

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

443

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 16 2007

RE: S.B. No. 1130
S.D. 1

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2007
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred S.B.
No. 1130 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EARLY EDUCATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to improve the two-tier junior kindergarten and kindergarten program within the Department of Education by providing appropriate curriculum and faculty for each tier.

Specifically, this measure:

- (1) Prohibits the movement of junior kindergarten and kindergarten students between tiers;
- (2) Prohibits a junior kindergartener from directly graduating to first grade;
- (3) Ensures that a separate curriculum is established for the junior kindergarten program;
- (4) Requires the Department of Education to staff junior kindergartens with qualified preschool teachers and preschool teacher aides;
- (5) Requires the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board to develop standards for teachers and teacher aides assigned to junior kindergarten classrooms; and



- (6) Appropriates funds for the implementation of a junior kindergarten program that achieves a 10:1 student to teacher ratio.

Testimony in support of this measure was submitted by the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board, the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools, Kamehameha Schools, the Hawaii Educational Policy Center, and one individual. Testimony in opposition to this measure was submitted by the Department of Education (DOE). Comments on the measure were also submitted by Good Beginnings Alliance and one individual.

Your Committee finds that pursuant to Act 219, Session Laws of Hawaii 2004, a two-tier junior kindergarten and kindergarten program was established within the DOE. Act 219, provided for the development of a program that maintained separate curriculum appropriate for each tier and was flexible enough to allow for movement between tiers. However, a separate curriculum has not been clearly established for junior kindergarten and movement between tiers and between junior kindergarten and first grade is extremely fluid and without determinative criteria. Your Committee determines that a clear separation between the junior kindergarten and kindergarten tiers must be established, through the development of separate curricula for each tier and the provision of adequate funding and requirements for teaching and support staff for junior kindergartens.

Upon further review of the measure and the testimony provided, your Committee believes that prohibiting any movement between tiers may be too restrictive and that some movement may be appropriate, but under more specific conditions. Transition between grades should be determined through appropriate assessments. However, your Committee determines that the DOE may require time to find successful models. Therefore, in the interim, the DOE can rely on the expertise of teachers who have backgrounds and experience in early childhood education and may allow movement if a school currently utilizes appropriate tests on a child's academic, physical, social, and emotional abilities. Finally, as it is not currently within the purview of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board to develop standards for teacher aides, the responsibility should be removed from the measure.

Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:

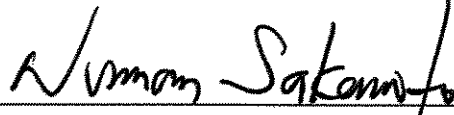


- (1) Allowing movement between junior kindergarten and kindergarten when the decision is based on appropriate assessments determined by:
 - (A) The professional judgment and experience of a qualified teacher with an early childhood education background and experience; or
 - (B) The testing of a student's academic, physical, social, and emotional abilities;
- (2) Requiring the DOE to report to the Legislature on information on successful models and a plan for using appropriate assessments for placement and decision making on movement between the junior kindergarten and kindergarten tiers and first grade beginning with the 2008-2009 school year;
- (3) Requiring the DOE to incorporate the Hawaii preschool content standards for four-year olds in developing the curriculum for junior kindergarten;
- (4) Removing the requirement that the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board develop standards for preschool teachers and preschool teacher aides;
- (5) Clarifying that funds are being appropriated to require the DOE to achieve a student to teacher ratio of 10:1 and not greater than 15:1;
- (6) Including an appropriation for a permanent educational specialist to focus on early childhood education and be responsible for policies, curriculum, and assessments relating to kindergarten, junior kindergarten, and other pre-kindergarten programs; and
- (7) Making technical, nonsubstantive changes for the purposes of clarity and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1130, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1130, S.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Education,



NORMAN SAKAMOTO, Chair



The Senate
 Twenty-Fourth Legislature
 State of Hawaii

Record of Votes
Committee on Education
EDU

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
SB 1130	EDU, WAM	02/02/07


The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.
 If so, then the previous decision was to: _____

The Recommendation is:

Pass, unamended 2312 Pass, with amendments 2311 Hold 2310 Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
SAKAMOTO, Norman (C)	X			
TOKUDA, Jill N. (VC)	X			
CHUN OAKLAND, Suzanne	X			
HEE, Clayton	X			
NISHIHARA, Clarence K.				X
TANIGUCHI, Brian T.				X
GABBARD, Mike	X			
TOTAL	5			2

Recommendation: Adopted Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature: 

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 File with Committee Report Clerk's Office Drafting Agency

*Only one measure per Record of Votes