

Arts & Communications Academy
~ Waianae High School ~

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

* **Curriculum input/policy input:** Academies should already have their curriculum set up and have board members go over them for relevance, skills missed, and possible projects that could be integrated.

* **Guest Speakers:** Members would be perfect as speakers either in the classroom or during an Academy Career Day. They could also bring other professionals in their field to these engagements or to join the board.

* **Field Trips:** Members could set up student visitations to their place of work to show students what it is like to be in the work environment.

* **Job Shadowing/Mentoring/Internships/Apprenticeships:** This is an ideal and should be attempted only after time has passed. A strong relationship must be in place among the board members, the academy faculty, and the students. This is something to shoot for down the line.

* **Teacher Externships:** This is similar to what HECO does each summer with teacher/student teams to expose them to the job and the skills necessary to do it well. This would allow teachers to see "the real world" and hopefully be able to integrate something into the classroom.

* **Volunteer Tutors from Corporations:** Some companies offer flextime for employees who volunteer their time at schools. They usually help with reading or homework. This benefits the teachers, students, and the employees.

* **Professional Development:** Some companies offer professional development programs for outsiders like teachers and students in Public Speaking, Organizational Skills, Computer Skills, etc. They could come to our school and give a lecture/workshop that could benefit teachers.

The Arts and Communications Academy
Waianae High School
85-251 Farrington Highway
Waianae, HI. 96797

Dear Prospective Advisory Board Member,

You may be aware of the No Child Left Behind law which states that public education must help every child reach state and national standards. This is a very tall order and Waianae High School has decided to meet this challenge by changing the very structure of our school and how it is run. We have contracted Talent Development which comes out of John Hopkins University to guide us to a new school model.

We propose to create six "schools-within-a-schools": A Ninth Grade Academy with only true ninth graders, four academies based on Career Pathways (Business-Industrial and Engineering Technology, Arts and Communications, Health and Human Services, and Natural Resources), and an after school hours Twilight school to help students transition back into a regular school setting with extra guidance and support.

Studies have shown that students tend to do better if they are put into teams where there is consistency and a sense of "ohana" among the faculty and students. We want to foster a feeling of belonging by having kids work with other students who have similar interests and career goals.

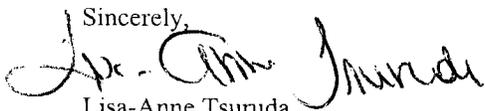
We have been diligently preparing for this dramatic change and we have already implemented our Ninth Grade Academy. It seems to be working and there are far less students "falling through the cracks" and many are passing most of their courses. The rest of the school will be implementing our Academies next year and although we have enthusiastic teachers and students, we still need help.

We are contacting you because we would like to form an Advisory Board for our academy. It is to be made up of community leaders and career mentors like yourself. This group will act as a "sounding board" for decisions in terms of academy course offerings, class curriculum, project ideas, and possible field trips and internships. A full description may be found on the back of this letter. We would like to get a feel for what it means to be in Arts and Communications professions.

Each academy was asked to come up with a list of possible board members and you were chosen. We felt that you are qualified in your area of expertise and that you would be open to affect positive change. It may sound like a large commitment, but your level of involvement would be up to your discretion. We will have a few meetings, but the bulk of your time would be spent with individual teachers or classes. You will be kept abreast of our decisions and student activities/performances/presentations, etc through newsletters, a possible web site, or phone calls.

The success of our students hinges on everyone working together. If you can find time in your busy schedule, we would love to have you on board. We will be having our first group of meetings in late Fall and early Spring 2005. Prior to that, we will be contacting you with more information, tours of our classes and facilities, and begin to build a relationship with you. If you have any questions or would like to contact us, you may call Marissa Tanimura or Tia Heldt, our Academy Chairpersons or myself, Lisa-Anne Tsuruda at 697-7017. We will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you for your consideration and we hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,



Lisa-Anne Tsuruda
Arts and Communications Academy Secretary
Business and Community Outreach Committee Chairperson