
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SCHOOL CLOSURES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that each school's
2 ability to cope with natural disasters and emergencies is
3 unique, and that a quick and timely school closure could make
4 the difference between a safe and unsafe evacuation for student
5 and faculty. The legislature further finds that a school's
6 principal is the most qualified administrator to make the
7 decision to close a school in a timely fashion and that
8 requiring additional procedures prior to closing the school,
9 such as consulting with a complex area superintendent, could
10 impede the timely evacuation of the school.

11 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to give school
12 principals the authority to close schools due to emergencies
13 created by natural disasters without needing to consult with the
14 complex area superintendent.

15 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
17 and to read as follows:



1 "§302A- School closure. A school's principal may close
2 the school in the event of an emergency created by a natural
3 disaster if the school's principal determines that the natural
4 disaster creates unsafe conditions for students and faculty.
5 The school's principal may make this decision without
6 consultation with, and approval from, the complex area
7 superintendent."

8 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



Report Title:

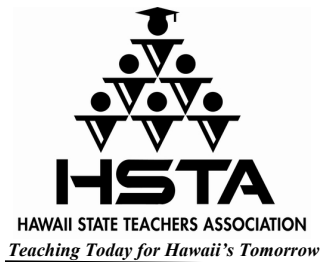
School Closure; Natural Disasters

Description:

Allows a school's principal to close the school without needing to consult the complex area superintendent in the event of an emergency created by a natural disaster if conditions are deemed unsafe for students and faculty. (SD2)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.





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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION

RE: SB 2381, SD 2 - RELATING TO SCHOOL CLOSURES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2018

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Woodson and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 2381, SD 2**, relating to school closures.

On October 23 and 24 of last year, Hawai'i was walloped by blustering thunderstorms. One of the hardest hit areas was Maui County, which saw flooding, widespread power outages, and downed trees and utility poles. At one point, nearly 66,500 people were without power on Maui, after lightning struck the island's electrical system. Power was not returned to Maui High School and Kalama Intermediate until the evening of the day after the storms had subsided.

Despite the danger to students and teachers, however, some shockingly schools chose to remain open, including Maui High, where only half of the school's 2,000 students showed up for class. Teachers and students alike could not navigate some roads that had been closed because of landslides and flooding, but their schools—like Baldwin High School—did not cancel classes, discounting clear and repeated warnings about dangerous conditions from state and county officials. When pressed to explain their reasoning, Department of Education officials and school principals cited a lack of clarity about who wields the authority to close a school and under what circumstances. That confusion must be remedied, if we're going to keep our children and their instructors safe.

To protect the well-being of students and teachers, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.

Written Only

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



DR. CHRISTINA M. KISHIMOTO
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

LATE

Date: 03/14/2018

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 309

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2381, SD2 RELATING TO SCHOOL CLOSURES.

Purpose of Bill: Allows a school's principal to close the school without needing to consult the complex area superintendent in the event of an emergency created by a natural disaster if conditions are deemed unsafe for students and faculty. (SD2)

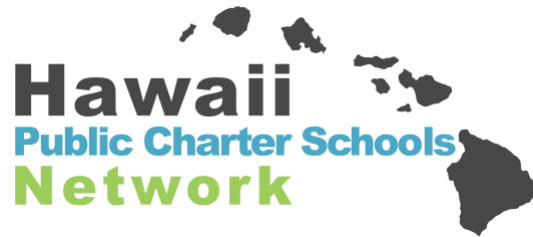
Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (HIDOE) does not support SB 2381, SD2.

School principals should routinely consult with the Complex Area Superintendent to ensure the proper chain-of-command is notified and that significant decisions are determined. Consulting with Complex Area Superintendents also ensures compliance with the National Incident Command System (NIMS) as required by Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5).

Currently, school principals have the right to evacuate their respective schools in cases of imminent danger such as natural disasters (i.e., tsunami lands within 30 minutes, etc.). In such cases, each school has Emergency Action plans (EAP) that provide specific procedures for evacuations and all emergencies to ensure the safety and security of school employees and students.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.



March 14, 2018

LATE

To: Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Honorable Sam Satoru Kong, Vice Chair
House Committee on Education

From: Jeannine Souki, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Charter Schools Network

**Re: SB 2382 SD1- RELATING TO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS- SUPORT
Conference Room 309 – Hawaii State Capitol – March 14, 2018, 2 P.M.**

On behalf of the Hawaii Public Charter School Network (HPCSN), I respectfully submit our testimony for SB 2382 SD1 – which would require the Department of Accounting and General Services to conduct semi-annual surveys of all departments concerning any unused facilities that may be used by public charter schools and maintain an inventory of all such unused facilities and to provide semi-annual reports on the inventory potentially useable unused department facilities to the State Public Charter School Commission.

All charter schools receive the same level of per pupil funding of \$7383/student in SY17-18 to provide for its instructional operations. But unlike most public schools, there are no facilities provided or funding from separate facilities budget to help start-up charter schools secure a building or property to establish a new campus. This is a problem because the lack of a facility and funding for it are the largest expenses for charter schools after personnel and direct instructional costs. Unlike most public schools, many start up charter schools do not have the means to provide school meals or transportation for students because the lack of facilities support represents the largest inequity gap for students.

HPCSN believes every student is deserving of access to adequate public-school facilities. For these reasons, we humbly ask your support for this bill to close the equity gap for public charter school students.

Mahalo for your consideration. HPCSN works to improve the operation and governance of public charter schools in Hawai'i and to be a voice for children and families that seek choices and quality in an independent public-school setting.