
HOUSE CONCURRENT 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



1 day while the students' guardians were unaware of the students'
2 absence from school; and
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4 WHEREAS, the lack of any statewide attendance policy or set
5 of standards demands that a comprehensive analysis be conducted
6 of chronic absenteeism; now, therefore,
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8 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
9 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
10 Session of 2015, the Senate concurring, that the Department of
11 Education and the Board of Education are requested to develop a
12 strategic plan addressing chronic absenteeism to:
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- 14 (1) Identify weaknesses in attendance policies and
15 procedures;
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- 17 (2) Specify the desired outcomes for parent contact and
18 classroom support; and
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- 20 (3) Develop effective ways to collect and report data to
21 administrators, guardians and respective neighborhood
22 boards; and
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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education and
25 the Board of Education are requested to implement standards
26 requiring direct communication from a school administrator or
27 administrative support staff member of any absences or tardiness
28 to a student's guardians within a reasonable timeframe, as
29 decided by the Board of Education, as well as written
30 notification to guardians of any unexcused student absences; and
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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
33 requested to submit a strategic plan to the Legislature for
34 review sixty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session
35 of 2016; and
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
38 requested to submit a report of its findings and
39 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
40 Legislature no later than thirty days prior to the convening of
41 the Regular Session of 2016; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Superintendent of
3 Education and the Chairperson of the Board of Education.

