

JAN 26 2011

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the weighted student
2 formula was established in 2004 to allocate funds to schools
3 based on a formula that provides a basic per capita allocation
4 for every student and additional funds based on various student
5 characteristics, one of which is geographic isolation. The
6 legislature's intent in enacting the weighted student formula is
7 to ensure that funding goes to schools with the greatest need
8 based on various student characteristics and that the funding is
9 used at the discretion of the individual schools. However,
10 because the weighted student formula allocates resources in the
11 form of funding rather than positions, geographically remote
12 schools and small schools lost several well-qualified teachers
13 and thousands of dollars in funding, resulting in the loss of
14 many courses necessary for graduation.

15 The legislature also finds that online learning provides an
16 opportunity to address the shortcomings of the weighted student
17 formula and alleviate the loss of funding for well-qualified
18 teachers and lack of available courses in geographically remote



1 schools and small schools. The online learning task force,
2 established by the legislature by Act 275, Session Laws of
3 Hawaii 2007, reported that online learning has the potential to
4 provide choices for students and educators in "remote areas with
5 no teacher or highly qualified teacher available." The task
6 force found that in 2007, school infrastructure plans were
7 adequate with over 54,000 networked computers in over 15,000
8 classrooms. The task force created the Hawaii virtual learning
9 network to expand and systematize online courses to offer Hawaii
10 students a wide array of online courses. In addition, in 2010,
11 the federal government announced a two-year \$47,000,000 project
12 to improve educational opportunities and beef up distance
13 learning capabilities, which will include the installation of
14 fiber-optic cable to sites on Molokai and Lanai.

15 The purpose of this Act is to establish a pilot project on
16 the island of Lanai to expand the Hawaii virtual learning
17 network and e-school to offer online courses and provide
18 students access to requisite courses for graduation that are
19 currently unavailable under the weighted student formula.

20 SECTION 2. (a) The department of education shall
21 establish a pilot project for Lanai high and elementary school
22 to expand the Hawaii virtual learning network e-school program.



1 The objective of the pilot project shall be to provide high
2 school students on the island of Lanai access to the selection
3 of basic elective courses required for graduation.

4 (b) Under the pilot project established pursuant to
5 subsection (a), the department of education shall:

6 (1) Provide training and mentoring for teachers to become
7 online instructors;

8 (2) Develop supporting infrastructure and resources for
9 students to allow them to benefit from online courses
10 and activities;

11 (3) Provide online tutoring and mentoring programs for
12 students through partnerships that include the
13 University of Hawaii;

14 (4) Work with the University of Hawaii to optimize the
15 utilization of the distance learning capabilities
16 being funded by the federal government; and

17 (5) Evaluate and determine the appropriate funding
18 mechanism for online learning programs for
19 geographically remote schools, whether through the
20 weighted student formula, categorical allocation, or
21 other funding mechanisms.



Report Title:

Education; Virtual Learning Pilot Program; Lanai; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a pilot project that expands the e-school program offered by the Hawaii virtual learning network and the DOE to Lanai high and elementary school. Appropriates funds.

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