

JAN 21 2026

# A BILL FOR AN ACT

## RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

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

1 PART I

2 SECTION 1. This Act shall be known and be cited as the  
3 "Hawaii Environmentally Friendly Schools Act".

4 SECTION 2. The legislature finds that the State's public  
5 schools generate large amounts of daily waste, much of which  
6 consists of single-use plastic food service items such as  
7 utensils, trays, and packaging. National studies estimate that  
8 United States schools produce more than fourteen thousand tons  
9 of solid waste each day, with nearly half composed of disposable  
10 food materials. The legislature believes that the continued use  
11 of these items in public schools contributes to plastic  
12 pollution that burdens the State's waste management systems and  
13 undermines efforts to promote sustainability in public  
14 facilities.

15 The legislature further finds that plastic pollution poses  
16 a direct threat to the State's ocean resources, coastal  
17 ecosystems, and community well-being. Reducing single-use



1 plastics in schools will help the State fulfill its  
2 constitutional duty to conserve and protect the State's natural  
3 beauty and all natural resources for future generations.

4 The legislature further finds that the State has taken  
5 significant steps in recent years to address climate change and  
6 promote environmental stewardship through statewide initiatives  
7 such as the establishment of a "green fee" tax on tourists to  
8 fund environmental protection and climate change resilience  
9 projects, the establishment of the Hawaii Climate Change  
10 Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, and the State's commitment  
11 to achieve net-zero emissions and one hundred per cent renewable  
12 energy by 2045. These efforts reflect the State's recognition  
13 that local action is critical to protect its fragile ecosystems  
14 and island communities from the accelerating impacts of global  
15 climate change.

16 The legislature believes that expanding sustainability  
17 practices within public schools complements these statewide  
18 initiatives by reducing waste, conserving energy, and  
19 cultivating environmental responsibility in the next generation.

20 Establishing environmentally friendly schools will ensure that



1 public schools contribute directly to the State's long-term  
2 vision of climate resilience and ecological balance.

3 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish an  
4 environmentally friendly schools initiative within the  
5 department of education to integrate environmental stewardship  
6 into school curricula, establish sustainability programs, phase  
7 out single-use plastics, and increase availability of water  
8 bottle filling stations on public school campuses.

9 **PART II**

10 SECTION 3. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
11 amended by adding a new section to part II, subpart B, to be  
12 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

13 **"§302A- Environmental stewardship; curricula plan;**  
14 **public schools.** (a) The department shall:  
15 (1) Develop and implement a statewide environmental  
16 stewardship curricula plan for public school students  
17 in through grade; and  
18 (2) Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, ensure that  
19 each public school offers an environmental stewardship  
20 course during each school year.



1                   (b) Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, each public  
2 school shall offer an environmental stewardship course for  
3 students in                   through                   grade. The curriculum shall  
4 emphasize:

11 (c) By June 30, 2028, and by each June 30 thereafter, the  
12 superintendent shall report to the legislature and board on the  
13 environmental stewardship courses and content offered during the  
14 previous school year at the schools in each complex area."

15 SECTION 4. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
16 amended by adding a new section to part II, subpart C, to be  
17 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

18 "S302A- Sustainability programs; recycling and  
19 composting. (a) Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, the  
20 department shall establish and administer sustainability  
21 programs, including recycling and composting programs, to be



1       implemented at public schools to reduce solid waste and promote  
2       environmental stewardship among students.

3            (b)    Each public school shall participate in the program or  
4       develop and implement a recycling and composting plan consistent  
5       with department guidelines.

6            (c)    The department may provide funding, technical  
7       assistance, and educational materials to support program  
8       implementation and shall coordinate with county solid waste  
9       management agencies and nonprofit organizations to facilitate  
10      collection and processing.

11           (d)    The department may adopt policies or rules to  
12      implement this section, including requirements for waste  
13      separation, collection, and reporting.

14           (e)    The department shall submit an annual report to the  
15      legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
16      each regular session, beginning with the regular session of  
17      2028, that includes a summary of school participation, program  
18      expenditures, and waste diversion results achieved under this  
19      section."



1 SECTION 5 Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended by adding a new section to part VI, subpart A, to be  
3 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

4 **"§302A- Single-use plastic food service products;**

5 **prohibited.** (a) Beginning July 1, 2027, no public school shall  
6 distribute or use single-use plastic utensils, trays, straws, or  
7 other disposable plastic food service products in any school  
8 cafeteria.

9 (b) The department may authorize limited exemptions if the  
10 department determines that a suitable nonplastic or reusable  
11 alternative is not reasonably available, or if the use of  
12 single-use plastic is necessary for health, safety, or  
13 disability-related accommodation.

14 (c) The department shall adopt policies and procedures to  
15 implement this section, including a timeline for the transition  
16 to reusable or compostable alternatives, standards for  
17 acceptable products, and guidance for schools on procurement and  
18 disposal practices.

19 (d) The department shall submit a report to the  
20 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
21 the regular session of 2028 that includes the status of



1 implementation, any exemptions granted, and recommendations for  
2 further reducing waste in public school food service  
3 operations."

4 SECTION 6. (a) The department of education shall increase  
5 the number of water bottle filling stations available on public  
6 school campuses to promote waste reduction and student health.

7 (b) Beginning July 1, 2028, each public school shall have  
8 at least one operational water bottle filling station accessible  
9 to students and staff; provided that implementation shall be  
10 subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this  
11 purpose.

12 (c) The department of education may contract with  
13 qualified vendors or public agencies for the design,  
14 procurement, installation, and maintenance of water bottle  
15 filling stations.

16 (d) The department of education shall adopt policies to  
17 ensure stations are regularly maintained, sanitary, and  
18 accessible to students, and may prioritize installation at  
19 schools with the highest enrollment or limited access to potable  
20 water.



6 (f) For the purposes of this section, "water bottle  
7 filling station" means a plumbing fixture connected to the  
8 potable water distribution system and sanitary drainage system  
9 that is designed and intended for filling personal use drinking  
10 water bottles or containers at least ten inches in height. A  
11 "water bottle filling station" may be separate from or integral  
12 to a drinking fountain and may incorporate a water filter and a  
13 cooling system for chilling the drinking water.

14 PART III

15 SECTION 7. There is appropriated out of the general  
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
17 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to be  
18 expended as follows:

19 (1) \$ to establish public school sustainability  
20 programs, including recycling and composting programs;



1 (2) \$ to implement the phase-out of single-use  
2 plastic food service products in public school  
3 cafeterias; and  
4 (3) \$ to procure and install water bottle  
5 filling stations in public schools.

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

**8** SECTION 8. New statutory material is underscored.

**9** SECTION 9. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

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INTRODUCED BY: *SKS CS*



# S.B. NO. 2213

**Report Title:**

DOE; Environmentally Friendly Schools Act; Environmental Stewardship Curriculum; Sustainability Programs; Recycling and Composting Program; Single-Use Plastic Products; Water Bottle Filling Stations; Reports; Appropriations

**Description:**

Requires the Department of Education to establish a statewide Environmental Stewardship Curricula Plan for public schools for certain students. Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, requires public schools to offer an environmental stewardship course for certain students. Requires the Department of Education to establish and administer sustainability programs, including recycling and composting programs, to be implemented at public schools. Beginning 7/1/27, prohibits the use or distribution of single-use plastic utensils, trays, straws, and other disposable plastic food service products in public school cafeterias. Beginning 7/1/28, requires each public school to have at least one operational refillable water bottle filling station accessible to students and staff. Requires reports to the Board of Education and the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

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

