

JAN 25 2006

S.B. NO. 2497

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the primary purpose  
2 of public education is the development of maximum learning in  
3 all students. This development is essential to the creation of  
4 an engaged citizenry, a sound and flourishing economy, and a  
5 vibrant cultural community. To remain relevant, class curricula  
6 must be flexible to reflect changes in our increasingly  
7 globalized society.

8           One example of curriculum enhancement is the rigorous,  
9 research-based Core Knowledge program created by Professor E.D.  
10 Hirsch, Jr. of the University of Virginia, which has been  
11 implemented by hundreds of schools across the nation. Programs  
12 of this kind have been known to help improve students' verbal  
13 reasoning skills, which are essential to achieving a student's  
14 advanced educational and future professional goals.

15           The purpose of this Act is to implement a new  
16 research-based curriculum throughout the public school system to  
17 develop students' critical and creative thinking skills.

18           SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is



1 amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and  
2 to read as follows:

3 **"PART . CONTENT-ORIENTED LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM**

4 **§302A- Content-oriented language arts program.** The  
5 content-oriented language arts development program is  
6 established in the department for kindergarten through grade six  
7 to provide a new research-based curriculum to develop students'  
8 creative and critical thinking skills.

9 **§302A- Program requirements.** (a) The program shall  
10 contain multiple week units in literature, science, history,  
11 civics, ethics, and the arts. Grade level topics shall be  
12 congruent with Hawaii state standards in literature, history,  
13 science, and the arts.

14 (b) The character of the materials shall gradually shift  
15 in focus as students advance from kindergarten through grade  
16 six. In kindergarten through grade three, there shall be an  
17 equal focus on content and on the decoding and encoding  
18 processes. In grades four through six, the focus shall shift  
19 towards writing skills and the reading of more demanding  
20 content. In all grades, an emphasis on reading aloud in the  
21 classroom shall be preserved on the grounds that fluency in



1 decoding skills does not catch up fully with listening skills  
2 until around grade seven.

3       **§302A- Skills component.** (a) The skills component of  
4 the program in decoding and encoding shall be consistent with  
5 best scientific principles as adopted by the National Reading  
6 Panel. In grades kindergarten through three, each daily lesson  
7 in decoding or encoding shall be designed to last approximately  
8 forty minutes. In grades four through six, the emphasis shall  
9 shift to writing and composition. Instruction in the  
10 distinctive features of the formal print code shall include  
11 grade level appropriate instructions in standardized conventions  
12 of the grammar, elaborated syntax, and pronunciations of  
13 American written English.

14       (b) The skills component shall be presented in a teacher  
15 guide and a student book that is separate from the content  
16 component. The skills component shall include lesson plans,  
17 illustrations, pedagogical guidance, and student work sheets.  
18 The total word count for these materials at each grade level  
19 shall be approximately one hundred sixty-five thousand words.  
20 Basic decoding and encoding instruction in grades kindergarten  
21 through three shall be replaced gradually by composition  
22 instruction in grades four through six.



1           **§302A- Content component.** (a) As used in this part,  
2 "content" means both world knowledge and word knowledge. The  
3 content component shall consist of two read aloud and discussion  
4 periods per day, together totaling approximately fifty minutes.

5           (b) The specially written or adapted content texts shall  
6 be designed for reading aloud with guided discussion. There  
7 will be two read alouds each day, each averaging one thousand  
8 five hundred words each. The lesson discussion guide for the  
9 teacher for each of the two lessons shall average seven hundred  
10 fifty words for a total daily text size that averages four  
11 thousand five hundred words. Two lessons each day for one  
12 hundred fifty days shall average six hundred seventy-five  
13 thousand words for each grade level in the content component.

14           **§302A- Text characteristics.** The read alouds and  
15 discussion shall have the following characteristics designed to  
16 optimize the increase in students' vocabulary and background  
17 knowledge:

18           (1) Each content topic shall be designed to last between  
19 ten and twenty class days;

20           (2) The read alouds shall engage children and be of high  
21 literary quality, as judged by competent critics. In



1 later grades, students may begin to do the reading  
2 aloud;

3 (3) Each content topic lasting between ten and twenty days  
4 shall be a genuine subject matter "domain" according  
5 to cognitive research regarding situation models in  
6 language comprehension;

7 (4) In order to achieve optimal advances in knowledge and  
8 vocabulary, the content within these content-oriented  
9 language arts classes shall be designed where possible  
10 to support and reinforce content that is studied  
11 simultaneously in other subject matter classes in  
12 history, science, and the arts;

13 (5) Each content topic shall be designed to integrate more  
14 than one discipline; and

15 (6) For each content lesson there shall be integrated an  
16 average of two illustrations, either blackline or  
17 color. For one-half of the lessons, a large color  
18 illustration suitable for showing an entire class  
19 shall be provided.

20 **§302A- Textbooks and learning materials.** (a) The  
21 graphic design of student books shall be uncluttered and  
22 visually attractive with a visual emphasis more on words than on



1 pictures. Engaging pictures shall be used to reinforce verbal  
2 understanding rather than replace it.

3 (b) In grades kindergarten through three, take home  
4 student books shall be designed to be of moderate length or no  
5 more than one hundred thousand words, containing a small number  
6 of texts that can be decoded and about half of the narratives in  
7 the full program. From these books, caregivers shall be  
8 encouraged to re-read some of the narratives to students in  
9 kindergarten and grade one. In grades two and above, students  
10 shall be encouraged to re-read some of the materials."

11 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
12 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,000,000, or so  
13 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2006-2007, to  
14 carry out the purposes of this Act.

15 SECTION 4. The sums appropriated shall be expended by the  
16 department of education.

17 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2006, and  
18 shall apply to schools beginning January 1, 2007.

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INTRODUCED BY: Norman Situmip

# SB. NO. 2497

**Report Title:**

DOE; Curriculum; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes new research-based curriculum for kindergarten through grade six to develop students' critical and creative thinking skills. Makes appropriation.

