



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

Date: 02/18/2022

Time: 10:10 AM

Location: CR 211 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

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

Title of Bill: SB 2184 RELATING TO DIGITAL LEARNING.

Purpose of Bill: Establishes a digital learning center within the Department of Education. Appropriates funds to staff and administer the digital learning center.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports SB 2184 and appreciates the legislature's commitment to digital learning and high-quality educational offerings.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the Department to pivot to a virtual learning environment and while in-person learning is still the preferred method for providing the best educational experience for our students, the Department also understands the value of a digital learning center. A digital learning center can provide endless possibilities to support the needs and demands of a technology-rich world. The flexibility in providing courses and opportunities to students in rural areas and smaller schools makes this an opportunity to provide equity and access to content that may not otherwise be available to them.

The digital learning center will serve as a center of innovation for teaching and learning, where curricular materials; instructional strategies; assessments and evaluation tools; and practices to address students' academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs in a virtual setting are developed, implemented, and refined to increase student engagement and achievement.

In the long term, the digital learning center could be a training center to build the pool of virtual learning educators through partnerships with higher education institutions and

pre-service students, contributing to the workforce for virtual, blended, and in-person learning.

The Department is in the process of creating a virtual learning school that would serve as the digital learning center. Planning is underway to utilize the experiences garnered to create a 21st century virtual school and while we acknowledge we are at the start line of this endeavor, we appreciate the Legislature's support in moving us towards that greater vision.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2184.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

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EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2184

February 18, 2022
10:10 a.m.
Room 211 and Videoconference

RELATING TO DIGITAL LEARNING

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill No. 2184 adds a new section to Chapter 302A, HRS, to establish a Digital Learning Center within the Department of Education to: 1) improve the quality and delivery of digital learning services throughout the public school system; 2) provide resources and services that help students develop and improve their digital literacy skills; and 3) provide resources and services to promote safe computing practices. The measure also establishes an unspecified number of full-time equivalent positions and appropriates an unspecified sum in general funds for FY 23.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Friday, February 18, 2022, at 10:10 A.M.
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference**

RE: SB 2184 Relating to Digital Learning

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** SB 2184 which Establishes a establishes a digital learning center within the Department of Education. It also appropriates funds to staff and administer the digital learning center.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

Through strategic and deliberate collaboration, the Chamber is investing in K-12 career and technical education, and synergy with business community, resulting in new industry partner connections, sector-driven workforce development solutions, increased certification attainment and high-quality work-based learning (WBL) experiences.

Establishing a digital learning center in Hawaii schools would ensure that students learn the necessary skills that would prepare them for the 21st century economy and for employment after graduation. While digitization offers advantages to employees with extensive digital literacy, it also increases barriers for members of the workforce who lack digital skills. Increasing digital literacy among students and members of the workforce would increase their competitiveness in an economy increasingly defined by the ability to use digital tools.

With the rise in workforce shortages across multiple industries, this bill will help students graduate and participate in the modern-day workplace, while also strengthening and diversifying our economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Kamehameha Schools®

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Time: 10:10 a.m.

Date: February 18, 2022

Where: Conference Room 211

TESTIMONY

By Dr. Wai‘ale‘ale Sarsona
Kamehameha Schools

RE: **SB 2184, Relating to Digital Learning**

E ka Luna Ho‘omalua Dela Cruz, ka Hope Luna Ho‘omalua Keith-Agaran, a me nā lālā o ke Kōmike o nā Loa‘a a me nā Ho‘olilo o ka ‘Aha Kenekoa, aloha kākou! My name is Dr. Wai‘ale‘ale Sarsona, Vice President of Hi‘ialo at Kamehameha Schools.

Kamehameha Schools **supports** SB 2184, which establishes a digital learning center within the Department of Education and appropriates funds to staff and administer the digital learning center.

Each haumāna (student) is unique and may learn in different ways. Although there were many challenges in education during this pandemic, the wide-spread introduction of digital learning provides all of us an opportunity to reimagine what education looks like in Hawai‘i.

Kamehameha Schools firmly believes in the transformative potential that digital learning offers. As a result, we established KS Digital, a digital tool that offers increased choices, flexibility, and support to help our haumāna (students) discover their personal potential. Additionally, we’ve launched Kaulu by KS Digital, a digital learning portal that will grow to connect haumāna (students) and ‘ohana (families) to a broad range of community-created learning opportunities across Hawai‘i.

This bill will ensure that students in Hawai‘i’s public education system will continue to benefit from the ever-growing advantages and opportunities that digital learning can offer. It also allows us to reimagine what education in our state could be.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an educational organization striving to restore our people through education and advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership. Hānai i ke keiki; ola ka lāhui.

‘A‘ohe ‘ulu e loa‘a i ka pōkole o ka lou. There is no success without preparation. **Please advance this measure.**