SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO REPORT ON WAYS TO INCREASE ACCESS TO EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES OR COURSE CREDITS FOR NON-TRADITIONAL AND EXTERNAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES.

WHEREAS, the nation's public education system is undergoing a period of intense change and rapid evolution in the aftermath of the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic and as digital demands and access take on a larger role in everyday life; and

WHEREAS, the traditional curriculum and credit system upon which a high school diploma is based, with a primary focus on the "four core" subjects of English language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science, has not been substantially modified in several decades; and

WHEREAS, innovative states across the country, including Colorado, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, among others, are exploring ways to revamp public education with more meaningful, personalized, and high-leverage learning opportunities commonly referred to as expanded or extended learning opportunities, which offer students credit toward graduation upon completion of out-of-school programs; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of extended learning opportunities is to ensure that learning is not confined to the four walls of a classroom, the pages of a textbook, and non-differentiated curriculum, but is expanded to include unique learning programs that will instill skills in students that transcend the classroom; and

WHEREAS, extended learning opportunities may be implemented through internships, apprenticeships, capstones, independent study, online coursework, community service, work-based learning programs, and other specialized venues; and
WHEREAS, extended learning opportunities are typically designed to award students credits toward a high school diploma upon completion of a learning program and its corresponding competency-based assessment, which are meant to highlight the acquisition of life skills and professional skills that will serve students through the rest of their educational journey and into their career; and

WHEREAS, ensuring that all students in Hawaii have access to quality extended learning opportunities has the capacity to generate a level of engagement in students that will better prepare them for life after high school graduation and their chosen career paths; and

WHEREAS, extended learning opportunities fit well within Hawaii's cultural context, as they align with the 'Ōlelo No'ēau of "Aʻohe pau ka 'ike i ka hālau ho'okahi", translated as "All knowledge is not learned in just one school"; and

WHEREAS, providing extended learning opportunities demonstrates the importance of giving Hawaii's students options to learn from many different sources and in many different ways, including 'āina-based education; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii is home to numerous employers and more than six thousand nonprofit organizations that can serve as extended learning opportunity resources; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii offers flexibility for extended learning opportunities through the Alternative Learning Programs Branch at the Department of Education, which provides statewide support to schools, complex areas, and districts for the development, maintenance, and enhancement of Alternative Learning Programs, Services, and Supports for at-promise students, for whom the traditional model of education has not worked; and

WHEREAS, many other students may struggle with the traditional model of teaching and learning, but have been ineligible for alternative learning programs; and

WHEREAS, improving access to extended learning opportunities in Hawaii will help to address recent research
findings from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, which reports that many students across the country are disengaged from their learning and feel they are not experiencing meaningful learning opportunities or connections; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2023, that the Board of Education is requested to report on ways to increase access to extended learning opportunities or course credits for non-traditional and external learning experiences; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education's report is requested to:

(1) Identify the number of students enrolled in Alternative Learning Programs, Services, and Supports programs in the 2022-2023 school year;

(2) Recommend a process by which all public school students can enroll in credit-bearing extended learning opportunities;

(3) Recommend a process by which community organizations can register to offer extended learning opportunity programs; and

(4) Recommend necessary changes to Board of Education policies that will enable access to extended learning opportunities, such as Board Policy 105-10, relating to alternative programs and services for secondary students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education is requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2024; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Chairperson of the Board of Education, and Superintendent of Education.

OFFERED BY: [Signature]