

MAR - 6 2020

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PILOT A LIMITATION ON
SUSPENSIONS IN ONE OR MORE COMPLEX AREAS FOR THE 2020-2021
SCHOOL YEAR.

1 WHEREAS, suspensions not only fail to address the root
2 causes of disruptive behavior, but also are related to future
3 undesirable outcomes such as dropping out of school and becoming
4 enmeshed in the criminal justice system; and

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6 WHEREAS, suspensions should never be used as punishment and
7 should only be used as last resort, in cases of imminent
8 physical danger, for valid pedogeological purposes, and for the
9 time strictly necessary to serve such valid purpose; and

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11 WHEREAS, the definition of suspensions includes out-of-
12 school, in-school, and ad hoc (part-day) suspensions; and

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14 WHEREAS, suspensions of all types have a profoundly
15 negative impact on students, denying them valuable education
16 time, increasing drop-out rates, and fueling the school-to-
17 prison pipeline; and

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19 WHEREAS, research indicates that the negative effects of
20 exclusionary discipline are more pronounced for males, students
21 of color, and students with disabilities - groups that have
22 historically experienced higher rates of suspension and
23 expulsion; and

24
25 WHEREAS, disparities in the number and length of
26 suspensions across race and disability create increased
27 obstacles to obtaining a quality education; and

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29 WHEREAS, students of ethnic or racial minorities do not
30 commit more disciplinable offenses than their peers, but in
31 aggregate they receive substantially more school discipline,
32 with longer and harsher sanctions; and



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2 WHEREAS, suspensions among elementary-level students in
3 particular disrupt a student's relationship with the school and
4 motivation to learn, with effects that are difficult to
5 overcome; and

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7 WHEREAS, students and their parents often are not informed
8 of their due process rights—including the right to be informed
9 about the details of the suspension, the procedures for
10 contesting such a suspension, and for appealing a decision to
11 impose suspension; and

12
13 WHEREAS, using positive alternatives to suspension leads to
14 better school outcomes; and

15
16 WHEREAS, after implementing alternative discipline methods,
17 several school systems realized large decreases in their rates
18 of suspension; examples include when:

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20 (1) California saw a 46 percent drop across its districts
21 over a five year span;

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23 (2) Dekalb County in Georgia witnessed a 47 percent
24 decrease in discipline rates;

25
26 (3) A Baltimore Public School System official testified
27 their school district created "a shift from thinking
28 about behavior management to thinking about building
29 competency among students to regulate their own
30 behavior as well as build social-emotional
31 competencies among adults"; and

32
33 (4) Administrators say the change resulted in focusing on
34 the underlying causes of student behavior and
35 providing student supports rather than resorting to
36 reactionary, punitive measures; and

37
38 WHEREAS, schools and complex areas have the power and
39 responsibility to make schools safe and welcoming learning
40 spaces for Hawai'i public school students today; and

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1 WHEREAS, some schools are already providing training in
2 restorative justice, positive behavior interventions, trauma-
3 informed care, and conflict resolution for administrators,
4 teachers, and parent liaisons; and
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6 WHEREAS, principals and administrators already have
7 alternatives to suspension in chapter 19 of Title 8, Hawaii
8 Administrative Rules available to them; and
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10 WHEREAS, principals and administrators can already track
11 the number, length, type of suspension, and demographic data of
12 the student; and
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14 WHEREAS, principals and administrators can already
15 determine if there are disparities in the number, length, and
16 type of suspension; now, therefore,
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18 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
19 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2020, the House of
20 Representatives concurring, that the Department of Education is
21 requested to identify between one to three complex areas with
22 high rates of school suspensions, both in number and length, to
23 pilot an elimination of school suspensions at the elementary
24 school level, and cap all types of suspensions at ten aggregate
25 days per student at the middle and high school levels; and
26

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
28 requested to publish a report of each complex area's efforts,
29 including:
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31 (1) Information on how many suspensions, what type, and
32 length, disaggregated by student demographic data and
33 by school, were given in that school year; and
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35 (2) Any memoranda or standard practice documents issued to
36 Department of Education employees; and
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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
39 requested to submit its report to the Legislature no later than
40 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
41 2022; and
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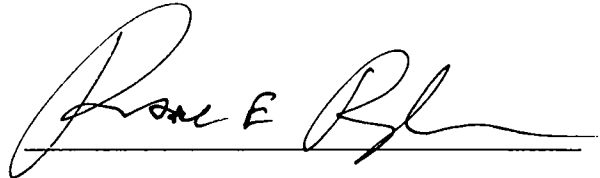
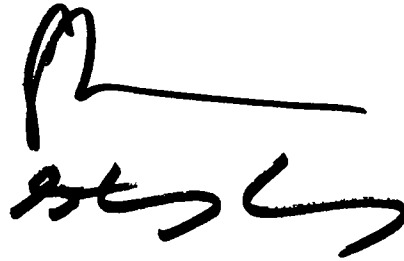


S.C.R. NO. 106

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Concurrent Resolution to be transmitted to the Chairperson of
3 the Board of Education, Superintendent of Education, and Complex
4 Area Superintendent or Superintendents of the school complexes
5 chosen for the pilot.

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7
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OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul E. Blum", written over a horizontal line.A second handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial followed by a horizontal line and a long, sweeping tail.