



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 03/23/2023

**Time:** 02:00 PM

**Location:** 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Education

**Department:** Education

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

**Title of Resolution:** HCR 0122 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP A WRITTEN PLAN FOR EVERY PUBLIC SCHOOL ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOL TO PROVIDE A UNIT OF INSTRUCTION IN ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HISTORY AS PART OF THEIR REQUIRED CURRICULUM, COMMENCING WITH THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments on HCR 122, which requests the Department to convene a working group to develop a written plan for every public elementary, middle, and high school to provide a unit of instruction in Asian American and Pacific Islander History as part of their required curriculum, commencing with the 2024-2025 school year.

The Hawaii Core Standards in Social Studies (HCSSS), written by teachers across Hawaii and adopted by the Hawaii Board of Education in 2018, are required for all grades and courses. The HCSSS allows all elementary, middle, and high school teachers to include a unit of instruction studying the events of Asian American and Pacific Islander history. Topics such as Asian immigration to Hawaii, the plantation system and its impact on the emergence of local culture, Asian contributions in the advancement of civic rights, landmark Supreme Court cases, racial divisions, and social, political, economic, and cultural contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (locally and nationally), etc. are called out in the HCSSS. Additionally, all students in the Department are required to take and pass a one-semester course on Pacific Island Studies in Grade 7. High school students learn about Asian and Pacific Islanders throughout their high school experience, and schools may choose to offer

elective semester courses in Asian History and in Pacific Island Studies.

While the Department provides guidance and professional development on the HCSSS, schools choose the specific topics and content that best help their students meet proficiency in the HCSSS. This allows teachers to use their professional judgment in creating a curriculum that considers student interests, school demographics, and the larger community. The Department provides materials to schools that help teachers implement lessons and units about Asian Americans. Such instructional materials include but are not limited to, non-governmental resources such as the Public Broadcasting System and the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center and are linked to the Social Studies page of the Learning Design Resource, to which all schools have access.

Further, should this resolution pass, determining minimum instructional time in each school, creating a reporting system, and monitoring implementation would cause an undue burden upon complex areas and schools when students are still struggling to recover from learning loss due to the pandemic.

For these reasons, the Department feels that this resolution is not needed at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HCR 122.

**HCR-122**

Submitted on: 3/21/2023 3:13:36 PM

Testimony for EDN on 3/23/2023 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cards Pintor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this resolution.

Mahalo nui,

Cards Pintor

**LATE**

**HCR-122**

Submitted on: 3/23/2023 10:58:43 AM

Testimony for EDN on 3/23/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lehua Norris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair Marten, and members of the Committee on Education,

My name is Lehua Norris and I am a junior attending Konawaena High School on the Big Island of Hawai'i. I am an Asian-American and a second-generation immigrant, with my lineage hailing from Ilocos Norte, Philippines. As the only state in the nation with a majority of our population consisting of Asian individuals (36.8%) and Pacific Islanders (10.5%), we should be supplementing the education of the younger generations with the history of their cultures. Although the Covid-19 pandemic is dwindling, the centuries-long pandemic of racism hasn't.

Oftentimes, I have found that racism and the generation of harmful stereotypes stem from a lack of exposure and education to the history and cultures different from the individual. At my school, there is one semester-long class that covers the history of Asian cultures as an elective for completing one's senior social studies credit. The perpetuation of white supremacy is when American history is required and all others are electives. Without being able to come from a place of understanding, others often see cultural practices that are widely different from their own, such as eating with one's hands, as "barbarian" and "dirty."

The model minority myth surrounding Asians is still harming my community. The idea that our "entire" race is able to find success yet is still different from Americans fuels the idea that we are still the 'perpetual foreigner' and that all countries within Asia are similar. When it comes to income, Taiwanese women earn about \$1.16 for every dollar the average white man makes whereas Burmese women will earn around \$0.50. The experiences of these groups are not the same, and a lack of education regarding our experiences with colonialism and our cultures provides no aid in helping this issue. We must uplift the voices of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders by requiring our history to be told in elementary, middle, and high schools across the state.

Mahalo for allowing me the opportunity to testify,

Lehua Norris