

JAN 25 2006

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO STUDENTS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds many benefits to a
2 reduction in the student teacher ratio. The majority of
3 research continues to demonstrate that students from smaller
4 classes continued to out-perform students from larger classes
5 through the eighth grade. Other outcomes from smaller class
6 size include students who are less likely to be retained in a
7 grade, more actively participate in class, and less likely to be
8 referred to special education. Research and common sense
9 suggest that teachers in smaller classes are better able to
10 devote more time to each student, which likely produces positive
11 effects on student achievement and can significantly impact the
12 education of disadvantaged children.

13 The legislature further finds that teachers as well as
14 students benefit from smaller class sizes. Teachers who are
15 assigned to classrooms that have a small student teacher ratio
16 report higher morale levels and are often able to move more
17 quickly through their curriculum. These teachers also
18 experience fewer discipline problems and are better able to



1 recognize learning deficiencies and special education needs of
 2 their students. The legislature agrees with the Hawaii State
 3 Teachers Association that excellence in the classroom can best
 4 be attained by a reduction of the student teacher ratio in all
 5 grades to allow for the optimum development of a student's
 6 potential.

7 Reducing the student teacher ratio in elementary, middle,
 8 and high school grades will require the combined efforts of
 9 educators, administrators, school community councils, and other
 10 stakeholders who best know the needs of individual schools.

11 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
 12 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
 13 and to read as follows:

14 **"§302A- Reduction of student teacher ratio. (a)**

15 Subject to the availability of funds appropriated by the
 16 legislature and allotted by the governor, the department:

17 (1) Shall reduce the ratio of students to teachers in
 18 elementary school grades one to five to not more than
 19 _____ students to one teacher;

20 (2) Shall reduce the ratio of students to teachers in
 21 middle school grades six to eight to not more than
 22 _____ students to one teacher; and



S.B. NO. 3102

1 beginning with school year 2006-2007, including the hiring of
 2 additional teachers, tutors, counselors, librarians, resource
 3 teachers, and other staff as necessary for the purposes of this
 4 Act.

5 SECTION 5. The sums appropriated shall be expended by the
 6 department of education for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 6. New statutory material is underscored.

8 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2006.

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SB. NO. 3102

Report Title:

DOE; Teachers; Class Size; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the reduction of the student to teacher ratio for elementary, middle, and high school grades. Appropriates funds for initiatives and for staff needed to support the reduction.

