



SPIN NEWS

The Newsletter for Parents of Children with Special Needs

SPECIAL
PARENT
INFORMATION
NETWORK

September 2017
Volume XXXIV, No. 1

SPIN is co-sponsored by the Disability & Communication Access Board and the Department of Education. Services include a phone line for information referral and support, a quarterly newsletter, an annual conference and community workshops. SPIN is guided by an Advisory Committee made up of parents, teachers and people with disabilities.

SPIN

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Closing the Achievement Gap

This school year offers hope of making real progress in improving services and outcomes for students with disabilities. This optimism stems from the alignment of three major initiatives, all designed to put incentives and resources in place to narrow the achievement gap between special education students and their non-disabled peers.

The Department of Education and Board of Education Strategic Plan for 2017-20

Acknowledging that the public education system in Hawaii has not offered equal opportunities to all of its students, this newly updated plan promises to focus on struggling learners and ensure *equity and excellence*. One measure of equity will be how well schools include students with IEPs in general education classrooms with adequate supports and trained and effective teachers.

The plan also sets targets for closing the achievement gap on statewide assessments between high-needs students (students with disabilities, English Learners, and economically disadvantaged students) and non-high-needs students.

State Plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

In order to receive federal funding for public education, Hawaii must fulfill certain requirements within its accountability system that positively impact students with disabilities. These include things like keeping

track of how struggling student subgroups are doing, setting goals for their improvement, using targeted supports to increase achievement, reducing unnecessary testing, and ensuring qualified teachers in the classroom.

On page 4, you'll find the interim and long-term goals the plan has set for reducing the achievement gap. If realized, they will make the post-high school success of special education students much more likely.



Superintendent's Review

Dr. Christina Kishimoto has made one of her first priorities the conducting of a broad and comprehensive

program review of special education services. The review is expected to take 6-8 months, involve intensive data analysis, and include key stakeholders in a Steering Committee. At the end of the process, the Department will have a clearer focus and action plan for needed reforms to instructional practices, student supports, teacher preparation and more.

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September is Suicide Prevention Month

The Facts

In 2015 . . .



3 out of 10 middle school girls had suicidal thoughts.

40 % of high school girls & 20% of high schools boys felt sad or hopeless every day for 2 or more weeks and stopped doing usual activities.

GIRLS were more likely than BOYS to attempt suicide.



The Big Island had the highest rate of suicide attempts.



More Hawaii high school boys made a suicide plan (1) and attempted suicide (2) than Mainland high school boys.



(1) 12.1%
(2) 9.3%



(1) 9.8%
(2) 5.5%

Source: 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Warning Signs

-  Talking about suicide (subtle or explicit)
-  Drastic changes in personality (more aggression, sadness, etc.)
-  Attempting to acquire dangerous objects or supplies
-  Giving away, destroying or selling important possessions

-  A reduced interest in activities that are normally enjoyed
-  Isolation--spending less time with friends and family
-  Increased reckless behavior--taking unusual risks
-  Increased or decreased sleeping habits without a medical reason
-  Telling friends and family good-bye for no reason

Help Save Lives Through Awareness



Taking Action

The **National Institute of Mental Health** reminds us that “seeking help is a sign of strength; if you are concerned, go with your instincts.” When the risk of suicide is high, take immediate action.



Never agree to keep someone’s suicidal thoughts a secret. Seek help from school or community mental health professionals as soon as possible.



9-1-1



Crisis Line of Hawaii
Oahu: 832-3100
N.I.: 1-800-753-6879

Provides information and referral services to youth in crisis. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Getting Educated



Take a **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)** course to learn how to use a nationally recognized action plan to help individuals at risk of suicide. The course will teach you to:

1. Assess for risk of suicide or harm.
2. Listen nonjudgmentally.
3. Give reassurance and information.
4. Encourage appropriate professional help.
5. Encourage self-help and other support strategies.

Contact CJ Rice, YMHFA Coordinator, DOE Project HI AWARE, crice@hawaiidoe.k12.hi.us, (808) 305-9798. Attend a MHFA workshop at the SPIN Conference, April 21, 2018.

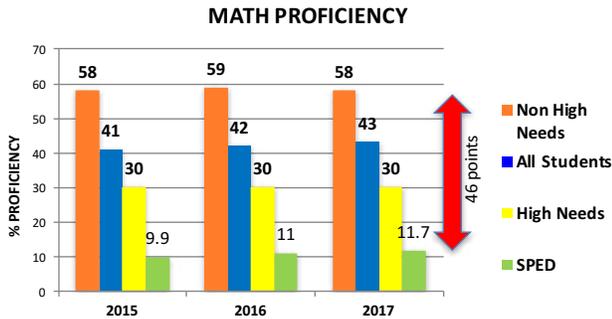
DISAPPOINTING SBA SCORES

Earlier this month, the Department of Education released the results of last Spring's **Smarter Balanced Assessment**. We highlight the math and ELA (English language arts) results below.

In the Strive HI accountability system, special education scores, along with scores for English Learners and students who receive free and reduced lunch, have been grouped together into a 'high-needs' group. Schools are rated by whether or not they reduced the gap between high-needs students and non-high needs students.

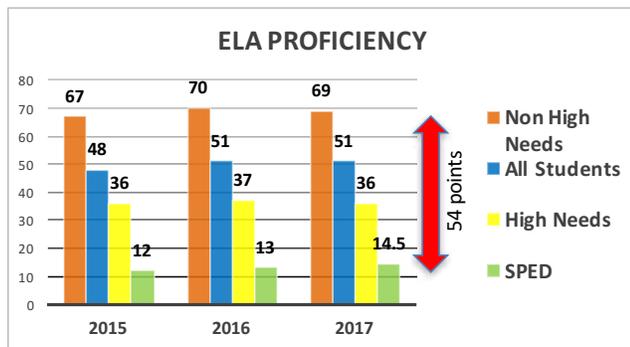
High-needs students represent the majority of public school students; however, special education students make up only about one-fifth of the total. That means scores can improve for the high-needs group and NOT reflect improved scores for education students with IEPs.

In looking at the graphs, you can see that over the last three years, proficiency rates for all groups grew very little--about 2% in three years. Likewise, the achievement gap (the difference in proficiency rates



between groups) stayed basically the same.

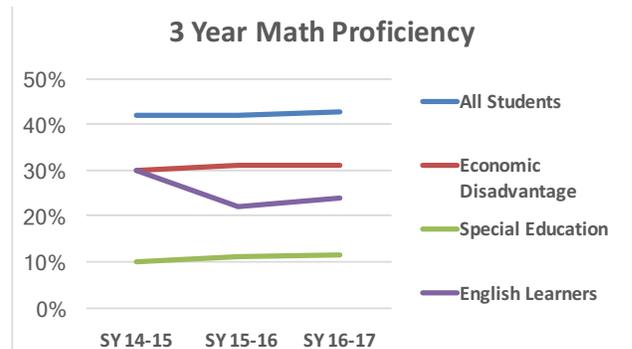
The most striking gap is when you look at the



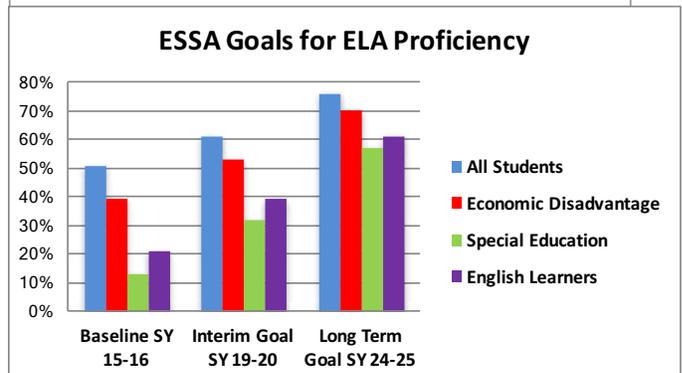
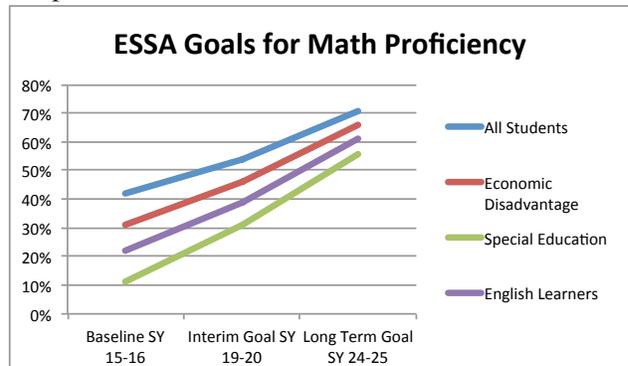
achievement of special education students compared to students who have no high needs. For math, the gap was 46 percentage points in 2017. In ELA, the gap was a whopping 54%!

PROMISING ESSA GOALS

On the front page, we pointed out that the ESSA State Plan sets ambitious goals for the performance of all students--and especially for students who traditionally have underperformed their peers. In the first graph below, we highlight the achievement of the three groups of students that make up the high-needs group over the past three years. Notice how achievement has basically flat-lined, and the gap between groups is the same over time with the



exception of English Learners. By contrast, look at the upward swing of math and ELA achievement and the narrowing of the achievement gap reflected in the ESSA interim and long-term goals. Special education students are making the greatest gains of any group. Granted, these are GOALS and not actual ACHIEVEMENT. However, the goals reflect an expectation and a commitment of resources.



Transition to Success

Please join us at the “Footsteps to Transition Fair,” hosted by the Department of Education, Windward District! This FREE event is geared towards middle and high school students with special needs, their families, case managers, therapists, teachers, and anyone else in their circle of support. It’s not too early to start planning and preparing for life after high school. As you transition to post-graduation and adulthood, it can be a challenge to make the many decisions about life after high school. Will you go to college, get a job, and/or move into your own place? Who do you turn to if you need help with your finances, or need to see a doctor, or want to make new friends? Will your parents continue to make decisions for you, or will you be responsible for your own choices? How do parents access services for their adult child? All of these questions can be answered

at the upcoming “Footsteps to Transition Fair” hosted by the Department of Education in partnership with various community agencies. Knowledgeable guest speaker, Leolinda Parlin of Hilopa’a Family to Family Health Information Center, will explain the transition process in easy to understand steps. A student panel will share their own experiences of the transition process. A variety of State and private agencies will come together under one roof to provide information about their services for students with special needs after high school. This is a great opportunity to meet and network with other students and families to build and add to your support system. There will be door prizes and free light refreshments to enjoy.

We look forward to seeing you there! Call SPIN at 586-8126 to register, or go online at the website listed above.



Please join us for the 2017 Footsteps to Transition Fair

Hosted by the Department of
Education, Windward District

An event for middle and high school students with special needs, with their families, to assist in making a successful transition to adult life and independence.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- 👣 Meet with adult service organizations and agencies
- 👣 Take the first step in developing a transition plan
- 👣 Hear stories from students on their path to success
- 👣 Network with other families walking in your shoes

When:	<p>Saturday, October 21, 2017</p> <p>8:30am: Sign-in, visit exhibits, and talk story</p> <p>9:30-10:30am: Student panel and keynote presentation by Leolinda Parlin</p> <p>10:30-12pm: Win prizes! Visit exhibits and talk story with our community partners</p>
Where:	<p>Windward Community College</p> <p>Hale ‘Akoakoa (Campus Center)</p>
How to sign-up:	<p>To sign up and request for access accommodations, please visit our website at http://footstepstotransition.weebly.com/ or contact us at 586-8126 (SPIN). Please register by September 29th to ensure that we are able to provide requested accommodations.</p>



Student-Directed IEP

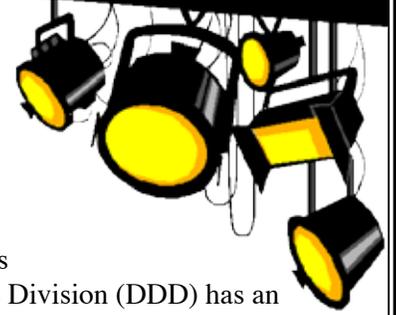
11 Ideas to Try



It is never too early to start including your child in the IEP process. Here are 11 ways your keiki can be involved in the process.

1. Begin your meeting by stating the purpose. “We are here today for my IEP.”
2. Introduce everyone or ask them to introduce themselves.
3. Review past goals and performance.
4. Ask for others’ feedback.
5. State your school goals, and after they turn 14, transition goals for after high school.
6. Ask questions if you do not understand.
7. Deal with differences of opinion in a respectful way.
8. State what kinds of supports you will need and how they can help you. “It would be really helpful if...”
9. Summarize your goals.
10. Close the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and helping you create a plan.
11. Work on your IEP goals all year long.

Spotlight on Support



The Department of Health’s Developmental Disabilities Division (DDD) has an important mission to foster partnerships and provide quality person-centered and family-focused services and supports that promote self-determination. To enter the DDD system, you must go through an eligibility intake process. If your child qualifies with an intellectual and/or developmental disability (I/DD) and is eligible to receive Medicaid Waiver services, there are several service options available.

1. Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)
 - * PAB worker, employment services, adult day health, nursing services, assistive technology, etc.
2. Consumer Directed Services (CD)
 - * The consumer can hire and train their own PAB or respite worker becoming their employer.
3. Case Management Services (CMS)
 - * Provides help in identifying what supports and services a person needs, assists in developing the Individual Support Plan (ISP), and helps get those supports in place.



To apply for DDD services, call the intake line at 808-733-1689 or visit the website: health.hawaii.gov/ddd/.

Hawaii Moms Send Aloha to Texas

After seeing a post on Facebook asking for feeding supplies for medically fragile kids in Houston, Amanda Kaahanui knew she had to do something. “Many of these families had to evacuate quickly and could only take a backpack with them while escaping the flood waters. My kiddo has a g-tube and I know how desperate I would be if we had to leave without his food or supplies. I had to do something.” So Amanda connected with 2 other moms of medically fragile children, Kau’i Rezentes and Hoku Defeo. Between the three of them, they reached out to more moms who had extra supplies or wanted to make a donation to help out. Then the reality of shipping it all to Texas hit and they started to despair. How could they get these much needed supplies to the families who really needed it? Luckily, they saw a flyer that Pasha Hawaii was donating a container and the Honolulu YMCA was organizing donations for Houston’s keiki. Amanda reached out to Lisa Ontai at the YMCA, who agreed to save space on the container. Then she reached out to the non-profit, Protect Texas Fragile Kids, who are distributing donated supplies in Houston. On October 2, they will meet the container and collect 22 boxes on 2 pallets for Houston’s medically fragile keiki. A`ohe loko-maika`i i nele i ke pāna`i – No kind deed has ever lacked its reward.



TOP: Amanda, Kau & Ikaika with 2 pallets of supplies.

BOTTOM: Kau, Hoku, Lisa, Sera, Ikaika & Amanda



Fall Calendar of Events



10/6 HAEYC (Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children) Conference
 10/6 Leadership Symposium
 10/7 Early Childhood Conference
 Hawaii Convention Center, call 942-4708 or email: kmurphy@hawaiiayc.org

10/7 P.A.C.E. Symposium - FREE
 BYU School of Education, Laie 8 am-1 pm
 For parents to learn about special education.
 RSVP: barbara.hong@byuh.edu, 675-3887

10/7 Access Surf Day at the Beach - FREE
 11/4 White Plains, Ewa Beach from 9:00 am -
 12/2 1:00 pm. Fun surfing event, for all ages
 and abilities. Sign up online at accessurf.org

Epilepsy Foundation Talk Story - FREE
 10/11 Oahu: "Service Animals" 5:30-7:30 pm
 10/19 Kailua-Kona: "Medical Cannabis" 6-8 pm
 10/20 Hilo: "Medical Cannabis" 6-8 pm
 RSVP: 528-3058 or efh@epilepsyhawaii.org

11/4 Epilepsy Hawaii Community Conference
 Oahu: Queens Conference Center
 8:30 am-3:00 pm FREE
 RSVP: www.epilepsyhawaii.org

10/13 SEAC - Special Education Advisory
 11/3 Committee Meeting 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
 12/1 Oahu: 919 Ala Moana Blvd.
 Public welcome to attend. RSVP 586-8126
 Call for location of December meeting.

10/21 Kauai Fern Grotto Cruise - FREE
 Sponsored by Autism Society of Hawaii
 11:00 am - 12:30 pm, RSVP by Oct. 19
 eventbright.com/e/fern-grotto-cruise-kauai-
 tickets-38202953061



10/18 Honolulu District Families Embracing
 11/15 Autism Support Group - FREE
 12/20 6:00 -7:00 pm. Sponsored by LDAH
 245 N. Kukui St., Honolulu 96817
 Child care provided, RSVP 536-9684

10/20 24th Annual White Cane Walk - FREE
 10:00-11:00 am, Hawaii State Capitol. The
 walk starts at the State Capitol Rotunda, goes
 through downtown and ends at Iolani Palace.
 For more info, call Ho'opono Services for the
 Blind at 586-5269.

10/21 Footsteps to Transition Fair - FREE
 8:00 am - 12:00 pm, Windward Community
 College, Hale 'Akoakoa. For families of middle
 and high school students. RSVP 586-8126
 or www.footstepstotransition.weebly.com



Hawaii Theater for Youth ASL Interpreted & Sensory Friendly Performances
 10/21 4:30 pm "Masters of the Currents" for ages 8+
 11/11 11:30 am "Ouch" for ages 2+
 12/9 11:00 am "Ordinary Ohana" for ages 5+
 For tickets, www.htyweb.org or 839-9885
 \$20 adult, \$10 youth. Tenney Theater, at St.
 Andrews Cathedral 229 Queen Emma Square

10/21 Shared Reading Saturday \$20 per family
 9:00-11:00 am, learn how to sign a book to
 your child. 1953 Beretania St. Suite 5A
 RSVP by email: admin@csc-hawaii.org



10/28 TACA Family Night: Trick or Treat
 5:30-8:00 pm. FREE for TACA families.
 Aliamanu Community Center
 RSVP: tacanow/org/local-chapters/west/hawaii



Special Parent Information Network
 1010 Richards Street, Room 118
 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Providing a world of support to parents of children with special needs

32nd Annual SPIN Conference

SAVE	THE
DATE	
APRIL	21,
2018	

"SPIN It to Win It!"
 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. • UH Campus Center

A conference for families of children with disabilities and helping professionals