



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

**Date:** 03/22/2021

**Time:** 03:15 PM

**Location:** CR 229 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Bill:** HB 0011, HD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires the board of education to develop statewide performance standards to be culturally relevant, historically and scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory. Requires a standards-based curriculum and its related educational materials to be nondiscriminatory. Establishes certain requirements for school complexes when developing standards-based curricula. Requires reports to the legislature. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 11, HD1.

Advancing equality in the Hawaii public education system is a core belief of the Department, demonstrated by the adoption of content and performance standards that set high expectations for all students.

We share the legislature's desire to provide non-discriminatory and equitable education for all our students, a very high priority for the Department.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on HB 11, HD1.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. 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](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).



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

**Senate Committee on Education**

Monday, March 22, 2021  
3:15 p.m.  
Via Videoconference  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 229

**House Bill 11, House Draft 1, Relating to Education**

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and Members of the Committee:

The Board of Education (“Board”) appreciates the intent of HB11 HD1 but has comments. HB11 HD1 would require the Board to develop statewide performance standards to be culturally relevant, historically and scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory and require a standards-based curriculum and its related educational materials to be nondiscriminatory, among other things.

The Board opposes proposed legislation that diminishes the Board’s power to formulate statewide educational policy as envisioned and established by Article X, Section 3, of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii.

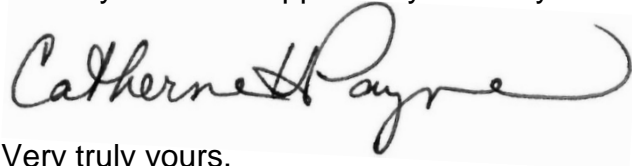
While the Board understands the importance and is supportive of the intent to provide nondiscriminatory and equitable education for all students, we believe the Legislature should leave the responsibility of setting criteria for statewide performance standards and curricula to the Board, as they are critical components of statewide educational policy. We note that determining whether performance standards or curricula are “culturally relevant, historically and scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory” is not a cut-and-dry endeavor. For decades, the Board has recognized the potential for gray areas in learning, and the Board considers opposing points of view as a normal and important part of the learning process for students. The Board’s policy on controversial issues has evolved over time into its current form, Board Policy 101-13.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Board Policy 101-13, entitled “Controversial Issues,” is available here:  
<https://boe.hawaii.gov/policies/Board%20Policies/Controversial%20Issues.pdf>.

Finally, we note that this measure appears to be, at least in part, a response to the Department of Education's ("Department") use of the Acellus Learning Accelerator. The Board agrees that this was a regrettable decision, which is why the Board intervened and directed the Department to improve its vetting processes. However, the Board does not believe that this one instance warrants the Legislature creating statewide educational policy, particularly when poor implementation resulted in the issue, not policy.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Board.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine Payne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Very truly yours,

Catherine Payne  
Chairperson, Board of Education  
Chairperson, 2021 Legislative Ad Hoc Committee

**HB11 HD1**  
RELATING TO EDUCATION  
Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ka Ho‘ona‘auao  
Senate Committee on Education

Malaki 22, 2021

3:15 p.m.

Lumi 229

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HB11 HD1, which would require the Board of Education’s statewide performance standards, as well as any standards-based curricula and related educational materials, to be culturally relevant, historically and scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory, with standards-based curricula to specifically address the historical injustices, cultural subjugation, and discrimination experienced by Native Hawaiians and underrepresented populations. **This measure will help to provide Hawai‘i’s public school students, including our Native Hawaiian students, with an enriched learning environment that will promote positive educational outcomes, and that will ensure a broader and more critical understanding of the unique social issues and challenges they may see both in their schools, and in our society as a whole.**

This measure is an important step towards the meaningful inclusion of culture-based education in performance standards and curriculum development, which would have a profound impact on Native Hawaiian youth. A 2009 study by Kamehameha Schools found that culture-based education has a positive impact on school engagement, and especially on students’ emotional and cognitive engagement.<sup>1</sup> High levels of school engagement are, in turn, associated with increased academic achievement and greater rates of persistence toward graduation. With Native Hawaiians comprising a large portion of the public school student body,<sup>2</sup> the culturally relevant curricula contemplated by this measure may potentially result in positive educational outcomes for a substantial number of our Native Hawaiian students.

In addition, the proposed inclusion of historic traumas, cultural subjugation, and discrimination experienced by Native Hawaiians and underrepresented communities in standards-based curricula will provide all public school students with a more critical

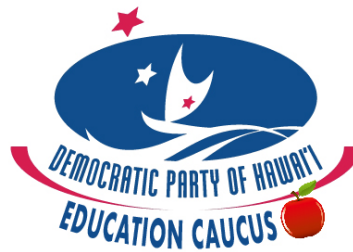
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<sup>1</sup> BRENNAN TAKAYAMA & BRANDON LEDWARD, HAWAIIAN CULTURAL INFLUENCE EDUCATION (HCIE): SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT AMONG HAWAIIAN STUDENTS 1 (2009), *available at* [https://www.ksbe.edu/assets/research/collection/09\\_0133\\_takayama.pdf](https://www.ksbe.edu/assets/research/collection/09_0133_takayama.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Native Hawaiians accounted for 24.3% of the public school student body population in the 2018-19 school year. THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, NATIVE HAWAIIAN DATA BOOK Table 06.01, *available at* [http://www.ohadatabook.com/go\\_updates.19.html](http://www.ohadatabook.com/go_updates.19.html) (last accessed Mar. 1, 2021).

understanding of social issues and challenges they may observe or experience both in school, and in our broader society. This in turn will better prepare them to more fully understand and engage in social and civic issues, and work towards realizing a more just and socially conscious society. OHA particularly believes that an accurate and contextual understanding of Hawai'i's history within our public school student body is critical to their ability to understand and address the unique issues and challenges that Native Hawaiians and our broader society continue to struggle with on a day-to-day basis. Thus, HB11 HD1 also has the potential to encourage a more nuanced understanding of the experiences of Native Hawaiians and the underrepresented and less-understood communities that make up our social fabric, and thereby facilitate the realization of a more just and socially harmonious society over the long-term.

Accordingly, OHA respectfully urges this Committee to **PASS** HB11 HD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.



## HOUSE BILL 11, HD 1, RELATING TO EDUCATION

MARCH 22, 2021 · SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
· CHAIR SEN. MICHELLE N. KIDANI

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports HB 11, HD 1, relating to the board of education, which requires the board of education to invite the exclusive representative for bargaining unit (5) (teachers and other personnel of the department of education) to appoint a nonvoting public school teacher representative to the board.

During the COVID-19 pandemic (and for nearly a decade prior), the Hawai'i Department of Education used the Acellus Learning Accelerator to facilitate virtual learning during Yet, teachers, parents, and community members found that the Acellus Learning Accelerator curriculum contains content that engages in racial, sexual, gender-based, and religious discrimination. Teachers and parents also expressed concern that content provided by Acellus is historically prejudicial and scientifically inaccurate. In October of 2020, these concerns prompted the Hawai'i Board of Education to direct HIDOE officials to phase out the Acellus curriculum by the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

Social justice issues are a growing concern for Hawai'i and the rest of the United States. Last year, large protests were coordinated in the islands and throughout the nation to highlight systemic racism, economic inequality, and police abuse faced by minority communities. These

demonstrations highlighted the urgency of establishing structural reforms to address socioeconomic inequality. To prepare students to participate in the development of a more equal society, it is important to create educational content that is culturally relevant, nondiscriminatory, and inclusive of the historical injustices endured by marginalized populations, including Hawai'i's indigenous people.

**Kris Coffield · Chairperson, Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus · (808) 679-7454 · [kriscoffield@gmail.com](mailto:kriscoffield@gmail.com)**



COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Education  
Hearing: Monday, March 22, 3:15 p.m.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB11, HD1, RELATING TO EDUCATION

Urge support of this bill that would require the Board of Education's statewide performance standards, as well as any standards-based curricula and related educational materials, to be culturally relevant, historically and scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory, with standards-based curricula to specifically address the historical injustices, cultural subjugation, and discrimination experienced by Native Hawaiians and underrepresented populations.

Our diverse cultures in Hawai'i provide us with the unique opportunity to prepare our keiki to compete on the world stage. Accurate history and culturally relevant, historically and scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory stories enrich our students with knowledge and experiences that shape their values. They will be better leaders who can understand and engage in social and civic issues, and work towards realizing a more just and socially conscious society.

As a Native Hawaiian, I especially appreciate the provisions of this bill that specifically address the historical injustices, cultural subjugation and discrimination experienced by Native Hawaiians and other historically underrepresented populations as applicable to units of study.

This acknowledgement makes it especially important that the indigenous knowledge, values, and practices of Native Hawaiians be integrated into the Board of Education's standards-based curricula and related educational materials.

Unless the budget cuts in the Hawaiian Studies and 'Olelo programs proposed by DOE a couple of months ago are reinstated, though, it will be difficult for DOE to walk the talk and achieve the fullest intent of this bill. Nevertheless, urge support of this bill.

Respectfully,

Leimomi Khan

**HB-11-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 10:16:35 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/22/2021 3:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Susan Pcola_Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill. I'm not sure it would be the responsibility for the Board of Education to develop statewide performance standards to be culturally relevant, historically and scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory.

Although the Board would review and approve these standards.

This bill reminds me of the Acellus issues with inappropriate content being used for the state's distance learning platform. Numerous testimonies to address these issues and to get "someone" to listen caused a loss of confidence in the Department of Education.

This is something none of us wants to see happen again.

Hawaii education system has a multitude of talents in the ranks. These requirements could be developed using working groups.