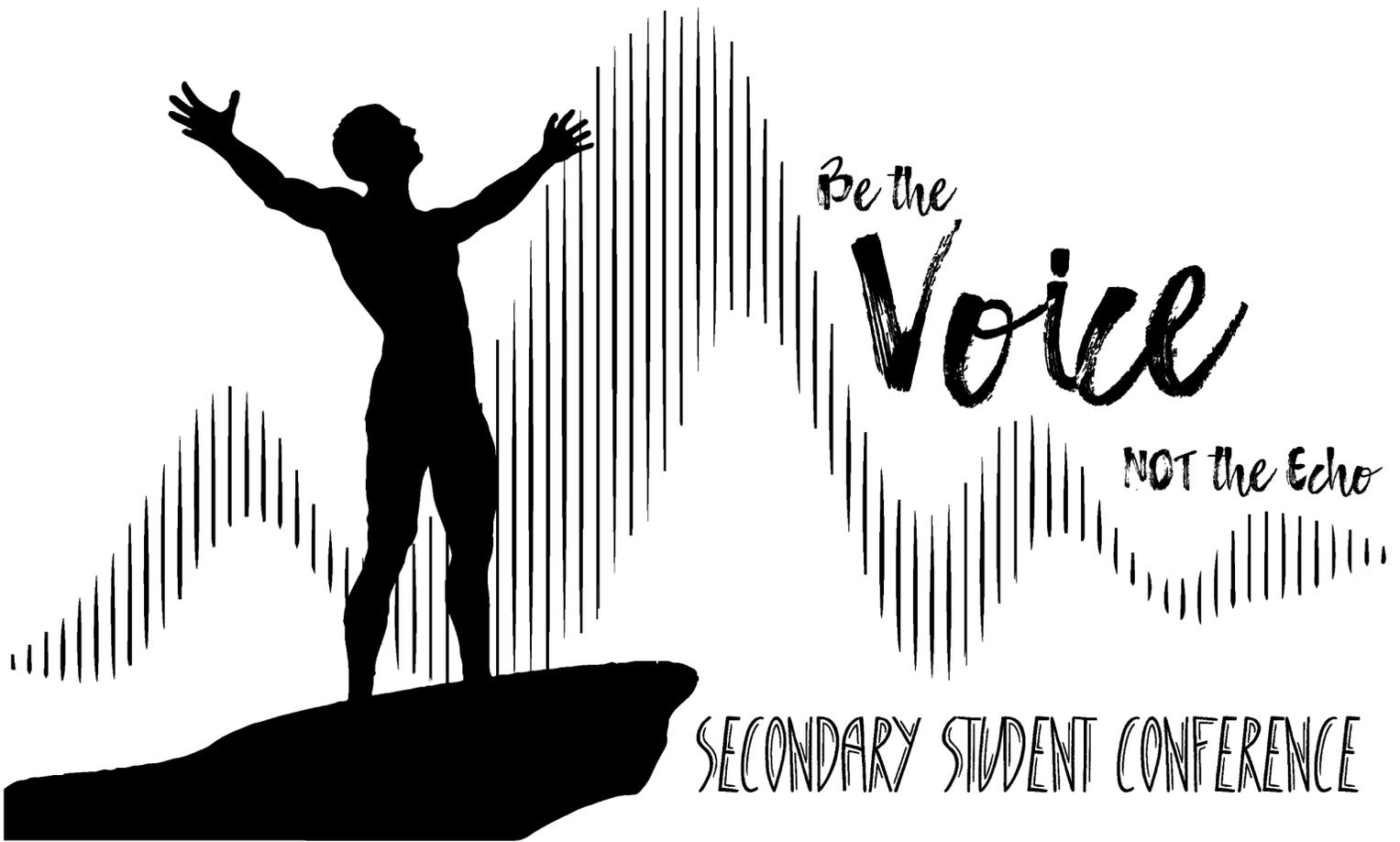


# 'Opio Newsletter

SECONDARY STUDENT CONFERENCE



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## CONTRIBUTORS:

Carlo Daquiaoag  
Pahoa High School

Fernanda Maldonado  
Baldwin High School

Christmel Ugalde  
Leilehua High School

Mikaela Briones  
Waianae High School

## ‘Opio Newsletter

*The Voice of Hawaii's Public School Students*

The ‘Opio has been revamped as a newsletter initiative of the Hawaii State Student Council that strives to share important stories from students for students in our public schools. The goal of this new initiative is to empower student voice by providing them an avenue to share their voices through story sharing and student highlights. The Hawaii State Student Council will be using its network of student leaders to reach various students across the state.

## INTRODUCTION

### Ms. Danielle Castro

Secondary Student Conference  
Co-Coordinator

Delegates,

I am beyond proud of the work you’ve accomplished in such a short amount of time. But as you know by now, we have only begun scratching the surface. We’ve empowered you with knowledge and experience to continue to stay engaged with your community and to speak up when you support or disagree with something.



Over the past three days, you learned the legislative process, interacted with legislators, met with passionate advocates in topics ranging from homelessness to traffic safety to the vaping epidemic, spoke up at the debate on behalf of 180,000 public school students, and submitted testimony in support of actual bills being debated upon by your legislator counterparts at the Capitol. You read over countless bills, researched numerous topics, and gained insight into things you never knew before. In short, you did A LOT. Now comes the most important part - taking all of this back and doing something with it. You had the unique opportunity to be a part of the 2020 Secondary Student Conference. Now go tell the world about it. Tell them what you did. Or even better, tell others how to do it, too.

The Secondary Student Conference is a partnership between the Department of Education and the Hawaii State Legislature. Know that you have the support of both organizations to continue to serve as advocates and to become civically engaged in your communities. We hope you know how accessible your state Capitol is and feel more confident in accessing the people and resources you need to enact change. But most importantly, we hope that you take the Conference’s theme to heart and realize that “being the voice and not the echo” means choosing to stand up and speak confidently, informed, and first. It is not shying away and waiting for others to do so - that’s what an echo is.

Through the speakers, sessions, and even conversations with fellow delegates, you know that there is much work to be done. However, we hope that you leave here empowered and perhaps even willing to start enacting the change we all passionately seek. You just have to be willing to start.

Thank you for all that you’ve done and will continue to do. I hope to hear from you soon.

Ms. Danielle Castro  
SSC Co-Coordinator

## HAWAI‘I STATE STUDENT COUNCIL

Tiffany Frias, State Advisor  
Alexandra Abinosa, Chairperson  
Jaylen Mae Arzaga, Vice Chairperson  
Breeze Chinen, Secretary  
Jessica Chang, Sergeant-at-Arms  
Carlo Daquiaoag, Historian  
Daniella White, BOE Student Representative

[hssc808.weebly.com](http://hssc808.weebly.com) | [information.hssc@gmail.com](mailto:information.hssc@gmail.com)  
Twitter and Instagram: @HSSC\_Council

# Meet your Committee Chairs and Secretary

## What is a challenge and success with working with your committees?



Riley Blaber  
*School Environment Chair*

"All of the delegates within the committee had really strong voices when it came to bills that interested them... However, after advocations for the bill and discussion between all delegates we were able to come to a common mindset and pick. Our committee was filled with individuals who understood the importance of student voice. They wholeheartedly supported every statement made by a delegate even if they disagreed. Their passion for the bills they chose were expressed respectfully and compassionately.



Isabel Bartolome  
*School Environment Secretary*



Sasha Arreola  
*Student Achievement Chair*

"One challenge would be that everyone's really passionate about their bills. So it's kind of hard to choose between the bills because half of our committee was for one, and then the other half was for another so it was hard to decide which one they wanted to choose for their final three. But our group ran really smoothly, they all decided on three bills really fast. A lot of communication happened. And I guess everyone just really got to know each other and they all collaborated and intermingled with each other."



Christian Ferreira  
*Student Achievement Secretary*



Alyssa Sunday  
*Co-Curricular Chair*

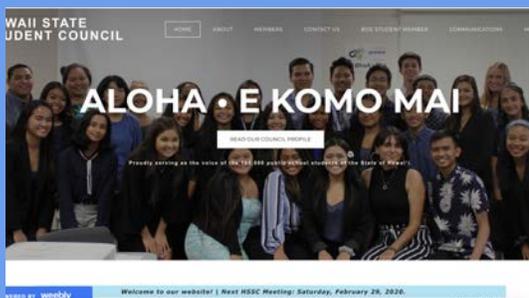
"I think one success we had during SSC would have to be. A lot of our delegates were very outgoing and very passionate about their bills they had. So they weren't shy, they're more so just very out there and very excited to get to work. Some challenges I have within my committee is that they're very passionate about their values and they're quick to defend and even include evidence."



Michael Amoyo  
*Co-Curricular Secretary*

**Want to learn more?**

<http://hssc808.weebly.com/> | Instagram: @hssc\_council



## SECONDARY STUDENT CONFERENCE

Delegates! If you'd like to learn more about the council that helped organized this conference, visit our website!

**To learn more, visit**  
<http://hssc808.weebly.com/>

# Day 01: Secondary Student Conference

*By: Fernanda Maldonado | Baldwin High School | Contributor*

Many of the delegates rolled up to this year's secondary student conference held at the Pagoda, they were welcomed in, for the introduction of the conference that was led by an opening message from Governor David Ige and First Lady Dawn Ige, as well as the wonderful speaker representative Troy Hashimoto who gave inspiring words for the start of the conference. One of our delegates, Skylar Fagarang from Aiea High School says that, "With this being my first time, I believe this opportunity has opened my mind and I feel inspired to do the best I can to inspire others and to do as much as I can to make an impact on society around me." Later that night the delegates were separated into their specific committees, they had about two hours of committee time to narrow down the bills they wanted to support and then research. Adam Alamodin from Aiea High School, who was super

excited to start talking about the bills, said, "one thing I really, really enjoyed was when we actually gathered into our specific committees. Because when I did, I got to meet so many different people. And that's obviously a plus. And because we got to meet a bunch of different people, I got to listen to a whole bunch of different perspectives. And through looking at all the bills, I found a lot of interesting things that I usually don't really think about. And when it came to picking up which bills actually stood out to all of us, it was really enlightening to hear about other people's perspectives, because not only it's different, but it's because my preconceived notions were changed because of the fact that I learned something new that I learned about this piece of information that I'd never really considered. So I think overall, I really enjoyed you know, getting to know my committee, getting to work with them." Soon after everyone resumed to meet back in the ballroom for the closing message that ended day one of SSC.



# DAY 02: Hawaii State Capitol

BY MIKAELA BRIONES | WAIANAE HIGH | CONTRIBUTOR

At our second day for SSC, the delegates wake up bright and early to get ready to leave the Pagoda and go to the State Capitol. The delegates had the opportunity to meet with their district representatives and talk about any issues and their bills they've discussed the night before. A day to remember, Genesis Andrewson-Aitogi from Waiakea High School, said, "I feel that today was super beneficial. Being from the Big Island it was really cool to be able to go to the Capitol and meet the people, especially who represent my district and the island of Hawaii. I think it was nice to be able to get my perspective and just see what they stand for and potentially find a possible career for myself."

The delegates had a very self-directed day as they chose their sessions to attend and have their debate trainings! The delegates were offered sessions, debate trainings, and a capitol tour throughout their duration at the capitol. Ellie Nakasome-Amaguin from Roosevelt High School said, "today was so much fun. I got to meet a bunch of new people and other delegates from across the islands. And it was, well, it was really fun. Before SSC, I didn't know much about the legislative process, but I can already feel that I'm going to learn a lot from this conference and I'm very excited to finish it out." We took a group photo and was able to ask questions that were relevant to our bills. Once the buses arrived, the delegates hurriedly boarded the buses to get back to the Pagoda Hotel to prepare for the night's activities. That night, the different committees had debate training, testimony writing, and bill review after dinner. Enriching their understanding, they were ready to decide on their bills in preparation for their debate the following day.





# DAY 03: The Debate

BY MIKAELA BRIONES | WAIANAЕ HIGH | CONTRIBUTOR

As the conference comes to a close, we have on more last activity before heading home. The delegates prepared long and hard to make sure they have the best information and facts to support the bills they have chosen. The delegates leave the Pagoda Hotel and head back to the Capitol. In the chambers, Daniella White, BOE Student Representative, goes over the debate rules as the delegates patiently and excitedly wait to start. Practicing professionalism, the delegates go up one by one, either supporting or speaking against the bill being discussed. The first group, co-curricular, start up the debate their three bills. Co-Curricular starts off strong with their first bill Many delegates from this committee engaged with the debate successfully. After their third bill, Student Achievement came down to the floor and



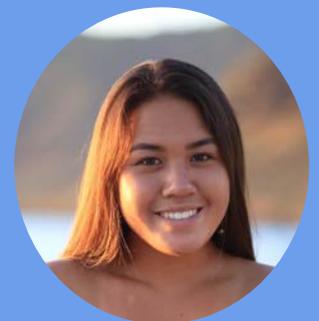
started off their debate on their three bills. The delegates from every committee asked questions, supported, or went against these bills. With curiosity and passion, the delegates conducted a wonderful debate. In the last round of debates, Student Environment worked hard to end off with a burst of information, thoroughly debating their bills.

## OUR VOICE MATTERS

### How did you feel as a delegate in the debate?

BY Kristyn Kailewa, Wai`anae High School

"I was so excited to participate and have the chance to explain my stance on different topics. I didn't expect to be so intrigued by the conversation, but I'm glad to have went up and debated."



# BILL OVERVIEW

## **HB 2126: Relating to Voter Registration**

Automatic pre-registration by Affidavit for high school students, ages 16-18.

## **SB 2358:**

Teachers, councilors, and principals will be required to attend a training in suicide prevention.

## **SB 2343:**

Introduces sexual assault prevention education and training to students and teachers, provide helpful information to parents, and allows to create a safer Hawaii for our keiki.

## CO-CURRICULAR

## **HB 1915: DOE Workforce Readiness Program**

Creates within the Department of Education a Workforce Readiness Program to provide opportunities for students to earn associate degrees, workforce development diplomas, pre-apprenticeship certificates and other industry recognized certificates.

## **SB 2256: Relating to Teacher Recruitment**

Authorizes department of education to provide incentives to enhance recruitment and retention of public school teachers.

## **SB 2296: Relating to Education**

Filling out the FAFSA from would become a graduation requirement for high school students, with the opt out option.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

## **HB 2038:**

Establishes a two year mobile facilities pilot program for the Department of Human Services to purchase, staff, and operate mobile facilities on DOE property to provide services including laundry, showers, oral hygiene, and food for homeless children and their families and appropriates funds.

## **HB 2043: Relations to Adolescents Mental Health Care**

Provides students with options to receive mental health care within their school facility to help them be more comfortable with their voice being heard.

## **HB 2044: Relating to Sexual Violence Prevention**

Schools should educate students about sexual abuse and sex trafficking.

## SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

# Pictures of SSC

