

DAVID Y. IOE
GOVERNORKEITH T. HAYASHI
INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

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

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

September 1, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

You are receiving this letter because your child is eligible for student transportation services. The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) continues to experience a severe shortage of student bus drivers, most notably on Maui, Oahu and Hawaii Island.

For planning purposes, please be advised that you may need to find alternative transportation to and from school for your child in the coming weeks. As the Department manages staffing and works to consolidate routes, priority will be given to special education students.

At this time, we do not know which bus routes will be impacted as conditions are changing rapidly. We will provide updates on impacted routes on our website at bit.ly/HIDOE-Buses. Please check this site for the latest updates, including information on refunds if necessary.

The Student Transportation Services Branch will be offering mileage reimbursement in the event families who qualify for transportation are unable to get bus service. Reimbursement will be made available at the current IRS standard mileage reimbursement rate. The application and voucher form can be accessed at bit.ly/HIDOE-Buses.

The driver shortage is the result of a combination of factors including an overall national and local driver shortage and staffing gaps caused by drivers needing to isolate or quarantine due to exposure to COVID-19. In order to fulfill our duty to provide reasonable supervision of students in our care, the Department has imposed a requirement that all contracted bus drivers be tested weekly for COVID-19 or provide proof of full vaccination as part of our commitment to providing a safe school environment for students.

We continue to explore all options to try to minimize disruption to the extent possible. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate these challenges.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Keith T. Hayashi".

Keith T. Hayashi
Interim Superintendent

KTH:nk

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER