

JAN 18 2019

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SPECIAL EDUCATION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that special education
2 services, including speech and language therapy, physical and
3 occupational therapy, and counseling accommodations, meet the
4 unique needs of students with disabilities. Governed by federal
5 and state regulations, special education services are available
6 to eligible students between the ages of three and twenty-two
7 who demonstrate a need for specially designed instruction.

8 The legislature further finds that, based on statewide
9 assessments, most special education students in the State's
10 public school system are performing below their current grade
11 levels in reading and math. During the 2013-2014 academic year,
12 only twenty-two per cent were proficient in reading and fifteen
13 per cent were proficient in math. Moreover, from the 2004-2005
14 to 2013-2014 academic years, the achievement gap between special
15 education students and general education students increased to
16 48.2 per cent in reading and 48.8 per cent in math, an
17 approximate ten per cent change in reading and twenty-seven per



1 cent change in math. For the 2016-2017 school year, the
2 statewide achievement gap between high needs and non-high needs
3 students stood at thirty-three per cent for language arts and
4 twenty-eight per cent for math.

5 Closing the achievement gap between special needs students
6 and their general education peers requires investing in
7 additional resources for special education teachers and
8 classrooms.

9 The purpose of this Act is to provide special education
10 teachers with funding for classroom materials to help ensure a
11 quality educational experience for all special needs students.

12 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
13 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$3,500,000 or so much
14 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the
15 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
16 2020-2021 for the department of education to provide up to
17 \$1,690 to each special education classroom teacher for
18 instructional materials and equipment that support student
19 learning.

20 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
21 of education for the purposes of this Act.



1 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect July 1, 2019.

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S.B. NO. 312

Report Title:

Special Education; Instructional Materials; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to the Department of Education to provide up to \$1,690 to each special education classroom teacher for instructional materials and equipment.

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