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August 6, 2011

SENT VIA FAX AND E-MAIL.

The Honorable Neil Abercrombie
Governor, State of Hawaii
Executive Chambers, State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Wil Okabe
President
Karolyn Mossman
Vice President
Joan Kamila Lewis
Secretary-Treasurer
Alvin Nagasako
Executive Director

Dear Governor Abercrombie,

We greatly appreciate your August 3 offer to renew a dialogue with us.

We agree that utilizing a third party to resolve the outstanding issues is the most productive route to achieving what is in the best interest of children, teachers, and the state.

I am pleased to inform you that the HSTA Board has voted to accept mediation/binding arbitration.

The HSTA Board recognizes that the acceptance of arbitration means that the decisions of a mutually agreed upon arbitrator will be final. We accept that this process may result in an agreement which neither side finds completely satisfactory. But we also recognize that Hawaii's statutory interest arbitration process will eliminate any doubt you may have about our willingness to end the current stalemate, eliminate further legal action, and result in a timely resolution that is binding on both sides without requiring further ratification.

We are grateful for your offer to settle our differences through a third-party.

Please let us know when we can meet this week to identify a mutually agreed upon mediator and arbitrator and a schedule for his/her work.

Thank you for offering to take this step. There are children to teach, a public to serve and a fiscal crisis to avoid.

Sincerely,

Wil Okabe
President
Hawaii State Teachers Association