
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO
REDUCE THE USE OF STANDARDIZED TESTING IN HAWAII'S PUBLIC
EDUCATION SYSTEM.

1 WHEREAS, enactment of the federal No Child Left Behind Act
2 in 2001 and Race to the Top program in 2009 shifted national
3 education priorities from inquiry-based teaching to standardized
4 testing; and

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6 WHEREAS, the nation's schools spend growing amounts of
7 time, money, and energy on standardized testing, in which
8 student performance on standardized tests is used to evaluate
9 individual students, educators, and schools; and

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11 WHEREAS, an overemphasis on standardized testing has
12 adversely affected public schools, teachers, and students by
13 narrowing academic curricula; reducing arts and cultural
14 education; causing teachers to teach to the test; decreasing
15 whole-child and vocational programs; and creating a climate of
16 compliance and fear among students, teachers, and
17 administrators; and

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19 WHEREAS, the adverse effects of standardized testing most
20 directly affect low-income students, English-language learners,
21 students from ethnic-minority backgrounds, and students with
22 disabilities; and

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24 WHEREAS, according to a 2014 study conducted by the
25 National Education Association, seventy-two percent of teachers
26 feel considerable pressure to improve test scores and a majority
27 of teachers report spending too much time on testing and test
28 preparation, with the average teacher spending approximately
29 thirty percent of the teacher's time on tasks related to
30 standardized tests; and



1 WHEREAS, a 2014 PDK/Gallup poll on public attitudes toward
2 public schools found that only thirty-one percent of parents
3 support using standardized test scores to evaluate educators;
4 and

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6 WHEREAS, there is a diverse and bipartisan movement to opt
7 out of standardized testing led by students, parents, teachers,
8 administrators, and organizations, which includes the National
9 Center for Fair & Open Testing and United Opt Out National; and

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11 WHEREAS, the Department of Education administers
12 standardized tests in multiple grade levels that are aligned
13 with the Common Core State Standards, including the Smarter
14 Balanced Assessment; and

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16 WHEREAS, the Department of Education has active contracts
17 with third-party entities to facilitate standardized testing and
18 test-based curricula that total approximately \$60,000,000; and

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20 WHEREAS, the estimated cost of standardized testing does
21 not include time spent on test preparation, interim testing,
22 classroom materials related to standardized testing, computer
23 equipment and personnel needed to administer standardized tests,
24 and the opportunity cost of educational programs eliminated to
25 increase time for standardized testing; and

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27 WHEREAS, in 2015, President Barack Obama criticized the
28 proliferation of standardized testing throughout the nation and
29 called on school districts to limit the amount of time spent
30 preparing for and taking standardized tests to no more than two
31 percent of a student's instructional time; and

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33 WHEREAS, in 2019, former Vice President Joseph Biden
34 pledged to reduce standardized testing in public schools if he
35 was elected President of the United States, saying that,
36 "teaching to a test underestimates and discounts the things that
37 are most important for students to know,"; and

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39 WHEREAS, the federal Every Student Succeeds Act provides
40 states with increased flexibility in the use of standardized
41 testing, including eliminating federally mandated inclusion of
42 standardized tests in teacher evaluations, allowing states to



1 choose what test to use for annual school assessments,
2 permitting states to institute a cap limiting the amount of time
3 that students spend preparing for and taking standardized tests,
4 and providing funding to states for auditing and streamlining
5 assessment systems; and
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7 WHEREAS, a survey of public school principals in Hawaii
8 conducted by Ward Research in July 2016 found that:
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- 10 (1) Eighty-five percent of principals agreed that
- 11 instructional time spent preparing for and taking
- 12 standardized tests should be reduced; and
- 13
- 14 (2) Eighty-four percent of principals felt that the
- 15 Department of Education should consider changes in the
- 16 Smarter Balanced Assessment; and
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18 WHEREAS, a survey of public school teachers conducted by
19 Governor David Ige's Every Student Succeeds Act Team found that
20 ninety-one percent of teachers felt that the State should
21 consider changes to its current testing program; and
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23 WHEREAS, Hawaii's Blueprint for Public Education, developed
24 by Governor David Ige's Every Student Succeeds Act Team, called
25 for reconsideration of Hawaii's membership in the Smarter
26 Balanced Assessment Consortium; and
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28 WHEREAS, numerous states have begun implementing authentic
29 assessments, which de-emphasizes standardized testing and
30 instead focuses on student performance indicators that promotes
31 critical thinking, open-ended questioning, and collaborative
32 learning; and
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34 WHEREAS, at the beginning of the Regular Session of 2021,
35 the Department of Education was facing approximately
36 \$400,000,000 in budget cuts that jeopardized teacher and staff
37 positions, curricular programs for vulnerable students, and
38 other educational services; and
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40 WHEREAS, the continuation of unnecessary standardized tests
41 would deplete school resources that would be better devoted to
42 maintaining school staffing levels, providing personal



1 protective equipment, and delivering essential learning
2 programs; now, therefore,

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4 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
5 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
6 of 2021, the Senate concurring, that the Board of Education and
7 Department of Education are urged to reduce standardized testing
8 in the public education system; and

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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education and
11 Department of Education are urged to replace standardized
12 testing with authentic assessments that promote critical
13 thinking and align classroom instruction with real-world
14 problem-solving, including assessments based on project-based
15 learning; and

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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
18 requested to submit a report to the Legislature on its efforts
19 to reduce standardized testing in public schools no later than
20 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
21 2022; and

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23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
24 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Lieutenant
25 Governor, Chairperson of the Board of Education, and
26 Superintendent of Education.

