LEGISLATIVE REPORT

SUBJECT: Accountability System

REFERENCE: Section 302A-1004, Hawaii Revised Statutes

ACTION REQUESTED: The department shall submit a report on the specifics of the implementation of the comprehensive accountability system, as well as the fiscal requirements and legislative actions necessary to maintain and improve the accountability system.

DOE REPORT: Please see attached report.
The Department of Education is fully committed to implementing a comprehensive accountability system that provides clear, concise, and actionable information on the Department’s work in monitoring and improving student achievement, ensuring their safety and well-being, and promoting their civic responsibility. This system is reflected in processes as well as products developed and disseminated by the Department.

In November 2003, the Department published an Accountability Framework pursuant to 302A-1004, Hawaii Revised Statutes. The framework was an effort to coordinate state and federal accountability initiatives into a holistic product that contained and explained department-wide strategic goals and key performance measures. It also sought to bring the state and federal accountability expectations into congruence with various state program planning, budgeting, and evaluation requirements. Finally, it represented the promotion of an accountability model that is essential to continuous improvement at all levels in the educational system.

In May 2003, the United States Department of Education (USDOE) approved Hawaii’s Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook that incorporated the myriad accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. That Accountability Workbook was amended with the approval of the USDOE in August 2003. It was most recently amended with the approval of the federal government in June 2004. The June 2004 revisions addressed four primary issues:

- Calculation of the participation rate in the Hawaii State Assessment
- Administration of the Alternate Assessment
- Inclusion of former ESLL students in the ESLL subgroup proficiency calculations
- Retention rate requirements

Act 51, Session Laws of Hawaii 2004, provided an additional impetus to clarify and enhance the Department of Education’s accountability system and processes. One of the most fundamental changes in that system is the publication of annual Educational and Fiscal Accountability Trend Reports on every school and complex as well as for the system as a whole. These trend reports provide the most recent three years worth on data on a broad set of indicators measuring student achievement as well as the Department’s efforts to ensure their safety and well-being, and promote their civic responsibility. These reports, designed to be simple, accessible, and easy to read, are being produced in hard copy format and are being placed on the Department’s website. Attached are several examples of these reports, along with a reference guide that explains each of the indicators in the reports.
Another significant milestone is the planned release of the Department’s Strategic Plan III in early 2005. This strategic plan builds upon its two predecessors, incorporates the spirit of the No Child Left Behind Act, and is heavily influenced by the various provisions of Act 51 as well as the Department’s work in addressing each of those provisions. The plan has four primary goals:

- Provide a standards-based education for every child
- Sustain comprehensive support for all students
- Deliver coordinated systemic support
- Achieve and sustain continuous improvement of student performance, and professional, school, and system quality.

In summary, the Department of Education has worked to ensure that accountability has been fully embraced at all levels within the public school system, that every employee knows the vision and goals of the Department and recognizes what they are expected to do to help address that vision and meet those goals, and that the outcomes of the Department are fully communicated to every stakeholder in our state. Accountability involves continuous and conscientious monitoring of our work, a full and complete reporting on what we have accomplished, and a method and willingness to fully address every area in which we may fall short. This is the watchword of accountability. This is what the Department of Education has incorporated into its system.