

FEB 26 2010

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING A REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE REGARDING INFORMATION ON
THE PUBLIC SCHOOL JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM.

1 WHEREAS, the National Conference of State Legislatures
2 reports that pre-kindergarten programs have grown over the last
3 two decades, with nearly two dozen states launching or expanding
4 programs in the 1990s and thirty-six states increasing funding
5 by over \$500,000,000 for pre-kindergarten programs in 2007; and
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7 WHEREAS, the National Conference of State Legislatures also
8 reports that more than half of children ages three to five but
9 not yet in kindergarten enroll in some form of pre-kindergarten,
10 totaling more than 4,300,000 children in the United States, with
11 parents' demand for pre-kindergarten on the rise; and
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13 WHEREAS, some research indicates that children who attend
14 pre-kindergarten are more likely to graduate from high school,
15 have higher earnings, and are less likely to be arrested than
16 children who go straight to kindergarten; and
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18 WHEREAS, additional benefits of attending pre-kindergarten
19 may include improved language skills, especially for children
20 from low-income and linguistic-minority families; and
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22 WHEREAS, the Legislature found that national and local
23 studies indicate substantial differences between older students
24 and younger students within one grade in terms of performance
25 and ability and, in response, established the public school
26 junior kindergarten program in 2004 (Act 219, Session Laws of
27 Hawaii 2004) as a commitment to adequately prepare children for
28 school and accommodate the range of learners in the existing
29 public school kindergarten program; and
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31 WHEREAS, despite the intent of the public school junior
32 kindergarten program to provide appropriate education and
33 nurturing to younger children prior to entering kindergarten or



1 grade one, issues have arisen regarding the need for more
2 appropriate curriculum for junior kindergarten children, the
3 need for better assessments of junior kindergarten children, the
4 promotion of a large number of junior kindergarten children
5 directly to grade one without adequate assurance that those
6 children would not have benefitted from an additional year of
7 kindergarten, and a dearth of longitudinal data indicating the
8 impact of participation in the junior kindergarten program on
9 subsequent academic progress; and

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11 WHEREAS, more information is necessary to guide
12 improvements to the junior kindergarten program that ensure the
13 program accomplishes the goals for which it was established;
14 now, therefore,

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16 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
17 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, the
18 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
19 Education is requested to report to the Legislature information
20 on the public school junior kindergarten program including but
21 not limited to the following:

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23 (1) For each school participating in the public school
24 junior kindergarten program:
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26 (A) The number of junior kindergarten children
27 enrolled since inception of the junior
28 kindergarten program at the school; and
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30 (B) The number of junior kindergarten children that
31 were retained in junior kindergarten, promoted to
32 kindergarten, and promoted to grade one;
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34 (2) The status of improvements to the junior kindergarten
35 program curriculum, assessment of junior kindergarten
36 children for determining whether to retain or promote
37 to kindergarten or grade one, and training of junior
38 kindergarten teachers; and
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40 (3) Any long-term assessment data or longitudinal data on
41 the impact of a child's participation in the public
42 school junior kindergarten program on that child's
43 subsequent academic progress; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education
2 report its findings and recommendations, including proposed
3 legislation, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
4 the Regular Session of 2011; and

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6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
7 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Superintendent of
8 Education, the Chairperson of the Board of Education, and the
9 Executive Director of the Early Learning Council.

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OFFERED BY: Norman Saylor Jr

