
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO INCREASE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
IN MICRONESIAN COMMUNITIES.

1 WHEREAS, upon arrival in Hawaii, Micronesian families lack
2 orientation to English language, laws, and customs, and are
3 unfamiliar with American academic culture; and
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5 WHEREAS, according to a 2015 report from Civil Beat,
6 Micronesian students are four times more likely than Japanese
7 students and twice as likely as Caucasian and Filipino students
8 to be suspended; and
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10 WHEREAS, according to Activating Educators Focus on Family
11 Engagement as Central to Teaching (AFFECT), a partnership
12 between the University of Hawaii and Hawaii State Teachers
13 Association, Micronesian parents are generally surprised when
14 encountering the expectations of the American education system;
15 and
16

17 WHEREAS, according to the global strategic consultancy firm
18 PASS, LLC, Micronesians make up the largest percentage of
19 students designated as chronically absent in Hawaii's school
20 system, with the rate of absenteeism increasing to thirty-three
21 percent for the 2015-2016 school year; and
22

23 WHEREAS, according to PASS, LLC, lack of parental
24 engagement is a strong contributor to chronic absenteeism; and
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26 WHEREAS, according to an article published in the Journal
27 of Pacific Rim Psychology by researchers at the University of
28 Hawaii, language barriers adversely impact students and parents,
29 making them feel inadequate in comparison to individuals who
30 possess a higher level of English language proficiency; and
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32 WHEREAS, according to the National Coalition for Parent
33 Involvement in Education, students with engaged parents are more



1 likely to have higher grades and test scores, attend school
2 regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior,
3 and adapt well to school; and
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5 WHEREAS, administrators, teachers, and school staff in
6 Hawaii's public school system often lack knowledge about the
7 Micronesian culture and do not have adequate resources to help
8 Micronesian families; and
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10 WHEREAS, according to the University of Central Florida,
11 schools often misunderstand parental behavior, resulting in an
12 oversimplification of the complexities surrounding immigrant
13 parental involvement in education systems built largely on
14 European-American values, beliefs, and traditions; and
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16 WHEREAS, family engagement is a component of goal three of
17 the Department of Education's strategic plan, which relates to
18 successful systems of support and makes partnerships with
19 families and communities a priority to strengthen parental bonds
20 with schools and improve communication, engagement, and
21 understanding with school stakeholders, including families; now,
22 therefore,
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24 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
25 Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of
26 2020, that the Department of Education is urged to increase
27 family engagement in Micronesian communities; and
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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
30 requested to perform outreach to Micronesian families to help
31 parents of Micronesian families understand Hawaii's education
32 system and identify challenges to improving the educational
33 performance of Micronesian children, including barriers to
34 accessing wraparound services for Micronesian students; and
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
37 requested to partner with the Pacific Resources for Education
38 and Learning and AFFECT in developing programs that advance
39 family engagement in Micronesian communities; and



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 2 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor,
 3 Chairperson of the Board of Education, Superintendent of
 4 Education, Chief Executive Officer of Pacific Resources for
 5 Education and Learning, and team leaders for Activating
 6 Educators Focus on Family Engagement as Central to Teaching.

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