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August 3, 2020

Via Email  
Ms. Cynthia Covell  
Assistant Superintendent  
Office of Talent Management  
State of Hawaii  
Department of Education  
Cynthia.Covell@k12.hi.us

Dear Ms. Covell:

**Re: Board of Education Change to 2020-2021 School Year Calendar**

The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) appreciates the opportunity to discuss the Board of Education's (BOE) recent July 30 decision to modify the 2020-2021 school year calendar for Department of Education (HIDOE) schools, delaying the start of students' instructional year from Tuesday, August 4 to Monday, August 17, 2020. This modification of the school year calendar impacts the nine (9) work days described in the Memorandum of Understanding regarding SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Response, section 2. Supports for Teachers and Continuity of Learning, section B and C, which states:

2. *Supports for Teachers and Continuity of Learning*
  - b. *August 4, 2020 is designated as the first instructional day of school on the BOE-approved SY 2020 school calendar. Beginning the school year with physical distancing will affect all of our normal school routines. Therefore, training and planning will be prioritized for the use of the school campus.*
  - c. *The first nine (9) days of instruction will consist of:*
    - i. *Half-days with students, including meal service, to complete the following: assess academic and social-emotional learning needs, conduct reviews, introductions, and to test and adjust to school-wide and classroom protocols.*
    - ii. *Half-days with staff will be utilized to train, test and adjust protocols to keep learning environments productive and safe.*
    - iii. *During the first nine (9) instructional days, teachers shall be provided no less than one (1) hour per day of teacher-initiated preparation.*

The HSTA and the HIDOE discussed this impact and have reached agreement to the following interpretation of this section of the MOU as it relates to the change in the calendar.

1. Per the BOE decision, August 4 – 14 are workdays without students and will be used for additional staff training and professional development.
2. Per the MOU, during August 4-14, teachers will be provided no less than nine (9) hours of teacher-initiated preparation time. The preparation time will be provided in blocks of no less than one (1) hour.
3. Principals will determine the dates and times the preparation time will be scheduled and will notify teachers.

HSTA appreciates the HIDOE's continued efforts to consult with HSTA regarding COVID-19 and the understanding that the impact of COVID-19 will likely cause additional adjustments and changes throughout school year 2020-2021.

Sincerely,



Andrea Eshelman  
Deputy Executive Director

C: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent  
Phyllis Unebasami, Deputy Superintendent  
Jarnett Lono, Personnel Director, Office of Talent Management