

Shine like the Stars

“Believe it or not, lots of people change their majors and abandon their dreams just to avoid a couple of math classes in college.” - Danica McKellar (actor and mathematician)

Just imagine what Hawaii would be like if this was true about the children in our state.

Unfortunately, this may already be the case. In spring 2015, Hawaii’s public school students took the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA), a test that carefully evaluates students’ skill in math and language arts. Disappointing many state officials and also many parents, the results of the SBA showed that throughout the state, only 41% of students met the Hawaii Common Core Standards for mathematics. It shows that the children of Hawaii are not very proficient in this area. This problem must be resolved. If this continues to occur during the next fifty years, our beloved community will collapse. However, a solution will not just present itself but has to be presented. We need the children of our generation to become excellent in all things math.

If this issue remains unresolved, then in fifty years, Hawaii will have a major problem on its hands. Math is undoubtedly an essential part of life. Wherever one looks, he or she can see math. Used in engineering, business, and science, Hawaii would suffer if not for it. If the children of this state continue to struggle with this subject, they will look to other jobs and leave the field of math and science untouched. Soon, there will be no new scientists, engineers, accountants, or mathematicians. Problems will inevitably occur. Engineers could not construct the beautiful and essential buildings which our community needs to flourish. The stock market would crash. Science would not advance. Businesses would crumble. Slowly but surely, the state of our community will begin to decline and will eventually be destroyed. The future of Hawaii is at stake.

One way to solve this problem would be to start a community-wide math campaign. This would be put on by a nonprofit organization, made up of members of the community willing to volunteer their time and effort. Notably, this campaign would entail the creation of clubs and competitions for kids of all ages that use math in practical ways, such as engineering, business, robotics, and technology. Fun and immersing, these programs would effectively teach kids math and problem-solving skills while engaging them in challenging, real-life problems. They would expose children to the enjoyable side of math at an early age. The public school of Hawaii would reach out to those in their district for support and sponsorship, uniting the people of Hawaii in an effort to help promote valuable mathematical skills. Education will flourish! If we can get our community to push for excellence in math, there will be definite improvement in the learning of the subject. In making this a community-wide effort, the children of Hawaii will realize the importance and significance of math and will develop a desire to explore it deeply.

Mathematics plays a fundamental role in society. Regrettably, Hawaii's youth are inevitably losing their understanding of this wonderfully complex system. The effects of this ignorance will begin to emerge as time goes on. To prevent this, we must find an answer. We must act. If we push for more learning, then we shall receive more learning. The community of Hawaii needs to join together to show our little ones how crucial math truly is. If this is done, Hawaii will be in great shape. This want, this need, is very similar to that of Clarence T.C. Ching. A philanthropist, Ching was a kind and generous man who donated his time and his resources in order to help others and to help education to thrive. We should do the same. The love, time, and effort that is given to Hawaii's keiki is given not for our personal sake, but to see them prosper, to see them triumph, to see them grow. The most important thing about this plan is not the plan itself, but the reason for the plan. If an idea is brilliant but is used for personal gain,

the idea ceases to be excellent. However, if both the idea and the reason are honorable, then the entire thing is fantastic! We do this for our keiki so that they may finally reach their true potential and shine as bright as the stars in the sky.