

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION GRANTS.

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

SECTION 1. (a) No later than _____, the department of education shall establish and administer the strong students grant pilot program to provide grants for eligible education expenses to eligible students who qualify for a grant under the program.

(b) To administer the program, the department shall:

(1) Establish a grant application process for parents of eligible students to apply for the program;

(2) Select a third party to build a grant distribution platform;

(3) Administer, or select a third party to administer, the grant distribution platform; and

(4) Subject to appropriation, award grants to qualified students under this Act.

(c) The department may:



1 (1) Retain other contractors as necessary to administer
2 the program and delegate program functions to the
3 contractors; and

4 (2) Take other actions as necessary to establish,
5 administer, and enforce the provisions of this Act.

6 (d) The awarding of grants shall be contingent on the
7 department of taxation's verification of the tax information
8 submitted by the parent and shall be made to eligible students
9 pursuant to prioritization rules adopted by the department,
10 which shall substantially conform with the following order of
11 preference:

12 (1) Eligible students whose families have an adjusted
13 gross income of \$50,000 or less, or as otherwise
14 provided by rule of the department to account for
15 family size;

16 (2) Starting on September 15 of each calendar year,
17 eligible students whose families have an annual gross
18 income of \$75,000 or less, or as otherwise provided by
19 rule of the department to account for family size; and



1 (3) Starting on November 1 of each calendar year, eligible
2 students on a first come, first served basis until all
3 available funds are awarded;

4 provided that the department shall adopt rules without regard to
5 chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to equitably account for
6 family size in awarding grants pursuant to this subsection;
7 provided further that applications for program grants shall not
8 be accepted after December 1 of each calendar year.

9 (e) Notification of grant awards for eligible students
10 under paragraph (d)(1) shall be made within thirty days from the
11 department's receipt of the application from the parent of the
12 eligible student. Grant funds under paragraph (d)(1) shall be
13 made available for participants' use as soon as practicable but
14 not more than thirty days after notification of the grant award.

15 (f) Prior to the award of a grant, the parent of a
16 participant shall agree to verify compliance with the program
17 requirements.

18 (g) If a parent of a participant is found to misuse grant
19 funds, then neither the parent nor another parent of the
20 participant living in the same household may apply for any



1 future program grants; provided that a parent may appeal the
2 finding of misuse to the department.

3 (h) Grant funds under the program shall be expended in the
4 fiscal year in which the funds are awarded and shall:

5 (1) Only be used for eligible education expenses; and

6 (2) Not be used for private school expenses.

7 Any unused funds at the end of a fiscal year shall revert to the
8 state general fund.

9 (i) The pilot program shall cease to exist on July 1,

10 .

11 (j) For the purposes of this Act:

12 "Assessment" means an examination or other objective
13 evaluation of a student's academic performance, academic
14 engagement, or college or career readiness.

15 "Contractor" means an individual or entity with whom the
16 department enters into a contract for the purpose of performing
17 a program function.

18 "Department" means the department of education.

19 "Eligible education expenses" means:



- 1 (1) Computer hardware, internet access, or other
2 technological devices or services that are primarily
3 used to meet a participant's educational needs;
4 (2) Textbooks, curriculum, or other instructional
5 materials, including educational software and
6 applications;
7 (3) Fees for national standardized assessments, advanced
8 placement examinations, examinations related to
9 college or university admissions, or industry-
10 recognized certification examinations;
11 (4) Therapies including but not limited to occupational,
12 behavioral, physical, speech-language, and audiology
13 therapies, or other services or therapies specifically
14 approved by the department; and
15 (5) Supplemental education services, as permitted under
16 the Constitution of the State of Hawaii.

17 "Eligible student" means a student attending a public
18 school in grades kindergarten through twelve.

19 "Grant" means an award of \$1,000 that shall be used for
20 eligible education expenses.



1 "Grant distribution platform" means a device through which
2 grant funds are transferred from the department to the parents
3 of participants.

4 "Parent" means a parent or legal guardian of an eligible
5 student or participant.

6 "Participant" means an eligible student for whom a grant is
7 awarded under the program.

8 "Program" means the strong students grant pilot program.

9 "Public School" means a department school governed by
10 chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, or a public charter
11 school governed by chapter 302D, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

12 SECTION 2. (a) The department shall submit a report to
13 the legislature on its efforts to establish the strong students
14 grant pilot program established by this Act, including any
15 findings and recommendations, no later than twenty days prior to
16 the convening of the regular session of 2023.

17 (b) The department shall submit a report to the
18 legislature on its efforts to implement the strong students
19 grant pilot program established by this Act, including any
20 findings and recommendations, no later than twenty days prior to
21 the convening of the regular session of 2024.



1 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 to
4 establish and administer the strong students grant pilot program
5 established by this Act.

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

8 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2051.



Report Title:

DOE; Strong Students Grant Pilot Program; Department of
Taxation; Income Verification; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the department of education to establish and administer the strong students grant pilot program to provide grants for eligible education expenses to eligible students. Requires the department of education to submit progress reports to the legislature prior to the 2023 and 2024 regular sessions. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/2051. (HD1)

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