

Date: 02/22/2010

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2336, SD2 Proposed Relating to the Department of Education

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to periodically report to the legislature information on non-core programs. Requires the board of education to close an existing school prior to opening a new school. (Proposed SD2)

Department's Position: The Department of Education supports Section 2 of the proposed Senate Draft 2 of SB 2336. The ongoing identification of programs which are not core to the department's basic and essential functions will strengthen the focus on core programs. It may also have the effect of lessening the number of non-core programs which are added to the Department's budget in the future. It has been the Department's experience that once programs are added to the budget, a constituency develops which makes it very difficult to reduce, restrict, or eliminate those programs, or even to transfer the funds to the Weighted Student Formula so they may be more evenly distributed and prioritized.

With regards to Section 3, the Department of Education wishes to note that there might be unintended consequences of not being able to construct needed schools in population growth areas. While this policy may be appropriate now, it may not be appropriate at other times.