A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the department of education operates Hawaii's public schools on a $1,700,000,000 budget that consists primarily of funds from the State. For fiscal biennium 2013-2015, the program costs of the department constituted more than fifteen per cent of the executive branch's total program costs.

The purpose of this Act is to require a management and program audit of the department of education's actions, policies, and rules regarding bullying and cyberbullying. The audit shall review complaints of bullying and cyberbullying towards any student, parent, teacher, department personnel, contract personnel, or department volunteer. The purpose of the audit is to assist the department, board of education, legislature, and executive branch in identifying and addressing any issues necessary to improve the operations of the department as it relates to minority groups, such as students with a disability, students of an ethnic or racial minority, students
who may be considered lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ), and any other group that has faced bullying or cyberbullying.

SECTION 2. (a) The auditor shall conduct a management and program audit of the department's anti-bullying efforts. The audit shall:

(1) Focus on the efficiency of the department's operations, taking into consideration the experiences of members of minority groups that have faced bullying or cyberbullying;

(2) Review complaints of bullying or cyberbullying towards any student, parent, teacher, department personnel, contract personnel, or department volunteer made since January 1, 2015. The audit shall also review the findings and any actions taken to address the complaints. The names of any parties in the complaints shall remain confidential and should any records be copied or distributed, all parties listed in the complaints shall be redacted;
(3) Determine the best practices for the department to identify and address the root causes of bullying and cyberbullying; and

(4) Identify any plans, actions, educational workshops, or trainings of complex area superintendents that may improve understanding of the experiences of individuals and groups who have been targets of bullying or cyberbullying in order to create a respectful and supportive learning environment for all students.

(b) The audit shall conclude no more than twelve months after its commencement.

SECTION 3. The auditor shall submit a report of the auditor's findings and recommendations, including any deficiencies in policies related to bullying and cyberbullying and any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2021.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.
Report Title:
Department of Education; Bullying and Cyberbullying; Audit

Description:
Requires the Auditor to conduct a management and program audit of the Department of Education's policies relating to bullying and cyberbullying, especially as they apply to students who are members of certain minority groups.

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