
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIO IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The United States Department of Education's
2 senior research analyst has stated that, "[t]he strongest
3 pre-college predictor of degree completion is the academic
4 intensity and the quality of a student's high school
5 curriculum." However, crowded classrooms, exhausted resources,
6 and scarce funding adversely affect the quality of the
7 curriculum in our schools.

8 The legislature finds that Hawaii public schools are
9 presently overcrowded with an average of twenty-five to twenty-
10 seven students per classroom. This situation hinders the
11 learning process by making the environment less accommodating to
12 one-on-one student to teacher interaction.

13 According to the Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio report
14 for the 2006-2007 school year, without direct communication
15 between student and teacher the subject is insufficiently
16 learned by the student. This results in a loss of student
17 competency and an inability to meet educational standards. As a



1 result, schools fail to achieve satisfactory passing rates in
2 standardized examinations and basic skills tests.

3 According to Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio research,
4 students placed in smaller classes for kindergarten through
5 third grade performed significantly better on standardized
6 skills tests. These benefits were shown to have a lasting
7 effect, as the improvement in student performance remained
8 unchanged when students returned to larger classes after the
9 third grade.

10 Studies in other states indicate that lowering the student
11 to teacher ratio effectively improves education. In Texas,
12 reductions in class size and increased teacher quantity were
13 shown to be central to increasing student achievement. An
14 identical Tennessee study outlined in the Student-Teacher
15 Achievement Ratio report also found that a reduction in class
16 size greatly benefited students.

17 The 2007 Hawaii Secondary Student Conference recommended
18 that the state government and department of education
19 effectively work to reduce the student teacher ratio in order to
20 improve standardized test scores. Therefore, the purpose of
21 this Act is to implement a reformation program for the Hawaii
22 state public school system designated specifically towards



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1 increasing the staffing of teachers and balancing the student to
2 teacher ratio.

3 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
5 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009 for
6 improving the student learning environment by decreasing the
7 student to teacher ratio.

8 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
9 education for the purposes of this Act.

10 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2008.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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Report Title:

Appropriations; Student to Teacher Ratio; Education

Description:

Appropriates funds for decreasing the student to teacher ratio in Hawaii public schools.

