

Dear Konawaena High School Family,

It doesn't feel 32 years have passed since I first walked into the Konawaena Band Room in 1989 to start my DOE teaching career. It was a wonderful, memorable 11 years with the band program and I still feel those were some of the best years of my life. Prior to starting at Konawaena I remember being encouraged by mentors about considering school administration as I progressed further in my career. After 11 years as Konawaena High School's band director, I felt it was time.

Leaving a program that I loved for Ho'okena School to become a vice-principal-in-training wasn't easy but I was excited for the opportunity and I got to better know our incredible South Kona community. I didn't realize at the time that my return to Konawaena High would happen so soon. After two years at Ho'okena I returned to Konawaena High in 2002 as its TA Principal and became its Principal several months later.

It has been inspiring to see our community grow and persevere through service testing, HCPS, the reduction of staff and students with the opening of new West Hawaii high school, and now the COVID-19 pandemic. To say nothing of the many academic accolades, positive accreditation certifications, athletic championships, etc. etc. Unfortunately, like in life, not all of what we've experienced has been positive yet we've been able to persevere, come together in support, and get through those things as well.

Over the past few months, I have needed to spend much more time with my aging mother on Oahu as well as address some personal things I haven't been able to for much too long. So after much thought and consult, I have made the decision to officially retire from the Department of Education effective November 1, 2021. I am hopeful people will be understanding and know that it wasn't an easy decision to make, not after being here in the place I love for over 30 years

With our supportive leadership team and dedicated staff I am confident the school will continue its now 100 year tradition (dare I say expectation) of rising to each occasion and supporting students, families and each other to become better every day. We have good systems in place and I know whomever the next principal may be, that person will have an amazing opportunity to build upon a beyond-solid foundation and take Konawaena High School to even greater heights.

I remain forever grateful Konawaena. I don't have the words to express how thankful and appreciative I really am.

Please be well always.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Shawn', written in a cursive style.

-Shawn