H.R. NO. 49 H.D. 1

HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A
    PLAN TO REDUCE THE USE OF EXTERNAL CONTRACTS FOR CURRICULA,
    INSTRUCTION, AND TESTING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

1   WHEREAS, a report by the Department of Education's Office
2 of Hawaiian Education found that cultural dissonance in schools,
3 or "the tension students feel as a result of incongruence
4 between their cultural meaning-making-systems and new cultural
5 information they encounter", was a predictive indicator of
6 achievement gaps for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander
7 students; and
8

9   WHEREAS, this cultural dissonance can be mitigated through
10 culturally appropriate curricula that affirms students' unique
11 cultural and historical backgrounds and identities; and
12

13   WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that the ethnic and
14 socioeconomic diversity of Hawaii's public school student
15 population requires such place-based and culturally appropriate
16 curricula; and
17

18   WHEREAS, the Department of Education's contract with
19 Acellus Learning Accelerator during the COVID-19 pandemic
20 exposed thousands of students to content that was biased against
21 racial, sexual, and gender minorities, and reflected an
22 inaccurate, incomplete, or prejudicial view of historical
23 events; and
24

25   WHEREAS, in October 2020, concerns raised by parents,
26 teachers, and community members led the Board of Education to
27 unanimously vote to phase out the Acellus Learning Accelerator
28 and virtual learning program by the end of the 2020-2021 school
29 year; and
30

31   WHEREAS, in November 2020, the Department of Education
32 released its report affirming those concerns and finding that

1 the Acellus lessons were not aligned with Hawaii content
2 performance standards; and
3
4 WHEREAS, empowering professionals who are most directly
5 involved with instructional delivery, especially teachers, to
6 develop learning materials will ensure that students are
7 provided with educational opportunities that are culturally
8 sensitive and account for different learning styles; now,
9 therefore,
10
11 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
12 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
13 of 2021, that the Department of Education, in consultation with
14 the Board of Education, is urged to develop and implement a plan
15 to reduce the use of external contracts for curricula,
16 instruction, and testing in public schools, including
17 recommendations for additional steps to reduce external
18 contracts; and
19
20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
21 urged to convene an advisory committee to make recommendations
22 to assist the Department in developing and implementing the
23 aforementioned plan; and
24
25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the advisory committee include
26 members from the exclusive representative for bargaining unit 5
27 and bargaining unit 6 and other stakeholders deemed appropriate
28 by the Department of Education; and
29
30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
31 requested to submit to the Legislature reports of its progress
32 in developing and implementing the plan, as follows:
33
34 (1) An interim report, including a list of advisory
35 committee members, findings, recommendations, and a
36 timeline for completing the plan and its
37 implementation, no later than twenty days prior to the
38 convening of the Regular Session of 2022; and
39
40 (2) A final report which shall include the plan and any
41 proposed legislation to implement the plan, if

1   necessary, no later than twenty days prior to the
2   convening of the Regular Session of 2023; and
3
4   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
5 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Chairperson of the
6 Board of Education, and Superintendent of Education.