



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

Date: 03/21/2022

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 0171 URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION TO PRIORITIZE THE HIRING OF DEDICATED STAFF TO MANAGE FEDERAL SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) provides comments on SCR 171.

The Department recognizes that additional funding to operate the program is needed to support the schools to sufficiently utilize federal school meal program benefits.

Charter schools who participate in the National School Lunch Program are their own School Food Authority managed by the Hawai'i Child Nutrition Programs. The Department defers to the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission in regards to their needs for additional positions for their schools and providing their own report to the Legislature.

The Department wishes to clarify that staff at schools do not manage federal meal programs, the School Food Services Branch manages the federal meal programs, and additional staff hired under the School Food Services Manager (Cafeteria Manager) is calculated through a staffing formula based on meal participation. The Department would need time to revisit this staffing formula and work together with the Hawaii Government Employees Association and United Public Workers unions to update applicable current contracts.

The Department believes that use of federal funds, although an option, may not be the ideal source of funds to sufficiently support the federal meals programs as the funding

may not be permanent nor consistent. Another solution may come from the creation of a centralized kitchen that would create efficiencies in our school meals programs and assist with providing foods to schools located in geographically isolated areas. Centralized kitchens may provide another model to support current food service operations and federal meal programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.