
A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
FOR A VIRTUAL SCHOOL.

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

1 SECTION 1. This Act is recommended by the governor for
2 immediate passage in accordance with section 9 of article VII of
3 the Constitution of the State of Hawaii.

4 SECTION 2. The legislature finds that the coronavirus
5 disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic caused unprecedented disruption
6 for businesses and communities. For schools, the disruption
7 began on March 15, 2020, when the department of education
8 extended spring break as a precaution to provide for the safety
9 of its staff and students. Subsequently, on March 22, 2020, the
10 mayor issued emergency order no. 2020-02 that required all
11 individuals in the city and county of Honolulu to stay at home
12 and to work at home except for certain essential activities and
13 work to provide essential government operations.

14 Despite the stay-at-home order, the department of education
15 continued to provide educational services to students through a
16 distance learning format that would allow students to continue



1 their education despite not being able to attend school in
2 person. Teachers were required to pivot to be able to provide
3 curriculum, content, and enrichment through a variety of means
4 including online videos, assignments, tutorials, and virtual
5 meetings. The department of education purchased computers,
6 devices, and wireless hotspots that were distributed to students
7 across the State to ensure equity of access to the virtual
8 content that was being created. This herculean effort allowed
9 for education to continue through the end of the 2020 school
10 year without jeopardizing the health and safety of students and
11 staff.

12 The legislature further finds that with the development of
13 a vaccine and with proper safety measures in place, the
14 department of education has been able to resume in-person
15 education. However, the disruption caused by the pandemic has
16 made it clear that some of the practices employed to allow for
17 distance learning should continue. While in-person education
18 overall has shown to be more effective for students, it has
19 become clear that an option to attend school virtually should be
20 made available for those for whom an in-person education would
21 prove to be too difficult.



1 The purpose of this Act is to:

2 (1) Appropriate funds for fiscal year 2021-2022 to build a
3 virtual school to allow for distance learning; and

4 (2) Authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds for
5 the purpose of renovations and electrical upgrades for
6 a virtual school for the department of education.

7 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$2,453,917 or so much
9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2021-2022 for the
10 purpose of building a virtual school to allow for distance
11 learning.

12 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
13 education.

14 SECTION 4. The director of finance is authorized to issue
15 general obligation bonds in the sum of \$2,700,000 or so much
16 thereof as may be necessary and the same sum or so much thereof
17 as may be necessary is appropriated for fiscal year 2021-2022
18 for the purpose of renovations and electrical upgrades for a
19 virtual school for the department of education.

20 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
21 education.



1 SECTION 5. The appropriation made for the capital
2 improvement project authorized by section 4 of this Act shall
3 not lapse at the end of the fiscal biennium for which the
4 appropriation is made; provided that all moneys from the
5 appropriation unencumbered as of June 30, 2024, shall lapse as
6 of that date.

7 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



Report Title:

Department of Education; Virtual School; Appropriation

Description:

Provides an emergency appropriation for a Department of Education virtual school and authorizes the Director of Finance to issue general obligation bonds. (SD1)

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