
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO FACILITATE DISCUSSION
WITHIN THE COMMUNITY ON THE FUNDING INADEQUACIES OF THE
WEIGHTED STUDENT FORMULA, PARTICULARLY FOR SMALL AND RURAL
SCHOOLS, AND EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE MODELS OR FORMULAS TO THE
WEIGHTED STUDENT FORMULA IN THE INTEREST OF MAXIMIZING
FUNDING EQUITY TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii's public education system is being
2 criticized for the inadequate delivery of educational services
3 and poor student achievement; and
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5 WHEREAS, Act 51, Session Laws of Hawaii 2004, also known as
6 the "Reinventing Education Act of 2004" (REA), intended to
7 implement comprehensive education reform in Hawaii's public
8 schools by, among other things, reducing the bureaucracy that
9 hampers the effectiveness of the Department of Education and
10 focusing more resources and control at the individual school
11 level; and
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13 WHEREAS, one of the elements of the REA included
14 establishing a Weighted Student Formula, which essentially is a
15 formula for allocating operating moneys to individual public
16 schools that includes a system of weighted characteristics
17 affecting the relative cost of educating each student attending
18 a public school, including new century charter schools and new
19 century conversion charter schools; and
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21 WHEREAS, after the Weighted Student Formula was established
22 in 2005, it became clear that many small and rural schools would
23 be severely and adversely affected upon full implementation,
24 specifically, those schools with smaller student enrollment,
25 geographically isolated schools, schools with a large number of
26 transient students or non-English proficient students, or a
27 combination of these; and
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1 WHEREAS, although specific characteristics are taken into
2 consideration in the Weighted Student Formula, adequate funds
3 have not been available to address these and other disadvantages
4 facing students and have thus resulted in undermining student
5 achievement by withholding resources from smaller schools, which
6 forced a reduction in faculty and staff; and
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8 WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of our State, as well as
9 the people of Hawaii, to ensure that the future generations have
10 a right and the opportunity to receive an education that meets
11 comparable national education standards; and
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13 WHEREAS, the communities in rural areas with small schools
14 would benefit from participating in discussions to learn about
15 the design and implementation of the Weighted Student Formula,
16 as well as sharing their experiences and observations on how the
17 Weighted Student Formula has adversely affected the quality of
18 education of the students; and
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20 WHEREAS, the Department of Education would be able to
21 receive meaningful community input on the deficiencies of the
22 current Weighted Student Formula, thus being able to collect
23 information that would guide future refinements of the Weighted
24 Student Formula, including devising alternative models that
25 would promote greater funding equity; and
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27 WHEREAS, meaningful change can occur given that the
28 Department of Education and the public share a common vision and
29 are committed to undertaking challenges and working together
30 towards positive change for the best interests of our students
31 and the teachers who are instrumental in guiding their
32 instruction; now, therefore,
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34 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
35 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009, the
36 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
37 Education is requested to facilitate discussion within the
38 community on the funding inadequacies of the Weighted Student
39 Formula, particularly for small and rural schools, and to
40 explore alternative models or formulas to the Weighted Student
41 Formula in the interest of maximizing funding equity to public
42 schools; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education
2 conduct an analysis of the implementation of the Weighted
3 Student Formula, which includes the impact on small and rural
4 schools on student achievement, safety and well-being, and civic
5 responsibility; and

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7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the information gathered by the
8 Department of Education on the Weighted Student Formula include
9 funding models used by other education agencies to address
10 resourcing smaller and rural schools, and the most effective
11 means by which schools within a school complex, complex area, or
12 district might share resources to achieve greater fiscal and
13 instructional efficiencies; and

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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
16 requested to submit its findings and recommendations to address
17 the concerns regarding the Weighted Student Formula to the
18 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
19 the Regular Session of 2010; and

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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
22 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to Superintendent of
23 Education and the Chairperson of the Board of Education.