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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
FOR A VIRTUAL SCHOOL.

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

1       SECTION 1. This Act is recommended by the governor for  
2       immediate passage in accordance with section 9 of article VII of  
3       the Constitution of the State of Hawaii.

4       SECTION 2. The legislature finds that the coronavirus  
5       disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic caused unprecedented disruption  
6       for businesses and communities. For schools, the disruption  
7       began on March 15, 2020, when the department of education  
8       extended spring break as a precaution to provide for the safety  
9       of its staff and students. Subsequently, on March 22, 2020, the  
10      mayor issued emergency order no. 2020-02 that required all  
11      individuals in the city and county of Honolulu to stay at home  
12      and to work at home except for certain essential activities and  
13      work to provide essential government operations.

14      Despite the stay-at-home order, the department of education  
15      continued to provide educational services to students through a  
16      distance learning format that would allow students to continue



1 their education despite not being able to attend school in  
2 person. Teachers were required to pivot to be able to provide  
3 curriculum, content, and enrichment through a variety of means  
4 including online videos, assignments, tutorials, and virtual  
5 meetings. The department of education purchased computers,  
6 devices, and wireless hotspots that were distributed to students  
7 across the State to ensure equity of access to the virtual  
8 content that was being created. This herculean effort allowed  
9 for education to continue through the end of the 2020 school  
10 year without jeopardizing the health and safety of students and  
11 staff.

12 The legislature further finds that with the development of  
13 a vaccine and with proper safety measures in place, the  
14 department of education has been able to resume in-person  
15 education. However, the disruption caused by the pandemic has  
16 made it clear that some of the practices employed to allow for  
17 distance learning should continue. While in-person education  
18 overall has shown to be more effective for students, it has  
19 become clear that an option to attend school virtually should be  
20 made available for those for whom an in-person education would  
21 prove to be too difficult.



1 The purpose of this Act is to:

2 (1) Appropriate funds for fiscal year 2021-2022 to build a  
3 virtual school to allow for distance learning; and

4 (2) Authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds for  
5 the purpose of renovations and electrical upgrades for  
6 a virtual school for the department of education.

7 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$2,453,917 or so much  
9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2021-2022 for the  
10 purpose of building a virtual school to allow for distance  
11 learning.

12 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
13 education.

14 SECTION 4. The director of finance is authorized to issue  
15 general obligation bonds in the sum of \$2,700,000 or so much  
16 thereof as may be necessary and the same sum or so much thereof  
17 as may be necessary is appropriated for fiscal year 2021-2022  
18 for the purpose of renovations and electrical upgrades for a  
19 virtual school for the department of education.

20 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
21 education.



1       SECTION 5. The appropriation made for the capital  
2 improvement project authorized by section 4 of this Act shall  
3 not lapse at the end of the fiscal biennium for which the  
4 appropriation is made; provided that all moneys from the  
5 appropriation unencumbered as of June 30, 2024, shall lapse as  
6 of that date.

7       SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



**Report Title:**

Department of Education; Virtual School; Appropriation

**Description:**

Provides an emergency appropriation for a Department of Education virtual school and authorizes the Director of Finance to issue general obligation bonds. (SD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

