

SB2451

Date: 02/08/2010

Committee: Senate Education and Housing

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn Matayoshi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2451 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires remote schools to be allocated funds using categorical allotments, rather than through the weighted student formula. Defines a remote school as any public school within a school complex that has the only public high school within a fifteen-mile radius or on an island.

Department's Position: The Department of Education does not support this bill, because the bill would require creation of additional categorical programs outside of the Weighted Student Formula (WSF). Some rural school communities with small enrollments have raised concerns regarding the viability of their schools under the per pupil allocation. There are ten high schools that are more than 15 miles away from the nearest high school. If these ten schools, and all of the schools in their complexes were all exempted from WSF, a total of 33 schools would be removed from the WSF. If the schools and their current FY 2010-11 WSF allocation removed from the WSF total, the impact on the value of 1.0 student would decrease from \$3,506.66, which is being used for the financial plans for next school year, to \$3,492.58, or a decrease of \$14.08 for the students in schools that are not as geographically isolated before any other weighting factors are considered. The actual impact on the value of 1.0 student will likely be even greater than the \$14.08 cited above, because the remote schools would probably say that their FY11 WSF allocation is insufficient and additional funds should be moved from WSF to categorical programs. The Department will work with the Committee on Weights to develop a recommendation regarding changes to the WSF allocation methodology that will consider the needs of geographically remote schools.