

MAR 10 2008

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR SPEAKERS OF HAWAI'I PIDGIN IN
HAWAI'I PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

1 WHEREAS, Hawai'i's multicultural society has produced a
2 unique indigenous language commonly known as "Hawai'i Pidgin" or
3 "Pidgin English" or just "Pidgin," and among some linguists as
4 Hawai'i Creole English; and
5

6 WHEREAS, it is widely acknowledged by linguists that Hawai'i
7 Pidgin is a complete language system in itself and not "broken
8 English"; and
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10 WHEREAS, it is estimated by linguists that six hundred
11 thousand Hawai'i residents have Pidgin as their mother tongue,
12 and an estimated one to two hundred thousand Hawai'i residents
13 use Pidgin more fluently than standard English; and
14

15 WHEREAS, it is widely acknowledged by linguists and second
16 language studies experts that Hawai'i residents being more fluent
17 in Pidgin than standard English may be a major factor in the
18 below average reading test scores among Hawai'i public school
19 students; and
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21 WHEREAS, a study by Susan Bauder Reynolds found that
22 linguistic differences between Hawai'i Pidgin and standard
23 English created initial comprehension difficulties among fifth
24 grade students at Pa'auilo School on the Island of Hawai'i; and
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26 WHEREAS, Susan Bauder Reynolds found that a bidialectical
27 learning strategy she used among Pa'auilo School fifth grade
28 students from 1990 to 1994 eliminated many comprehension
29 difficulties and resulted in statistically significant
30 improvement in reading test scores; and
31



1 WHEREAS, the State mandated Standard Achievement Test in
2 use at the time is normed so that, nationally, twenty-three per
3 cent of all students score in the below-average range, but
4 schools in heavy Pidgin-speaking areas typically had fifty per
5 cent or more of their students in the below-average range; and
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7 WHEREAS, Standard Achievement Test reading scores for
8 Pa'auilo School from 1991 to 1994 showed a significant drop in
9 below-average scores (down to four per cent in 1994) and a
10 significant increase in average scores; and
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12 WHEREAS, two bidialectical learning programs, Project
13 Holopono, which took place in 1984 to 1988 involving students in
14 grades four to six, and Project Akamai, which took place in 1989
15 to 1993, involving students in grades nine and ten, showed
16 improved test scores on standard English by as much as thirty-
17 five to forty per cent; and
18

19 WHEREAS, linguists and second language study experts have
20 found bidialectical teaching strategies to be effective in
21 multilingual situations and exclusionary monolingual teaching
22 strategies to be counterproductive and less effective; and
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24 WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that fluency in
25 standard English is crucial for meeting proficiency standards
26 set by the federal No Child Left Behind Act and for keeping
27 Hawai'i competitive in the global economy; and
28

29 WHEREAS, at the same time, the Legislature also recognizes
30 the value of Hawai'i Pidgin as an expression of local culture;
31 and
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33 WHEREAS, the Department of Education has sought to improve
34 English proficiency among Hawai'i public school students in
35 recent years with limited success; and
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37 WHEREAS, the Department of Education as yet has no language
38 policy recognizing the widespread and significant role of Hawai'i
39 Pidgin in Hawai'i's society; now, therefore,
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41 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fourth
42 Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session of 2008, the
43 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of



1 Education, in consultation with the College of Education, the
 2 Department of Linguistics, and the Department of Second Language
 3 Studies of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, is requested to
 4 develop bidialectical teaching strategies for teachers whose
 5 students' mother tongue is Hawai'i Pidgin; and

6
 7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education, in
 8 consultation with the Department of Linguistics, the Department
 9 of Second Language Studies, and the Charlene Sato Center for
 10 Pidgin, Creole and Dialect Studies of the University of Hawai'i
 11 at Manoa, is requested to identify schools where significant
 12 populations of Hawai'i Pidgin speakers may be found; and

13
 14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education, in
 15 consultation with the College of Education, the Department of
 16 Linguistics, and the Department of Second Language Studies of
 17 the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, is requested to develop plans
 18 for conducting a controlled study on the effectiveness of
 19 bidialectical teaching strategies for Hawai'i public schools with
 20 significant Hawai'i Pidgin-speaking populations; and

21
 22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent of
 23 Education, in consultation with the College of Education, the
 24 Department of Linguistics, and the Department of Second Language
 25 Studies of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, is requested to
 26 report findings and plans to the Legislature no later than
 27 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
 28 2009; and

29
 30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 31 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Superintendent of
 32 Education and the President of the University of Hawai'i.

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 34 OFFERED BY: Norman Sakomafu

D. J. J. J.

Clarence K. Iwaihiko
Mike Gabriel

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