A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that staggered start times for Hawaii's schools should be studied to determine the impact of this component in the overall establishment of an educational system that produces the best learning environment for Hawaii's elementary, middle, and high school students.

According to the nonprofit Start School Later, early start times began in the latter half of the twentieth century due to the limited fleets of suburban school buses. Suburban schools staggered their school start times to allow the same fleet of buses to serve all students. High school students were dropped-off the earliest. Urban schools adopted this system of transporting students to their respective schools, and extracurricular activities aligned themselves with this staggered start time schedule.

Research at the University of Minnesota found that teenagers typically cannot fall asleep until 10:45 p.m. or 11:00
p.m. In contrast, a pediatrician at Blank Children's Hospital found that younger children typically fall asleep at 9:00 p.m.

Isabel Fattal, in her November 12, 2017, article "Why Are Parents Afraid of Later School Start Times?", reported that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has urged a later start time of 8:30 a.m. for middle and high school students. However, federal data for the 2015-2016 school year indicates that over eighty-five per cent of public high schools start before 8:30 a.m.

Although there is scientific evidence of the advantages of a later start time for certain age groups of students, there are other considerations that complicate the implementation of staggered start times, such as impacts for sports and other after school activities, issues relating to transporting students to and from schools, and financial considerations.

The purpose of this Act is to establish a staggered school start times task force to study and evaluate the issues and implications of instituting a staggered school start times program in Hawaii's public school system, including examining staggering the start times of department of education schools to
achieve more efficient and cost-effective school bus service
schedules for grades kindergarten through twelve.

SECTION 2. (a) The superintendent of education or the
superintendent's designee shall convene a staggered school start
times task force to study and evaluate the issues and
implications of instituting a staggered school start times
program in Hawaii's public school system, including examining
staggering the start times of department of education schools to
achieve more efficient and cost-effective school bus service
schedules for grades kindergarten through twelve.

In examining the start times of public schools, the
staggered school start times task force shall consider current
and projected school bus service schedules and:

(1) The projected costs and cost-savings realized as a
result of modifying school bus service schedules; and

(2) The impacts on student learning and achievement,
instructional time, and safety and other effects of
modifying school bus service schedules on students,
teachers, faculty, and the community.

(b) The superintendent of education or the
superintendent's designee shall serve as the chairperson of the
staggered school start times task force and shall invite the
following individuals or their designees to serve as members of
the task force:

(1) A high school principal;
(2) A middle or an intermediate school principal;
(3) An elementary school principal;
(4) The Executive Director of Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for
  Education;
(5) A representative of after-school program providers for
  elementary schools;
(6) A representative of after-school programs providers
  for middle or intermediate schools;
(7) A representative from the Hawaii State Teachers
  Association;
(8) A representative from the Hawaii Government Employees
  Association; and
(9) Any other individuals as determined by the
  superintendent of education.

(c) The members of the staggered school start times task
force shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed
for expenses, including travel expenses, necessary for the
performance of their duties.

(d) The staggered school start times task force shall be
exempt from chapter 92, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and shall act
in an advisory capacity.

(e) The staggered school start times task force shall
report its findings and recommendations on staggered school
start times, including proposed legislation, to the legislature
no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular
session of 2020. The report shall include:

1. A compilation of accurate research and fiscal and
demographic information relating to staggered school
start times in other jurisdictions;

2. Research on and evaluation of other state and school
systems' organizational policy agendas and best
practices related to staggered school start times;

3. The micro and macro fiscal impact on the department of
education, state government, and residents of the
State with particular attention to residents with
children in elementary, middle, or high school;
(4) A comparison, assessment, and evaluation of the current practices of Hawaii's school system and a system based on staggered school start times;

(5) The legal and practical impediments, including existing contracts and collective bargaining matters, to implementing a staggered school start times program; and

(6) The time frame, considering facilities and modifications thereto and necessary education, administrative, and support personnel, to implement a staggered school start times program.

(f) The staggered school start times task force shall terminate on June 30, 2020.

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 to carry out the purposes of this Act.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of education for the purposes of this Act.
SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.
Report Title:
Public Schools; Staggered School Start Times; School Bus Service Schedules; Task Force; Study

Description:
Requires the Department of Education (DOE) to convene a Staggered School Start Times Task Force to study and evaluate the issues and implications of instituting a staggered school start times program, including effects on school bus schedules. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.