



## From the governor: Moving the state forward together

**I**t's easy to talk about governing; it's much harder to "walk the talk" and make the tough decisions on the community's most pressing issues— whether it's in education, the economy and jobs, affordable housing or the environment. As Governor Ige embarks on his second term, this edition covers timely issues, school progress and working together for the future.

**Q. What do you want to focus on in your second term?**

**A.** We want to build on the progress and momentum we're already seeing. A recent list of local housing construction in Pacific Business News showed 16 of the 23 projects underway in 2018 were affordable rentals or for-sale units, built with state-assisted financing. A second term enables us to maintain this momentum. We're ahead of schedule in our Sustainable Hawai'i goals of producing clean, renewable energy while reducing the cost to consumers. We're focused on innovation and getting more funds to our schools. And we've had breakthroughs to better manage ocean resources through community-based rules and balanced water allocation for agriculture, electricity and housing.



Gov. Ige with DOE Superintendent Kishimoto and education advocates.

**Q. What does the Supreme Court's decision to allow construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope mean for Hawai'i?**

**A.** I've always believed that science and Native Hawaiian practices can coexist. The TMT decision advances Hawai'i's reputation in scientific discovery and provides for community and educational benefits. When I went up to Mauna Kea's summit, I thought there were too many commercial aspects and not enough cultural understanding of the significance of the mountain. The Board of Land and Natural Resources adopted 43 conditions to ensure the project fulfills its environmental and educational commitments, that TMT will train and hire local workers, and that Native Hawaiian protocols will be respected. Hawai'i island Mayor Harry Kim and I want to work with the community to create a vision for Mauna Kea as a symbol of peace and international cooperation. The University of Hawai'i has done much to strengthen its stewardship of the mountain, which was part of my 10-point plan from 2015.

**Q. Without a constitutional amendment, what is the way forward to increase resources to improve public schools?**

**A.** Hawai'i is the only public school system in the nation where not a penny comes from property taxes. Every year the Department of Education's budget request far exceeds our ability to provide the needed funds. Although vaguely worded, I thought the constitutional amendment was a valid question to put to the voters. We'll keep looking for ways to increase resources, including improvements through our tax modernization initiative to collect taxes already owed for online sales, vacation rentals and tax fraud.

**Q. What progress are you seeing in the state's Department of Education system and the schools?**

**A.** I've found DOE Superintendent Kishimoto really does walk the talk and understands that the system needs to support innovation in the classroom. Our Blueprint for Education says quality begins by empowering schools to be creative in ways that serve their communities rather than focusing on standardization. The superintendent and I agree we have to pay attention to teacher retention and fiscal accountability, and I know she's focused on making sure DOE funds are spent effectively at the school level.

**Q. The DOE and the state are taking a strong stand against bullying. Does President Trump's rhetoric make the problem worse?**

**A.** What the president says matters. Some of his hateful rhetoric really encourages bullying. Social media gives everyone a platform to attack without taking responsibility. We have to send a strong message that bullying in any form is just not acceptable.

# Hawai'i Supreme Court upholds permit to build TMT

In a long-awaited decision, the Hawai'i Supreme Court has affirmed the State Board of Land and Natural Resources' decision to issue a construction permit for the \$1.4 billion Thirty Meter Telescope on Mauna Kea. "We're pleased the court carefully weighed all the varied and passionate testimony about TMT," said Governor Ige. "We believe this decision is fair and right and will continue to keep Hawai'i at the forefront of astronomy."

University of Hawai'i President David Lassner added, "TMT will not only represent a major advance in humankind's knowledge of the universe, it will have tremendously positive educational and economic impacts for the people of Hawai'i island and the entire state." Also praising the decision were Suzanne Case, director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), and attorney general Russell Suzuki. "DLNR will continue to work closely with UH on next steps to move this project forward," said Case.



DLNR chair Suzanne Case with Gov. Ige, David Lassner and Russell Suzuki.



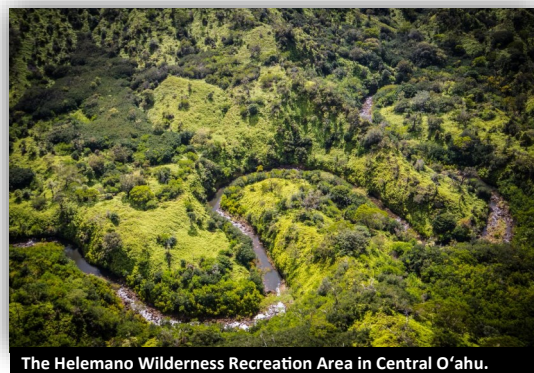
In his 10-point plan for better stewardship of Mauna Kea, the governor asked that the TMT site be "the last area on the mountain where a telescope project will be completed or sought." Three other telescopes on the mountain are scheduled to be decommissioned. The consortium of research universities behind TMT have provided \$2.5 million for scholarships, classroom projects and STEM grants every year since 2014. TMT will also provide an additional one million dollars each year for college scholarships for native Hawaiians and other educational initiatives on Hawai'i island.

TMT must now submit construction plans to the DLNR for review and approval. If construction starts next year, it's estimated the telescope would be completed in 2029.

## State acts to protect critical watershed and recreation lands

Protection of Central O'ahu's vital water resources. New outdoor recreation opportunities. Improved habitats for native species, many of them endangered. Those are some of the benefits of a \$15.2 million land acquisition involving federal, state and private sector partners. Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) director Suzanne Case said, "This area is a treasure. It's a central location that provides a lot of outdoor recreation and conservation management capability right in the middle of O'ahu."

The purchase of 2,882 acres in the Helemano Wilderness Recreation Area from Dole Food Co. was completed by the Trust for Public Land and DLNR's Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW). Working with the community, DOFAW will create a multi-resource management plan. Gov. Ige said, "Watersheds and forests are the very foundation of our lives in these islands. This partnership is a terrific win for the community and the environment."



The Helemano Wilderness Recreation Area in Central O'ahu.

## Advancing computer science for DOE students statewide

To advance a cause he described as "near and dear to his heart," Governor Ige signed a bill to increase computer science education and teacher training in the schools, HB 2607 (Act 51). "I want to thank the legislature and our private sector partners for helping us ensure our students can succeed in a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy," said the governor.

At the bill signing, DOE Superintendent Christina Kishimoto said the department wants to support the programs already at many of the schools. "We want to design an innovative curriculum that embeds a computer science experience at the elementary, middle and high school levels," she said.

"We're not focused on just adding a class, which would be the easy way to respond to this. Rather we want to ask what types of experiences will push our students to be innovators and leaders in the field."

Kishimoto said the Board of Education has adopted computer science standards so that by 2022 all children, K-12, in Hawai'i public schools will have a meaningful computer science experience. "We're offering K-8 computer science innovation grants to encourage teachers to try new ideas," she said. "And next summer a teacher-led conference will share different approaches for students to continue the momentum."

### A Washington Place Christmas

The community is invited to a holiday open house on Dec. 14 from 5 to 8 p.m. sponsored by the Washington Place Foundation. A \$5 donation is suggested for adults.

Reservations can be made through [www.Eventbrite.com](http://www.Eventbrite.com). For details, contact 586-8040 or [wpfevent@gmail.com](mailto:wpfevent@gmail.com).

# Fighting for better schools and more teacher pay

She's been on the job for a little over a year, but **DOE Superintendent Christina Kishimoto** has already faced some tough issues — from the recent debate over a constitutional amendment for more school funds to stricter anti-bullying policies and keeping students safe during the Kīlauea eruption and record floods.

## What have been the most inspiring and challenging parts of the job so far?

"The most inspiring part has been the amount of innovation already happening in our classrooms," she replied enthusiastically. "We have all these best-kept secrets and hidden gems. Principals and teacher teams are asking, 'Do we have permission to go in this direction?' To which my answer is always the same: This isn't about permission, it's about what's best for the students." And the biggest challenge? "We're a statewide school system that serves every child. We don't turn anyone away. We want to create this engaging and dynamic learning environment where students can succeed. We encourage collaboration from all our partners, from parents to our communities and our elected officials to help guide this process for all our students."

**The constitutional amendment** on the November ballot may have been struck down by the Hawai'i Supreme Court, but the issues it raised are still front and center for Kishimoto. "We, the state, have some decisions to make about how we're going to fund public education and better teacher pay," she said. "Either we need to all be at the table together to create an advanced public education system or we can fall prey to creating these divisions and avoid the tough conversations." Kishimoto said her top issue right now is **to raise teacher salaries** "so we can attract and retain the best educators for our students." She's concerned the supply of applicants is diminishing, especially for special education teachers to help close the student achievement gap, and others who worry they can't afford the high cost of living in Hawai'i.

**Also high on the list** is community discussion about **stricter anti-bullying policies** in the schools. Statewide public hearings on the DOE's updated student discipline code will continue through December. The student discipline code moves bullying at the secondary school level to a more serious Class A offense to signal that it is a behavior that won't be tolerated in the schools. However, Kishimoto stressed that while students need to know there are consequences for their behavior, "the focus is still on education and making sure our students learn from their mistakes." The DOE is developing **an anti-bullying app** to provide both resources and a process for students to get help if they're being bullied. The department asked State Student District Council leaders for input to make the app useful and plans to make it available to middle schools in January 2019 and to high schools in the summer. Following that, the DOE will make adjustments for an elementary school version.

**Kishimoto said the past year has been devoted to launching a design process at every school for more community-based empowerment.** "For years the emphasis has been on a top-down set of standards with centralized curriculum design," explained Kishimoto. "Now we're asking schools to collaborate at the complex level, taking into account the resources in the community for real engagement. We're still incorporating the same standards of critical thinking, problem-solving, math, literacy and other skills but delivered in a way that takes advantage of that community's uniqueness — whether it's a school in a rural area with rich 'āina-based resources or an urban center surrounded by businesses, for example."

**Kishimoto said she was hired with a clear understanding of what was expected of her.** "The Board of Education, legislators, community members and parents all asked for **a real focus on innovation and school-based empowerment.**" She said delivering on that challenge is at the heart of budget and programmatic decisions. These have ranged from providing school-level innovation grants and more computer science education development in grades K-12 statewide as well as increased funds through the student-weighted formula, which pushes money directly to the schools. "Currently, 93 percent of the state's DOE budget is either in the hands of principals or in shared services such as busing and food services," she explained. "We moved three-quarters of our Title II teacher development funds to the schools and complex area superintendents. And we're looking at how to reprogram internal funds before we ask for more money from the Legislature."

**To improve budget transparency,** Kishimoto said the DOE is already taking steps in that area with "budget briefs" posted online to simplify complex reports. Kishimoto said she understands the need for accountability and welcomes ways to assure taxpayers that public funds are being well-spent. Board of Education chair Catherine Payne concurred about the need to work together. "We're at the moment when our schools can be not just good but great. We need communities and businesses to help us."



Dr. Kishimoto meets Hau'ula Elementary's student government and a Maunawili Elementary kindergartener.



Maui's King Kekaulike High drama students with Gov. Ige.

# Teachers from across the state honored for their dedication

If you want to find hope for our state's future, try spending some time with the 2019 District Teachers of the Year. They were honored Oct. 26 at Washington Place by Governor and Mrs. Ige, DOE Superintendent Christina Kishimoto and community officials at the Hawai'i's 2019 Teacher of the Year ceremony. The rousing cheers for each district nominee showed they were all winners — making history, science and English more meaningful, improving autism education, showcasing classroom success or developing career academies for student success.



Hawai'i's Teacher of the Year Mathieu Williams with other honorees and officials.

Hawai'i's top winner, who will go to Washington, D.C. in April to compete for the national title, is **Mathieu Williams**, 29, a technology and digital media teacher at **Kealakehe Intermediate in Kona**. He was praised for developing "an innovative, multi-layered experience so students can find the best versions of themselves while learning marketable skills." In their first time entering, his students earned top prizes at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Television Network's national convention last March. Williams' colleagues praised him as a teacher-leader whose values make him an inspiration to everyone he meets. "He has the most beautiful vision of what education could be," said Kristen Brummel, Hope Street Group state director. Brummel said Williams is the perfect ambassador for the state because "he has the heart of Hawai'i in his soul."

**What does Williams tell his students?** "I ask them, 'What are you going to offer this world?'" he said. "I want them to work from the heart and be responsible, ethical users of technology. Adolescence is when they're going through so many changes. They're at that tipping point of loving school or saying, 'Yeah, whatever.' We have a responsibility to the whole child. Our students are reflections of us." **The district winners** included Shane Albritton, School for Examining Essential Questions of Sustainability charter school; Brandon Arakawa, Kahului Elementary, Maui; Sean Doi, Kaua'i resource teacher, Sam Hankins, Kawanakoa Middle, Honolulu; Gail Izumigawa, Waipahu High, Leeward; Mary Ann Kurose, Radford High, Central; and Debbie Morrow, Kailua Elementary, Windward.

## Building a future in technology for the next generation

From a nationwide first-place ranking in innovation to nurturing the next generation of coders, Hawai'i is gaining recognition through the state's **Office of Enterprise Technology Services (ETS)**. The office is helping deliver on Governor Ige's promise to make government more transparent, efficient and effective. To do that, ETS and chief information officer **Todd Nacapuy** have worked with state departments on several projects to modernize systems, reduce waste and improve accountability.



Gov. Ige, Todd Nacapuy and staff celebrate winning the Chaucer award.

"I'm proud of the progress we've made in technology," said Governor Ige.

"Modernizing how we improve public services has been one of my top priorities since becoming governor." The projects have ranged from complex tax and payroll system modernizations to a paper reduction pilot program that saved one million sheets of paper over a five-month period by converting to digital documents. Overall, **Hawai'i was ranked first among 50 states in the use of emerging technologies and innovation by the Center for Digital Government** to streamline operations and reach policy goals.

One award-winning project is the **Hawai'i Department Dashboard**, which was named the **2018 North America winner for digital innovation by Chaucer**, a global consulting group. The dashboard – the first of its kind in the nation – provides a visual overview of 16 state departments' IT projects, with timelines, status and financial breakdowns. It tracks more than \$450 million in spending and more than 600 state projects. Another initiative is the **Hawai'i Annual Code Challenge (HACC)**, which was chosen **State IT Innovation of the Year by StateScoop** in Washington, D.C. The competition, conceived by Governor Ige and coordinated by ETS, brings together coders and state departments to design computer solutions to improve government operations.

Nacapuy, who has won his own share of awards as a business innovator, left a career as a tech entrepreneur in Seattle to come home to Hawai'i. One of his goals involves creating IT career pathways in state government for future Hawai'i college grads. "I'm in a position where I can help people move up the ladder, whether it's within state agencies or the private sector," said Nacapuy. "The whole community benefits because we're helping to keep local talent here in Hawai'i while growing a local IT workforce."

Contact us at [governor.hawaii.gov](http://governor.hawaii.gov)  
Executive Chambers, State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: (808) 586-0034 | Fax: (808) 586-0006

Hilo Office (808) 974-6262 | Kona Office (808) 323-4542 |  
Maui Office (808) 243-5798 | Kaua'i Office (808) 274-3100

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