
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE STATE AUDITOR TO PERFORM AN AUDIT ON THE
PROCEDURES FOR AND DETERMINATIONS ON APPLICATIONS FOR
GEOGRAPHIC EXCEPTIONS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

1 WHEREAS, section 302A-1143, Hawaii Revised Statutes,
2 requires a person of school age to attend the school of the
3 service area, as determined by the Department of Education, in
4 which the person resides, unless one of three exceptions
5 applies; and

6
7 WHEREAS, one exception to this requirement is a requested
8 geographic exception to attend a school in another service area,
9 which may be granted at the discretion of the Department of
10 Education; and

11
12 WHEREAS, section 8-13-4, Hawaii Administrative Rules, vests
13 authority to approve or disapprove a geographic exception in the
14 principal of the receiving school, after communicating with the
15 home school principal; and

16
17 WHEREAS, Board of Education Policy 500-12, relating to
18 geographic exceptions to the mandatory school attendance law,
19 provides that the process established by the Department of
20 Education for the handling and approval of geographic exception
21 requests shall be "equitable, widely publicized and 'user
22 friendly' to parents and children"; and

23
24 WHEREAS, the number of students attending public schools in
25 Hawaii under geographic exceptions has increased significantly
26 in recent years, with slightly over twenty thousand students
27 receiving geographic exceptions during the 2018-2019 school
28 year, as compared to approximately eight thousand students in
29 2005; and



1 WHEREAS, many Hawaii families have expressed concerns
2 regarding the fairness and objectivity of the criteria employed
3 when processing geographic exception requests; and
4

5 WHEREAS, gathering information and exploring potential
6 reforms related to geographic exception procedures will promote
7 equity and accountability in serving the diverse educational
8 needs of Hawaii's public school students; now, therefore,
9

10 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
11 Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of
12 2020, the Senate concurring, that the State Auditor is requested
13 to perform an audit, pursuant to article VII, section 10, of the
14 Constitution of the State of Hawaii, on the procedures for and
15 determinations on applications for geographic exceptions within
16 the Department of Education; and
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the audit is requested to
19 include the following:
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- 21 (1) An analysis of the historical use of geographic
22 exceptions that reaches back at least ten years from
23 the present school year;
24
- 25 (2) Disaggregated data categorized by home school and
26 receiving school; student demographics, including
27 ethnicity, for geographic exceptions that were
28 approved and those that were disapproved; special
29 education services needed; status as an English
30 Language Learner student; status as a student
31 recipient of free or reduced lunch; and the reasons
32 provided for approval or disapproval;
33
- 34 (3) A compilation of: the date of application for a
35 geographic exception by a parent or substitute legal
36 guardian with the date of receipt by a school, the
37 number of days prior to or after the March 1 deadline
38 that the application was received, the number of days
39 it took for a school to respond to the application,
40 and whether a written appeal was made and its outcome;



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- 1 (4) The number of students attending school under a
- 2 geographic exception as a percentage of total
- 3 enrollment numbers for each school;
- 4
- 5 (5) The appropriateness of geographic exception review
- 6 procedures, including principal-applicant interviews
- 7 and consideration of student grades and test scores;
- 8
- 9 (6) The feasibility and possible timeline for implementing
- 10 an online geographic exception and school enrollment
- 11 platform;
- 12
- 13 (7) How other states administer geographic exception
- 14 programs; and
- 15
- 16 (8) Equity implications based on the information contained
- 17 in the audit, clarifying any opportunities to promote
- 18 a more efficient allocation of funds and objective
- 19 standards for approval or disapproval in the
- 20 geographic exception process; and
- 21

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Auditor is requested
 23 to submit a report of the Auditor's findings and
 24 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
 25 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
 26 the Regular Session of 2021; and
 27

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 29 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the State Auditor,
 30 Chairperson of the Board of Education, and Superintendent of
 31 Education.
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 34

OFFERED BY: Myra A. White

[Handwritten signatures and initials follow, including "John M. ...", "Chad ...", "D. ...", "Angela ...", "S. ...", "A. ..."]



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MAR 05 2020

