
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SENSORY ROOMS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there are many
2 students in the State's public school system diagnosed with an
3 autism spectrum disorder. The department of education tracks
4 the number of students eligible for the Individuals with
5 Disabilities Education Act services under the autism spectrum
6 disorder category and based on the official December 2019 count,
7 the number of students with autism spectrum disorder is two
8 thousand eighty-eight. The National Institute of Mental Health
9 describes autism spectrum disorders as a group of developmental
10 disorders that affects communication and behavior and is said to
11 be a "developmental disorder" because symptoms generally appear
12 in the first two years of life. Without the proper care and
13 management at a young age, children diagnosed with an autism
14 spectrum disorder may have difficulty communicating and
15 interacting with other people and will experience symptoms that
16 hurt their ability to function properly in school, work, and
17 other areas of life.



1 The legislature further finds that a sensory room is a
2 therapeutic space with a variety of equipment that provides
3 students with special needs with personalized sensory input.
4 Such rooms also help students calm and focus themselves so they
5 can be better prepared for learning and interacting with others.
6 Installing sensory rooms in Hawaii's public schools will help
7 children learn to self-regulate their behaviors and improve
8 their focus, allowing them to achieve success in the classroom.

9 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 10 (1) Require the department of education to construct and
11 implement sensory rooms for children diagnosed with
12 autism spectrum disorder in all public schools,
13 beginning with public elementary schools and
14 progressing through public middle and intermediate
15 schools and public high schools;
16 (2) Appropriate funds for the planning, design, and
17 construction of the sensory rooms; and
18 (3) Appropriate funds to hire licensed special education
19 teachers to staff the sensory rooms.



1 SECTION 2. (a) The department of education shall
2 construct and implement sensory rooms for children diagnosed
3 with autism spectrum disorder in all public schools.

4 (b) The department of education shall construct and
5 implement sensory rooms as follows and in the following order:

6 (1) In those public elementary schools on the neighbor
7 islands that do not have special education classes;

8 (2) In all other public elementary schools in the State;

9 (3) In those public middle and intermediate schools on the
10 neighbor islands that do not have special education
11 classes;

12 (4) In all other public middle and intermediate schools in
13 the State;

14 (5) In those public high schools on the neighbor islands
15 that do not have special education classes; and

16 (6) In all other public high schools in the State.

17 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
18 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
19 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for
20 the planning, design, and construction of sensory rooms in
21 public schools.



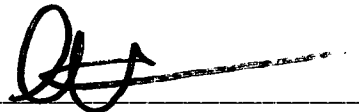
1 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
2 education for the purposes of this Act.

3 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
5 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for
6 the establishment of full-time equivalent (FTE)
7 special education teacher positions (EDN 150) within the
8 department of education to staff public school sensory rooms.

9 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
10 education for the purposes of this Act.

11 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;
12 provided that sections 3 and 4 shall take effect on July 1,
13 2022.

14
INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 21 2022



H.B. NO. 1914

Report Title:

Department of Education; Sensory Rooms; Special Education Teachers; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the department of education to construct and implement sensory rooms for children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder in all public schools. Appropriates funds for the planning, design, and construction of the sensory rooms. Appropriates funds for special education teachers to staff the sensory rooms.

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