
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TEACHER RETENTION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds the State needs to
2 provide monetary incentives to recruit teachers and promote
3 longevity in the field. Further, general education teachers who
4 teach special education inclusion classes alongside special
5 education teachers should be entitled to the same pay
6 differential. The purpose of this Act is to:

7 (1) Establish the Onipa'a Teacher Bonus Program which
8 provides monetary awards to licensed and certified
9 teachers who practice in the State for an extended
10 period of time; and

11 (2) Ensure that general education teachers teaching
12 special education inclusion classes are equitably
13 compensated.

14 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
16 and to read as follows:



1 "§302A- Onipa'a Teacher Bonus Program. (a) The department
2 shall establish a teacher bonus program which provides bonuses
3 to teachers in the department of education who exemplify high
4 teacher standards and accomplished teaching through means deemed
5 appropriate by the board of education. Each school must submit
6 a report concerning the use of money distributed by the
7 department. The department must provide a summary of the
8 reports to the board and the legislature.

9 (b) The program shall be outlined by the following
10 provisions:

11 (1) Beginning after the effective date of this Act, a
12 teacher that is considered a full-time employee of the
13 department and teaches for two school years in such
14 school shall be eligible to apply for the bonuses
15 pursuant in this section;

16 (2) The department shall award bonuses to any eligible
17 teacher who applies and meets the requirements of this
18 section;

19 (3) The department shall develop and administer the Onipa'a
20 Teacher Bonus Program. The program shall consist of a
21 series of bonuses available to eligible teachers who



1 meet the qualifications of this section. Such bonuses
2 include the "Ola Professional Performance" bonus and
3 the "Ola Loa Longevity" bonuses;

4 (4) The department shall maintain the records related to
5 the program and any teacher receiving a bonus pursuant
6 to the program, including tracking teacher
7 demographics, the number of years a teacher has
8 taught, the annual income a teacher receives from
9 teaching, the school and location a teacher teaches
10 at, and any other information the department may
11 require. The department shall share such information
12 except as aggregate data that does not include
13 personally identifiable information for any particular
14 teacher;

15 (5) The board may adopt and promulgate rules and
16 regulations to carry out this section;

17 (6) The "Ola Professional Performance" bonus awards shall
18 be awarded to an eligible teacher who has been
19 practicing within the State for at least two school
20 years; provided that, this award shall total no more
21 than two thousand five hundred dollars; and



(7) The "Ola Loa Longevity" bonus awards shall be awarded to an eligible teacher who has been practicing within the State for at least five school years. The teacher shall be eligible for receiving this bonus award on a recurring basis every five years; provided that, each issued award shall total no more than five thousand dollars.

(c) As used in this section:

"Bonus" means a non-base, building payment that is in addition to a teacher's regular salary and that is awarded based on outstanding service and awarded to a full-time teacher who satisfies the licensing and certification as outlined in chapter 302A-805, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

"Department" means the department of education.

"Board" means the board of education."

SECTION 3. Section 302A-630, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§302A-630 [†]Teachers; additional benefits or credits.[†]"

(a) Teachers with special assignments, where their responsibilities are greater, may be provided additional benefits by the department.



1 (b) Teachers in Hawaiian language medium education whose
2 responsibilities are greater or unique and require additional
3 language skills may be provided additional benefits by the
4 department.

5 (c) In determining additional benefits for vocational
6 agriculture and technical school teachers, the department may
7 allow credit for practical experience.

8 (d) In determining additional benefits for teachers,
9 staff, and administrators in Hawaiian language medium education,
10 the department may allow credit for practical experience.

11 (e) In determining additional benefits for special
12 education teachers, the department shall include general
13 education teachers who teach special education inclusion classes
14 as equally qualified for the additional benefits."

15 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
17 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
18 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
19 2026-2027 for the funding of the Onipa'a Teacher Bonus Program.

20 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
21 of education for the purposes of this Act.



1 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
2 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

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

4

INTRODUCED BY:

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JAN 16 2025



H.B. NO. 265

Report Title:

Teacher Retention; Teacher Bonus Program; Education; Staffing

Description:

Establishes the Onipa'a Teacher Bonus Program to address teacher retention and award teachers for outstanding and extended service in the department of education. Ensures that general education teachers assigned to special education inclusion classes receive the same additional benefits as special education teachers.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

