

In order to apply for funding for ESSA programs, the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) will be submitting a consolidated state plan to the U.S. Department of Education in September 2017. ESSA requires that the draft state plan be available for public comment for 30 days; HIDOE's draft was available from April 18, 2017 to May 18, 2017 and solicited 458 response. HIDOE's aim was to collect meaningful feedback on the goals, targets, and supports for all students and for student subgroups. The survey results and other feedback from stakeholders will inform the final draft that HIDOE will submit to the federal government.

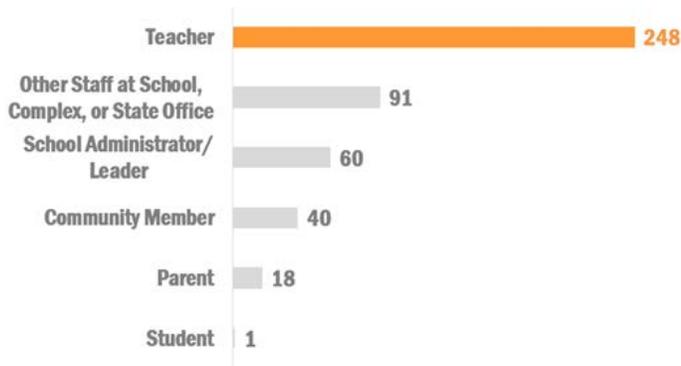## Report Contents

This report contains:

Next Steps

The public comment period closed on May 18, 2017. A summary of the public comments will be presented to the Board of Education (BOE) on June 6, 2017. On June 20th, HIDOE will present a revised consolidated state plan to the BOE for authorization to submit the plan to the U.S. Department of Education. The Governor will have 30 days to review the plan. The final consolidated state plan is due to the federal government on September 18, 2017.

The public comment period opened for the ESSA Consolidated State Plan on April 18, 2017 and closed on May 18, 2017. After revisions are made, the final plan will be proposed to the Board of Education on June 20, 2017.

Of the 458 respondents, 54% were teachers.

Teacher	248
Other Staff at School, Complex, or State Office	91
School Administrator/ Leader	60
Community Member	40
Parent	18
Student	1

- Respondents were asked to answer 17 questions through an online survey.
- The questions focused on topics that have generated a great deal of discussion, including:
  - Subgroups
  - Long-Term Goals
  - Identifying Schools for Supports
  - Indicators and Measures
  - Teacher Certification and Recruitment
  - English Language Learners
  - Use of Federal Funding

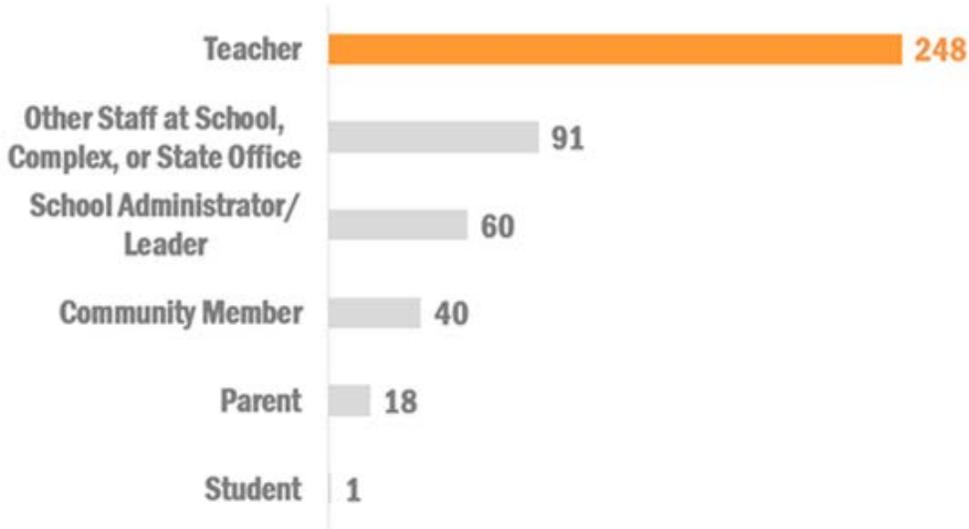| Areas of Agreement	Areas of Disagreement
Ethnic Subgroups **76%** of respondents agree that the major racial/ethnic subgroups identified by HIDOE are appropriate for monitoring performance.	**Chronic Absenteeism** **54%** disagreed with the proposal of using chronic absenteeism as the "State-Selected Measure of School Quality or Student Success."
Median Student Growth Percentile (MGP) **64%** agree that growth as a measure is valuable for elementary and middle schools.	
Timeline for Identification of Schools **76%** agree that schools should be identified for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement every 3 years.	**Long-Term Goals** **57%** believed that our proposed long-term goals for *ALL students* were too ambitious. **79%** believed that our proposed long-term goals for the *student subgroups* were too ambitious.
Teacher Certification Options **78%** believe that the teacher certification routes are sufficient for the needs of our state.	
Timeline for Achieving English Language Proficiency **59%** believe that 5 years is an appropriate timeframe for English Learners to achieve English language proficiency.	**Proposed N-size of 20** A slim majority of respondents (**52%**) disagreed with the proposed n-size of 20. However, there is a divide among this majority on whether the appropriate n-size should be higher or lower than 20.

Survey Questions

1. What is your primary role in education?

2. If you are a public school system employee, please select one.

3. Are the subgroups that HIDOE proposes to include as the major racial and ethnic student subgroups appropriate subgroups for monitoring performance?

4. As a minimum n-size for accountability and reporting, Hawaii proposes a minimum number of 20 students. Thus, a subgroup of students would be included in the school accountability system as a subgroup if it has at least 20 students. For example, if the English learner subgroup in a school has 15 students and the children with disabilities subgroup has 22 students, the English learner subgroup would not be included in the school accountability system and the children with disabilities subgroup would be included. Is 20 the appropriate minimum number of students in a subgroup to include that subgroup in the school accountability system?

5. Are the proposed goals (long-term goal and interim) ambitious and attainable for our schools?

6. Do you have a suggestion for an alternative method for determining long-term goals for all students and/or for student subgroups?

7. Is growth, as measured by the median growth percentile (MGP), an appropriate measure for the "Indicator of Student Growth or Other Academic Indicator: Academic Progress" for elementary and middle schools?

8. Is the percentage of students who are chronically absent an appropriate measure for the "State-Selected Measure of School Quality or Student Success"?

9. Is three years the appropriate amount of time for schools with struggling students to improve their school performance to no longer meet the identification requirements (three years is the maximum amount of time ESSA allows)?

10. If an identified school continues to struggle without making measurable improvement after three years, what types of rigorous interventions would better support student achievement?

11. Are the available routes to teacher certification sufficient to meet the needs of our state?

12. What strategies would you recommend for increasing recruitment of teachers at geographically-remote or rural schools?

13. What strategies would you recommend for increasing recruitment of teachers at schools with the most struggling students (schools identified for comprehensive or targets supports and improvement)?

14. In consultation with the World-class Instructional and Design Assessment (WIDA) Consortium Research Department, Hawaii has proposed to use a timeframe of up to five years - dependent on the level in which the student enters the language instruction education program - with our English learners generally advancing one proficiency level each year as determined by the English language assessment composite scale score. Do you agree that this timeframe is appropriate for English learners to achieve English language proficiency?

15. How would you prioritize the use of federal funds for these state-level efforts and activities?

16. Please explain your ranking above, as appropriate.

17. Do you have additional feedback on any other portion of the drafted plan? Please provide specific references to the sections of the plan, as appropriate.

Survey Responses

Question 1   What is your primary role in education?

Of the 458 respondents, 54% were teachers.

Role	Count
Teacher	248
Other Staff at School, Complex, or State Office	91
School Administrator/ Leader	60
Community Member	40
Parent	18
Student	1

Question 2   If you are a public school system employee, please select one.

Most respondents work at DOE schools.
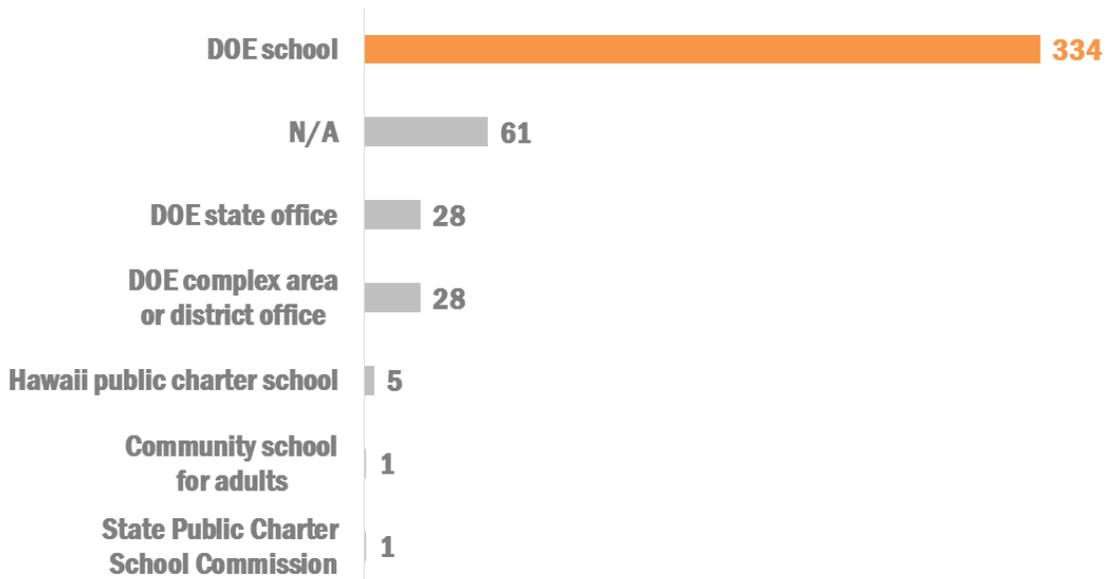
Option	Count
DOE school	334
N/A	61
DOE state office	28
DOE complex area or district office	28
Hawaii public charter school	5
Community school for adults	1
State Public Charter School Commission	1

Proposed subgroups are appropriate.

■ Strongly Disagree	■ Somewhat Disagree	■ Somewhat Agree	■ Strongly Agree
35	35	126	100

Prevailing themes from the 75 respondents who commented include:

Respondents proposed further disaggregation of the Pacific Islander student subgroup.	21 References

"I hope they also choose to address Micronesians separately from Pacific Islander because they are a large group with diverse needs separate from other Pacific Islands."	"Pacific Islander group is too vague even with Native Hawaiian taken out."

| Respondents requested a category of "Other" for students with mixed races.	10 References

"Most students now are mixed. Will mixed be an option or will students be able to select more than one?"	"We have many mixed people, and I wonder if it is appropriate to somehow identify oneself as mixed. It is often difficult to identify with just one racial or ethnic group."

n-size should be 20.

134	94	52
Yes, 20	LOWER	HIGHER
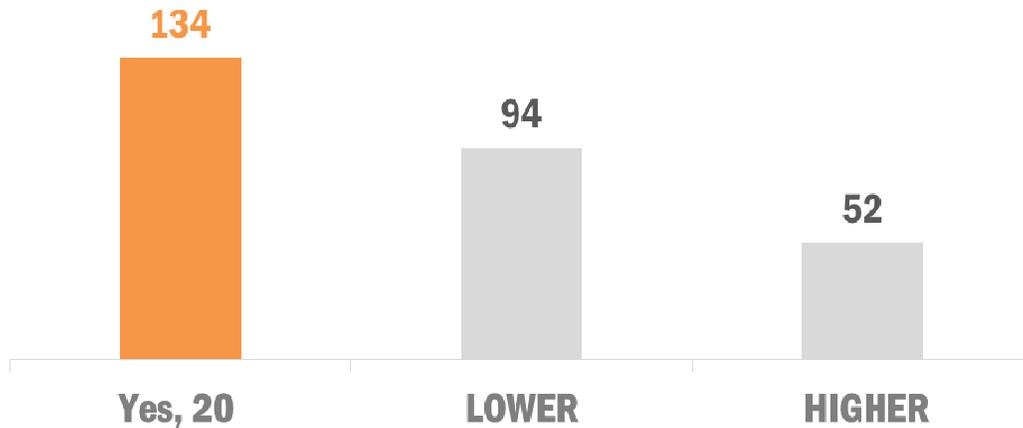
Prevailing themes from the 104 respondents who commented include:

Some respondents indicated a preference for a lower n-size.	50 References

"Reduce the "n" size for reporting from the "n" size of 20 outlined in the ESSA State Plan to an "n" size of 10 in order to ensure that schools are held accountable for the academic improvement of high needs subgroups. There are national studies recommending 10 or lower as a minimum subgroup size. Higher numbers undermine disability subgroup accountability."	"Several small schools (both charter and DOE) have populations of subgroups well below 20. That high of a number risks large swaths of subgroup students not being counted."

Other respondents felt a higher n-size was more appropriate.	20 References

"For schools with a higher school population, 20 seems like a very small number of students."	"30 is the quantifiable number for effective research."

Others felt that a percentage of the schools population was appropriate for n-size.	20 References

"Perhaps to be fair, it should be a percentage of the school population rather than a number."	"I think the number shouldn't be a number, it should be a percentage of the school's population. This makes it more equitable for schools with large/small populations."

Question 5	Are the proposed goals (long-term goal and interim) ambitious and attainable for our schools?

Respondents think proposed goals are too ambitious.

■ Not ambitious enough   ■ Slightly ambitious   ■ Appropriate   ■ Slightly too ambitious   ■ Far too ambitious

6	7	45	84	137

For student subgroups

6	18	99	94	68

For all students

Question 6	Do you have a suggestion for an alternative method for determining long-term goals for all students and/or for student subgroups?

Prevailing themes from the 162 respondents who commented include:

Respondents felt the goals set forth in the ESSA plan were unrealistic.	54 References

"Using the DOE's own historical trend data, the department should determine more realistic targets relative to available resources. Raising achievement benchmarks without also increasing resources and student supports places an unfair burden on schools and teachers."	"Relook at our educational system and how it is underfunded. We cannot set ambitious goals without providing adequate funding to support schools and students."

Respondents also commented on the example of an alternative method as an acceptable option for determining long-term goals.	31 References

"I like the alternative method. You MUST take the baseline into consideration, otherwise this is poor measurement practice (think NCLB) to assume you can set the same bar regardless of baseline."	"The alternate goals seem a lot easier to get to and seem more fair for the subgroups."

Question 7	Is growth, as measured by the median growth percentile (MGP), an appropriate measure for the "Indicator of Student Growth or Other Academic Indicator: Academic Progress" for elementary and middle schools?

Most respondents agree that growth is an appropriate measure.

- ■ Strongly Disagree
- ■ Somewhat Disagree
- ■ Somewhat Agree
- ■ Strongly Agree

58	46	146	35

Prevailing themes from the 73 respondents who commented include:

Respondents commented on assessment options as indicators for academic progress, with a preference for the inclusion of authentic assessments.	*30 References*

"Teachers have repeatedly asked for authentic assessment for our students. These include project-based learning and student portfolios."	*"Measurement should be by a portfolio of all accomplishments."*

| *Other respondents included comments on growth as a measure overall.*	*19 References*

"Growth should be personalized to the school and subgroups, using the current data points used by the schools."	*"I like a growth measure, it just puts pressure on teachers in particular grade levels when it really needs to be a schoolwide effort. Perception matters."*

Most respondents disagree that chronic absenteeism is an appropriate measure.

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Strongly Agree

100	54	98	32
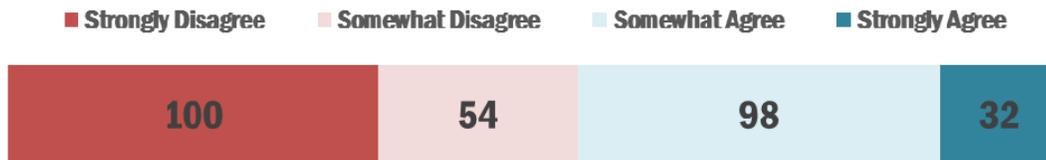
Prevailing themes from the 105 respondents who commented include:

Respondents indicated that families had a large role in student chronic absenteeism.	36 References

"I don't know an alternative, but attendance is completely up to the parents and families. There is only so much the school can do to improve absenteeism."	*"There has to be a program or services that places some ownership/responsibility on the parents. Everything in place for a student in school means absolutely nothing if there isn't an accountable plan for parents."*

Other respondents felt that more state-level support is needed to help address chronic absenteeism.	14 References

"The state may need to provide more support to families and determine reasons for chronic absence. We need to solve underlying reasons before we can demand student attendance. Homelessness and other socioeconomic issues that impact attendance can't easily be fixed by attendance mandates."	*"Need funding to support reduction of chronic absenteeism. Dedicated counselors to fighting this issue? More PD for counselors and teachers on successful strategies for reducing chronic absenteeism."*

Question 9	Is three years the appropriate amount of time for schools with struggling students to improve their school performance to no longer meet the identification requirements?

Schools should have 3 years to meet identification requirements.


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218  Yes, three years
37   No, every year
31   No, every two years
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Question 10	If an identified school continues to struggle without making measurable improvement after three years, what types of rigorous interventions would better support student achievement?

Prevailing themes from the 187 respondents who commented include:

Respondents pointed at leadership as a rigorous intervention.	48 References
"Evaluation of school systems which include but are not limited to administrative effectiveness and ability to help teachers and staff deal with issues. This evaluation should include all administrative positions from the principal, CAS, and above and should include evaluations of those positions by teachers and other faculty who work at the school."	"Allow the CAS [Complex Area Superintendent] and complex support staff identify where the shortfalls occur and what can be done to make improvements. I feel a lot depends on the leader(s) of the school to set the pace as to the direction is headed."

Respondents also identified the role community plays in assisting struggling schools.	46 References
"The described interventions are rigorous in and of themselves. However, there is immense potential to be intentional in integration of community expertise, resources, and supports to strengthen rigorous interventions that are grounded in place and more likely to be implemented with fidelity. Integrating community resources and expertise into turnaround efforts also provides an opportunity to better allocate resources and minimize redundancies."	"The rigorous intervention should be about the school (teacher quality, principal quality, curricular resources, high expectations and rigor), but there also has to be a coming together with the community."

Most respondents agree that routes to teacher certification are sufficient.

■ Strongly Disagree   ■ Somewhat Disagree   ■ Somewhat Agree   ■ Strongly Agree

36	27	125	96

Question 12	What strategies would you recommend for increasing recruitment of teachers at geographically-remote or rural schools?

Prevailing themes from the 225 respondents who commented include:

The majority of respondents proposed a variety of benefits and incentives, with monetary benefits as the primary focus.	*152 References*

"Partially/Fully funded housing for teachers willing to move to geographically isolated areas."

"Offer higher, more competitive salaries."

"Differentiated pay to attract teachers to hard to fill schools."

"Incentivize enrollment in teacher education programs through scholarships and student loan forgiveness for teachers willing to work in remote areas."

"Offer traveling expense such as gas allowance if traveling distance is more than 10 miles from residence to school."

Many respondents proposed ways to improve the teacher pipeline, including the use of local talent to fill vacancies, ensuring awareness of the culture in the communities teachers will serve, and easing the process to attain or transfer teaching licenses.	*68 References ("Grow Your Own" – 28 References)*

"Make education enticing to kids at an early stage to encourage them to come back years later to their communities to teach."

"Hire locally first. Groom potential teachers from students of remote or rural areas. (Get creative!)"

"Allow teachers who come from out of state with teaching degrees in their state to transfer easily and efficiently with the status and credibility that they bring."

"Also, more support from the school for the first year, helping the teacher learn about the community and culture, different strategies that work well there."

Some respondents referenced lowering class size.	*21 References*

"Class size should be limited."	*"Reduce class size."*

Other respondents advocated for professional development and quality mentoring supports to recruit and retain teachers in these areas.	*20 References*

"Irrespective of upfront qualifications, teachers must be equipped to meet the administrative demands set forth. Ongoing, free training should be provided to all teachers if the professional development courses are in line with the teacher's area(s) of specialty or will enhance teacher capabilities to meet Common Core, Next Generation Science Standards, and STEM certifications."

"Effective on site mentoring. Need people on campus daily to specifically target new teachers. Right now this responsibility is placed on people as an added role rather than a primary role."

Question 13	What strategies would you recommend for increasing recruitment of teachers at schools with the most struggling students (schools identified for comprehensive or targets supports and improvement)?

Prevailing themes from the 224 respondents who commented include:

The majority of respondents proposed a variety of benefits and incentives, with monetary benefits as the primary focus.	*146 References*

"Increase teacher salaries, lower class size, establish wraparound services for teachers and students, provide teacher housing, and incentivize enrollment in teacher education programs through scholarships and student loan forgiveness for teachers willing to work in struggling schools."

"Offering stipends and bonuses for teachers who work at difficult to fill schools based on student gains."

"Salary increase but they need to be trained and effective."

"Incentives to attract the most qualified teachers (have your best teachers teaching the students with the most need)."

"More funding and time allotted for teachers who teach students who are struggling academically."

Many respondents advocated for lowering class size.	*47 References*

"Student-teacher ratios need to be smaller in low-performing schools so teachers can devote more time to remediation and additional supports needed."

"Commitment to lower class size."

"Definitely, reduce class size."

Some respondents proposed ways to improve the teacher pipeline, including the use of local talent to fill vacancies, ensuring awareness of the culture in the communities teachers will serve, and easing the process to attain or transfer teaching licenses.

28 References

"Work with UH to build their program and keep "local" teachers in Hawaii. Pay increase to attract "locals" to stay in Hawaii and go into teaching."

"You must understand or learn the culture of Hawaii. Respect the community values and have strong classroom management environment."

"We need to grow our own teachers, recruiting from the very own communities that we serve and providing pathways and financial support for IA and PTT to pursue teaching degrees."

"The ability to get all certifications and licensing to become a highly qualified teacher at the school."

Other respondents advocated for professional development and quality mentoring supports for teachers who work with struggling students.
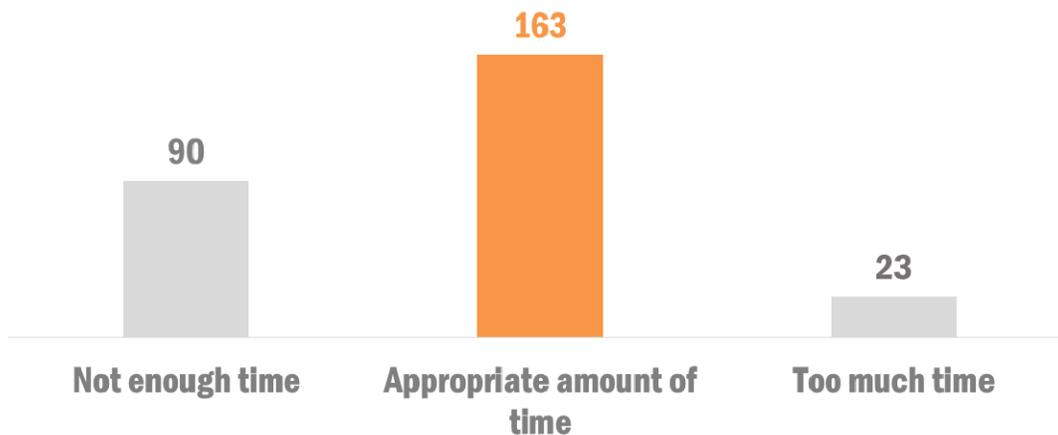
24 References

"Provide PD/mentoring for teacher who deal with struggling students so they are able to teach using best practices approved by HIDOE."

"You have to provide support. Especially for new teachers. They need mentors, good mentors, and people they can trust to help them through the difficult times."

Question 14	Do you agree that [a 5 year] timeframe is appropriate for English learners to achieve English language proficiency?

5 years is appropriate for ELs to achieve proficiency.

Not enough time	Appropriate amount of time	Too much time
90	163	23

Prevailing themes from the 105 respondents who commented include:

There are different schools of thought about the length of time it will take an English Learner to Achieve Proficiency.	*32 References*

"Research shows it takes approximately 7 years to acquire the "academic" language to proficient within the classroom."

"English language learners need to learn English faster, and are capable of learning English in 2-3 years to a level of proficiency."

Our English Learner population requires additional funding, resources, and qualified staff to attain proficiency in 5 years.	*24 References*

"I do believe that five years is an appropriate expectation IF the student has multiple opportunities to be instructed by teachers who are "qualified" and "informed" about the EL learning strategies/practices that are critical for these language learners. Many schools do not place a value currently on pairing EL students with qualified teachers as well as placing an emphasis on EL language strategies being used in the core classroom."

"Hawai'i's English Language Learner population has not received adequate support or effective staffing to meet the DOE's proposed proficiency benchmarks within five years. To do so, ELL programming would require a substantial boost in resources and funding equity."

The length of time for language acquisition varies based on conditions or characteristics of the individual student.	*23 References*

"Language acquisition and learning take between 2-7 years. Many factors affect the process including linguistic distance between the native and the learned, socioeconomic status, literacy level in the first language, motivation, age, and social status of the language in the community. This is not a one size fits all situation."

"Varied. Length of time each student spends at a particular stage of language acquisition may vary greatly."

"Everyone has their own learning curve and the older the student who enters the school system, the harder it is to learn a new language."

Question 15	How would you prioritize the use of federal funds for these state-level efforts and activities?

Priority 1	**Improving School Conditions for Student Learning**
Priority 2	**Providing Access to a Well-Rounded Education**
Priority 3	**Providing Supports for Successful Transitions Between Grade Levels and/or Schools**
Priority 4	**Improving the Use of Technology in Order to Improve Academic Achievement and Digital Literacy of all Students**

Please explain your ranking above, as appropriate.

Prevailing themes from the 175 respondents who commented include:

Improving Hawaii's school conditions (updating facilities, cooling, space, furniture, etc.) is critical to student success.

73 References

"Our students and teachers seem so much happier this year in air conditioned classrooms; more learning can take place when school conditions are safe and comfortable"

"Improving the conditions for student learning which includes air conditioning and updated furniture and classrooms will definitely improve achievement. Schools with limited space are working out of storage rooms."

"When students have a great school with great conditions they will have higher interest in learning. We should be able to provide a Well Rounded Education in a school in great shape."

"Schools need to be an appropriate environment for learning - cool, have necessary equipment, and small class sizes for effective teaching of all students."

There is disagreement on the value of spending funds on additional technology.

63 References

"Technology is on the forefront of life skills to be successful in the work place, so this is a high priority."

"Technology is already embedded into our culture and daily academic requirements. I do not believe more money should be invested into that as a top priority."

"Technology is everywhere in education now and in order for our public school students to keep up with the technology around us, students need easy access to it."

"Although technology constitutes a helpful teaching tool, too many teachers rely on technology as their curriculum instead of challenging students to learn how to think."

A well-rounded education is important and should include access to a diverse selection of course offerings.

55 References

"A well-rounded education (including social-emotional learning, the arts and humanities, and a diverse set of electives) is essential."

"Well-rounded education should include both academic instruction, as well as social emotional instruction and ample opportunities for physical activity."

There is disagreement on whether transitions are a top priority.

29 References

"Transitional support is key to student success. If students feel supported then they are more likely to invest in their academics and become self-directed."

"Schools are already focusing on successful transitions and it is something already being done."

Question 17	Do you have additional feedback on any other portion of the drafted plan? Please provide specific references to the sections of the plan, as appropriate.

Prevailing themes from the 108 respondents who commented include:

Accountability, Measures, Goals	*22 References*

"Absenteeism should not be included in the plan; teachers have no control over that aspect."

"I would like the state to ensure that any needs assessment tools selected by Complex Areas for use in school improvement will included an assessment of student access to and involvement in extra-curricular and afterschool activities."

"In its final plan, the department should maintain this balance by weighting academic measurements at no more than 51 percent of a school's rating, which will allow more attention to be paid to the school quality and student support indicators of student success."

General Positive Feedback	*11 References*

"I am pleased with some of the changes. It is always difficult to provide all supports with our budget constraints, but I believe that positive school leadership is at the core of success. We must train our upcoming teachers and give them support. This is not happening across the board now."

"Thank you for all the work you have done! Overall, I like the draft."

"For the most part it looks good - hoping it comes to fruition and not just a pipe dream!"

"This is a good, solid plan."

Needs of Subgroups and Equity Issues	*10 References*

"I would have liked to have seen more specific information on how disadvantaged populations would close the achievement gap. There are many schools with under the n group that are not reported."

Did we learn from NCLB or are we doomed to repeat those errors? When high poverty schools struggle, we obviously have failed to provide those communities with the schools and social services they need. Why not study what they need and figure out how to provide it?"

"[T]he DOE needs to support principals to learn how to appropriately educate ELLs and require them to hire fully qualified teachers who have expertise in working with ELLs, including specialists who know about language development. It is unacceptable to rely on untrained Ed Assistants to work with this highly vulnerable population. All teachers need some knowledge of how to work with ELLs, and all schools with even a few ELLs need at least one teacher whose primary expertise is in teaching ELLs."

Other Topics Referenced in Question 17: Assessment; Authority; Teacher Benefits, Pay, Supports; Evaluations; Consultation; and Partnerships