



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

**Date:** 02/04/2019  
**Time:** 02:55 PM  
**Location:** 229  
**Committee:** Senate Education

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB 0392 RELATING TO SPECIAL EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Appropriates funds to the Department of Education to provide up to \$1,690 to each special education classroom teacher for instructional materials and equipment.

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education (Department) supports the intent of SB 392 appropriating funds for every special education classroom teacher to provide up to \$1,690 for instructional materials and equipment that support student learning, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Board of Education's approved budget.

The intent of this bill aligns with Goals 1 and 2 of the Department's Strategic Plan in that the extra materials and equipment would help ensure student and staff success.

Should SB 392 pass, the Department respectfully requests approximately \$4,000,000 be appropriated to carry out the purposes of this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at [www.hawaiipublicschools.org](http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org).

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Chair  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair  
Committee on Education

Kayla Burton

Monday, February 4, 2019

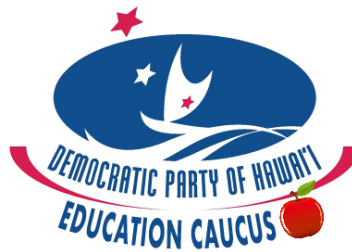
Support for S.B. No. 392, Relating to Special Education

My name is Kayla Burton and I am a student enrolled in the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I strongly support S.B. No. 392, Relating to Special Education, which would provide up to \$1,690 to each special education teacher for the purpose of acquiring instructional materials and equipment that support student learning.

As a former paraprofessional/ skills trainer who worked one-on-one with a special needs child, I had a first-hand account regarding the need for the appropriate educational materials and equipment for the students. Over the duration of an academic school year, I experienced something that many teachers can resonate with- digging into my pockets to procure materials and additional classroom resources; I found myself purchasing various school supplies in order to support my client's education.

In attempt to help close the achievement gap that has become more evident in recent years, I made every effort to ensure that my client would have all of the necessary materials to meet the goals stated in his Individualized Education Program (IEP). It is unfortunate and unacceptable that such a "gap" exists due to a lack of economic resources.

By providing our deserving special education teachers with up to \$1,690, we are supporting the fact that all children in the special education setting deserve a quality education. I humbly ask the committee to pass S.B. No. 392. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



## **SENATE BILL 392, RELATING TO SPECIAL EDUCATION**

FEBRUARY 4, 2019 · SENATE EDUCATION  
COMMITTEE · CHAIR SEN. MICHELLE N. KIDANI

**POSITION:** Support.

**RATIONALE:** The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports SB 392, relating to special education, which appropriates funds to the Department of Education to provide up to \$1,690 to each special education classroom teacher for instructional materials and equipment.

Hawai'i's special needs students deserve our help. For the 2017-2018 school year, the statewide achievement gap between high needs students—which includes SPED children, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students—and non-high needs students was 32 percent for language arts and 28 percent for math. While State Superintendent Christina Kishimoto and the Hawai'i Board of Education have prioritized closing the achievement gap, doing so requires providing additional resources for SPED teachers.

In 2011, the Hawai'i State Department of Education discontinued the SPED classroom supply fund, which, for a decade, had given \$1,690 to every SPED teacher for curricular materials, high-interest low Lexile books, hands-on materials to support mathematics learning, adaptive programs and supplies, community and life skills developmental materials, and even paper for printing of individualized education plan forms. It would cost \$3,738,280 to provide the \$1,690 in supply funds to each of the state's 2,212 SPED teacher positions, which would be money well spent.



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION

RE: SB 392 - RELATING TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2019

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **strongly supports SB 392**, that appropriates funds to the Department of Education to provide up to \$1,690 to each special education classroom teacher for instructional materials and equipment.

Hawai'i struggles to meet the needs of special education students. Based on statewide assessments, most special needs students are performing below grade level in reading and mathematics. Each school year, the statewide achievement gap between high needs students—which includes special education children, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students—and non-high needs students is far too wide and part of the reason is that teachers need specialized supplies and instructional materials for the specific learning needs of their students. They do not get enough of a budget to purchase all the supplies and instructional materials they need to adequately differentiate their instruction for their students.

Department of Education officials, including State Superintendent Christina Kishimoto, have stated that closing the achievement gap between special needs students and their general education peers is a top priority. Doing so, however, requires investing in additional resources for special education teachers and classrooms.

In 2011, the ten-year-long DOE ended the special education classroom supply fund, after American Recovery and Reinvestment Act revenue that had been used to subsidize the fund expired. The loss left schools scrambling for alternatives and SPED teachers unable to provide essential supplies for their students, including curricular materials, high-interest low Lexile books, hands-on materials to support mathematics learning, adaptive programs and supplies, community and life skills

developmental materials, and even paper for printing of individualized education plan forms, modified lessons, and related items.

Special education teachers need these additional funds for the unique needs for their students. No teacher should have to pay out of pocket for the needed instructional materials and equipment for their classroom.

We must provide a quality education to our special needs students and invest in the professional necessities of their instructors. To improve the achievement of our most vulnerable keiki, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.

**LATE**

**SB-392**

Submitted on: 2/3/2019 4:27:00 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/4/2019 2:55:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| cheryl              | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Positive use of funds that will benefit so many. Yes please, support Special education educators.