Farm to School

The Need: State-Level Support For All Elements of Farm to School

**CORE ELEMENTS OF FARM to SCHOOL**

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**SCHOOL GARDENS**

**PROBLEM:** No formal program, funding, or resource staff positions exist in the Hawai‘i Department of Education (HIDOE) to support more than 200 learning garden programs in Hawaii’s K-12 public schools.

**SOLUTION:** Establish the HIDOE Hawai‘i School Gardens Program and fund state-level and complex area-level support positions to provide training, technical assistance, and grants for school gardens.

**JUSTIFICATION:** School learning gardens are key to equity and whole child wellbeing. They serve as outdoor classrooms to accommodate diverse learning styles, and as a key instructional strategy for standards-based curriculum, social and emotional learning, Nā Hopena A'o (HĀ), climate change resilience, wellness, and more.

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**PROCUREMENT, SCHOOL FOOD**

**PROBLEM:** A staffing shortage in HIDOE School Food Services Branch (SFSB) slows expansion of meal improvements for all public schools through the ‘Aina Pono Hawai‘i State Farm to School Program.

**SOLUTION:** Fund procurement and nutritionist positions in HIDOE SFSB.

**JUSTIFICATION:** These positions will work with the SFSB Farm to School Coordinator to directly support expansion of the ‘Aina Pono Hawai‘i State Farm to School Program to all public schools.

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**EDUCATION**

**PROBLEM:** The average age of farmers in Hawai‘i is over 60 years, and Hawai‘i does not have an adequate-sized farming workforce for expansion of cultivated agricultural lands and food production.

**SOLUTION:** Invest in agriculture education by funding a P-20 (preschool through post-secondary) Agriculture Education Coordinator, fulfilling a key recommendation of the P–20 Agriculture Education Working Group in its final report to the 2019 Hawai‘i State Legislature.

**JUSTIFICATION:** This position will focus on infusing agriculture education into teacher development programs at all levels (P-20).