

Date: 02/27/2012

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 2007,HD1 (hscr 299-12) Relating to Instructional Time

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Department of Education to devise four bell schedules each for elementary, middle, and high schools, except for charter schools and public multi-track schools. Repeals the general requirement that all public schools except charter schools and multi-track public schools include one thousand eighty student instructional hours for the 2016-2018 school year. (HB2007, HD1)

Department's Position:

The Department of Education (Department) supports HB 2007, HD1 (hscr299-12), with the amended definition of "student instructional time." The expanded definition provides clarity of what constitutes instruction.

The Department will work with appropriate role groups to develop and implement consistent standardized bell schedules. Standardized scheduling will allow for coordinated planning and learning opportunities for students and school staff.



HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

RE: HB 2007, HD1 -- RELATING TO INSTRUCTIONAL TIME.

MONDAY; FEBRUARY 27, 2012

WIL OKABE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Oshiro and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association opposes HB 2007, HD1, which directs the Department of Education to devise four bell schedules for the state's elementary, middle, and high schools.

From our perspective, instructional time is the teacher work day. Additionally, lawmakers have routinely stated, during the current legislative session, that the State Legislature should not be micromanaging the Department of Education, particularly with regard to in-school operations at the local level. Yet, time and time again, policymakers have violated that tenet, first by mandating implementation of performance evaluations and now with the compulsory realignment of bell schedules.

While standardized bell schedules may be convenient for parents with children at multiple campuses, they are likely to discount the particularities around which schools base their current schedules. For example, not all schools have the same lunch or break schedule, owing in part to stark variances in the size of school populations. In fact, Act 51 allowed schools to craft bell schedules that accommodate their own student needs and the schedules of other schools in a given complex area. It should also be noted that instructional time is subject to collective bargaining. Accordingly, we feel that systemwide standardization of bell schedules, including any attempt to redefine instructional time, should undergo the consult and confer process to ensure that

instructional time increases, when enacted, are accompanied by corresponding hikes in compensation.

That said, we fully support efforts to provide equal opportunity and access to students pursuing different academic pathways. Let us work together, collaboratively, to design schools that are the sign and signal of our society's highest standards of excellence. While education reform must extol a fierce belief in teachers' rights to collectively bargain fair wages, benefits, and work conditions, this right is only a barrier to student achievement in the minds of education reformers who deny that teachers tasked with day-to-day instruction are best equipped to determine the needs of their classrooms.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to this bill.