



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

Date: 03/24/2022

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: 309 Via Videoconference

Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Resolution: HCR 0135 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP AND ADD FARM TO SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION STANDARDS TO THE ANNUAL SCHOOL PRINCIPAL EVALUATIONS.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) appreciates the legislature's commitment to ensuring the success of the farm-to-school initiative in the State of Hawaii but respectfully opposes HCR 135. While schools can play a critical and substantial role in facilitating increasing production of local food products, an expectation of principals to implement these programs at their schools does not provide them the flexibility necessary to address their individual school needs, which may include securing the necessary resources to ensure a successful farm-to-school program.

As indicated in this resolution, developing a centralized strategy across the entire Department is an implied prerequisite to establishing site-specific strategies at each school. The Department's Office of Facilities and Operations (OFO) is currently working on strengthening the foundation for a robust farm-to-school initiative for schools to participate in, which depends on securing adequate supply chain local food sources within the state. As OFO continues its work to identify and secure these local food sources, many additional details must be solidified before expecting principals to implement and execute an effective farm-to-school program at their schools.

The Department is committed to continuing its work to develop its farm-to-school program further and improve its contribution to bolstering local, fresh, and healthy food sources for Hawaii's keiki and larger communities. The Department's leadership team stands ready to work with the legislature to further this laudable and important goal to

increase the amount of fresh local food on public school menus.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HCR 135.