



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

May 2, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We want to inform you of a recently released Netflix series called *Thirteen Reasons Why*, which has received high interest from teenage audiences. The plot is based on a fictional story of a high school student who experiences terrible events and dies by suicide. We have serious concerns about the graphic elements in the series that are inconsistent with messages that protect mental and emotional well-being, as well as content that is for mature audiences.

The Hawaii State Department of Education wants you to be aware of this show because of its graphic nature. You may want to discuss this show with your teenage children. The National Association of School Psychologists recently stated it does not "recommend that vulnerable youth, especially those who have any degree of suicidal ideation, watch this series." Children and youth who watch this series will need supportive adults to process it.

The series does raise issues of bullying, which the Department works to reduce in our schools by emphasizing a culture of respect, responsibility and resiliency, using a framework of prevention, response and follow-up.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. The physical and emotional well-being of our students are a high priority. It takes all of us in our communities to be vigilant in ensuring student safety.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Matayoshi".

Kathryn S. Matayoshi
Superintendent

KSM:ddc