



COURTESY

**Mary Anne Raywid Scheele, shown with her grandsons, pushed for legislation to establish charter schools. Raywid died Jan. 12 after a two-year battle with cancer.**

**MARY ANNE RAYWID SCHEELE / 1928-2010**

# An icon for charter schools, she was a tireless activist

**BY PAT GEE**  
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Decades before the charter school movement was launched in Hawaii, Mary Anne Raywid Scheele pushed for alternative education and smaller schools that were more responsive to the individual needs of students.

She became an activist for national school reform at Hofstra University on Long Island, N.Y., during a 30-year tenure that started in 1959. She retired as a professor emeritus, and became an adjunct professor at University of Hawaii at Manoa after moving here in 1996.

She died Jan. 12 following a two-year battle with cancer at 81.

Raywid first came here in 1986 to keynote a League of Women Voters of Honolulu conference on school reform.

She working tirelessly with league founder Marion Saunders on legislation to establish charter schools, said Dr. Libby Oshiyama, an international curriculum specialist living on the Big Island. Raywid chaired the league's Education Committee from 1998 for 10 years.

"She was my kumu ... my source. She was an icon in her field; I was privileged to sit at her feet," Oshiyama said.

"The charter school movement was spawned" from the inception of a Schools-Within-a-School system at Kapaa Elementary School in 1991, Oshiyama said.

Scheele believed "the bigger the school, the more it loses its humanity," she added.

Beth-Ann Kozlovich of Hawaii Public Radio said, "She believed charters are central to creating an

education system that can reach every child, be directed by the needs of its community and families. For example, charters did not implement Furlough Fridays. Mary Anne was gravely concerned that we could have the shortest school year in the nation ... what this will mean to the learning of all children, especially those with diverse learning styles."

A memorial service will be held at 4 p.m. Jan. 31 at the First Unitarian Church of Honolulu. Donations may be made to the American Cancer Society in Raywid's name.

Raywid is also survived by a daughter-in-law Margaret Scheele; and two grandsons, Sam and Ben. Acknowledgments should be sent to the Scheele Family at 8918 Colesbury Place, Fairfax, VA 22031.