



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

September 10, 2020

TO: Complex Area Superintendents
Principals (All)

FROM: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto
Superintendent

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "CK", written over the name "Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto".

SUBJECT: Quarter 2 Planning for School Year 2020-2021

At the beginning of this school year, we planned for opening our school facilities using selected school models. Parents were given an opportunity to consider virtual learning as an alternative to face-to-face instruction rather than homeschooling or seeking another educational institution.

Extending distance learning further into the school year will require adjustments for families and students as well as employees. As we move forward, this is a time for schools to revisit their school model, share their plans with their families, and allow for families to make adjustments as we anticipate a longer duration in dealing with COVID and the impact on our schools and communities.

Due to the concerns raised regarding the appropriateness and rigor of the elementary instructional materials in the Acellus Learning Accelerator program, parents of elementary school students who are concerned about the Acellus program will be asked to contact their child's school to discuss their concerns and options. To minimize the disruption of student learning, any mutually agreed-upon decision made to transfer the student from the full distance learning program to the school's selected model should be made for the remainder of the school year. We understand that any movement of students will also impact class size.

The Department will be initiating specific actions to address concerns regarding the Acellus program. These actions include, but are not limited to, a thorough content review for rigor, equity issues, and alignment to the Hawaii State Department of Education subject standards. Further, we are carefully monitoring corrections by the vendor for immediate removal of inappropriate content. Schools will receive guidance on use of specific modules/lessons, including accompanying strategies, by Wednesday, September 17, 2020.

Complex Area Superintendents, et al.
September 10, 2020
Page 2

We are providing teachers, parents and students with a means to report any concerning content found in the Acellus Learning Accelerator program. Anyone who comes across concerning content assigned by an HDOE teacher should report the specific location and details of such content immediately using the HDOE Controversial Content Concern Form at <https://bit.ly/2GgNWt7>. The content reported will be shared with the Acellus vendor to be corrected. Content pulled from general web searches will not be reviewed.

Finally, we are also soliciting feedback on the distance learning experience through the Online Content Feedback Form at <http://bit.ly/3BX8WxR>. This feedback will help to inform us on how to improve virtual learning.

As we progress through the school year, the Department of Health will be providing metrics that will be used to determine whether schools can safely reopen or need to quickly return to a full distance learning model. We appreciate your flexibility and responsiveness to the constant changes and challenges we have been faced with throughout this public health crisis.

Should you have any questions, please contact Deputy Superintendent Phyllis Unebasami, via email or by phone at (808) 784-6161.

CMK:pu

c: Phyllis Unebasami, Deputy Superintendent

Alisa Bender, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Office of Curriculum & Instructional Design

Nanea Kalani, Interim Communications Director, Office of Strategy, Innovation & Performance

