

SCR163

URGING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE
ACADEMIC CREDIT OR SOME OTHER INCENTIVE OR
PENALTY TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS TO TAKE THE
ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS TESTS SERIOUSLY.

EDU

Date: 03/23/2012

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Resolution: SCR 163 URGING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE ACADEMIC CREDIT OR SOME OTHER INCENTIVE OR PENALTY TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS TO TAKE THE ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS TESTS SERIOUSLY

Purpose of Resolution:

Department's Position:

The Department shares the Legislature's concerns that the Adequate Yearly Progress tests should be valid measures, and that students should be motivated and encouraged to take these tests seriously. Several appropriate means to encourage and motivate students are already used by many schools. The Department, however, cannot support the academic credit incentives proposed by this resolutions currently worded, and the Department must be extremely cautious in considering if or when penalties are appropriate.

(1) Board of Education Policy 4501 states that students' academic grades/credits must be based solely on attainment of the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards, Third Edition, and related benchmarks that is demonstrated during classroom instruction and assessments for each elementary school content area and secondary course. Therefore, students may not be given academic credit for passing the Online Hawaii State Reading, Mathematics, or Science Assessment that can be applied to an English Language Arts, Mathematics, or Science grade.

(2) Many elementary, middle, and high schools currently provide a variety of incentives for students that are related to the Online Hawaii State Assessments. The purpose of these incentives is to motivate students to focus on their classwork and homework every day so that their standards-based classroom assessments, quarterly grades, and performance on the Online Hawaii State Assessments will indicate their improved achievement throughout the school year. The incentives used by some schools focus on encouraging students to have a positive attitude during each Online Hawaii State Reading, Mathematics or Science Assessment test session, do their best to read each question carefully and click on the answer they think is correct., take a short rest break if they are tired, and continue answering questions until the test session ends. Students who demonstrate these behaviors are given incentives that may include

extra minutes of recess, participation in special activities, receiving a certificate of recognition when the scale score received for a Hawaii State Reading or Mathematics Assessment increases by 5 or 10 points between the first and second opportunities or the second and third opportunities. Students, parents, and teachers are very pleased that the Reading and Mathematics Assessments can be taken three times during the seven month testing window because this online testing feature makes it possible to actually track improved performance over time. Some schools recognize only the students who pass the assessments and provide incentives that may involve serving pizza or ice cream, an academic banquet for the students and their parents, and wearing Hawaii State Assessment cords during graduation ceremonies. Students should not be given money, gift certificates, or equipment such as iPods for passing one or more of the Hawaii State Assessments.

(3) Some students will not receive passing scores for the Hawaii State Assessments for a variety of reasons. These reasons include documented learning disabilities, social and emotional needs, and language acquisition needs. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to impose penalties on these students who will need on-going instructional support and motivation during classroom instruction and customized incentives to do their best to answer each question on the Hawaii State Assessments. These incentives may involve testing the students in small group settings where they can be given immediate praise and encouragement for paying attention, having them answer only five to ten questions during each test session to maintain focus and reduce fatigue, having the principal write a letter to their parents that recognizes their effort during the Hawaii State Assessment test sessions.