



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

**Date:** 03/18/2022

**Time:** 03:15 PM

**Location:** CR 229 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Resolution:** SCR 0016 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CONDUCT A COMPARISON STUDY AND REIMBURSE CERTAIN TEACHER EXPENDITURES FOR CLASSROOM SUPPLIES.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports equitable access to classroom supplies regardless of geographic location in the State, but respectfully opposes this resolution.

The resolution asserts that teachers who reside in counties with a population of less than 200,000, thus those who reside in Maui or Kauai counties, do not have adequate access to large discount retailers of school classroom supplies and, thus, incur higher expenses to purchase essential classroom supplies, often with personal funds. However, all Department schools statewide have access to price lists for classroom supplies through the State Procurement Office price and vendor lists for office supplies. While some vendors offer free shipping, there are others who assess a shipping fee for orders that must be mailed. To negate the higher cost from shipping charges for neighbor island schools, the Department's school funding formula includes an addition of approximately \$38 dollars for each student enrolled in our neighbor island schools. This totals nearly \$2 million. Because all Department schools across the state have access to the same price lists for classroom supplies and because neighbor island schools are provided with additional funds to compensate for shipping costs, the Department does not believe a comparison study is necessary.

The call for the Department to reimburse all expenditures of personal funds that are reasonably and necessarily incurred for essential and additional classroom supplies is

also unnecessary as teachers statewide already have options to secure supplies for their classrooms and we would encourage teachers to work with their schools and their school principals as purchases can then be aggregated throughout the school for greater cost-savings.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this resolution.