
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN TO ADDRESS CHRONIC
STUDENT ABSENTEEISM.

1 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that an important first step
2 toward student success in public schools is ensuring that
3 students are in attendance and ready to learn to maximize the
4 efficiency of time spent in the classroom; and
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6 WHEREAS, attendance data, as it is currently recorded and
7 reported, misrepresents the scope of the chronic absenteeism
8 problems within Department of Education schools; and
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10 WHEREAS, finding a solution for chronic absenteeism has
11 been an ongoing task for school administrators, the Department
12 of Education, and the Board of Education; and
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14 WHEREAS, anecdotally, it has been reported that many
15 teachers find attendance policies place an onerous
16 responsibility on teachers rather than school administrative
17 staff, to process absences, and absences have been incentivized
18 through poorly aligned tardy policies; and
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20 WHEREAS, current policies and procedures have caused
21 delayed notification to parents regarding student absences,
22 resulting in minors being unaccounted for at some schools for up
23 to twelve hours, or a complete breakdown in communicating
24 absences to parents in many cases; and
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26 WHEREAS, delayed reporting of absences to parents has been
27 noted in incidents involving serious injury or death of
28 students, including an accident in November 2012 involving three
29 Campbell High School students, which occurred during the school
30 day while the students' guardians were unaware of the students'
31 absence from school; and



1 WHEREAS, the lack of any statewide attendance policy or set
2 of standards demands that a comprehensive analysis be conducted
3 of chronic absenteeism; now, therefore,
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5 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
6 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
7 Session of 2015, that the Department of Education and the Board
8 of Education are requested to develop a strategic plan
9 addressing chronic absenteeism to:
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- 11 (1) Identify weaknesses in attendance policies and
12 procedures;
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- 14 (2) Specify the desired outcomes for parent contact and
15 classroom support; and
16
- 17 (3) Develop effective ways to collect and report data to
18 administrators, guardians and respective neighborhood
19 boards; and
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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education and
22 the Board of Education are requested to implement standards
23 requiring direct communication of any absences or tardiness to a
24 student's guardians within a reasonable timeframe, as decided by
25 the Board of Education, as well as written notification to
26 guardians of any unexcused student absences; and
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
29 requested to submit a strategic plan to the Legislature for
30 review sixty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session
31 of 2016; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
34 requested to submit a report of its findings and
35 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
36 Legislature no later than thirty days prior to the convening of
37 the Regular Session of 2016; and



H.R. NO. 109

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Resolution be transmitted to the Superintendent of Education and
3 the Chairperson of the Board of Education.
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OFFERED BY:

Jakashi Em

MAR 13 2015

