

JAN 23 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO STUDENT HEAT EXPOSURE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii has
2 experienced rising air temperatures, with annual peak averages
3 consistently breaking record highs. These increases, combined
4 with Hawaii's high average annual relative humidity, pose
5 significant challenges for human thermoregulation.

6 The legislature further finds that exercising in hot and
7 humid weather can be dangerous, as the body's ability to cool
8 itself through sweating becomes less effective under humid
9 conditions. When sweat cannot evaporate efficiently due to high
10 moisture levels in the air, the risk of heat-related illnesses
11 increases.

12 The legislature also finds that children and younger
13 athletes are particularly vulnerable to exertional heat illness
14 due to slower heat acclimatization, reduced thermoregulation
15 capabilities compared to adults, and external pressures to
16 exceed physical limits. Additionally, children often lack
17 control over the timing and conditions of outdoor activities,



1 such as recess and sports practices, and may have limited access
2 to hydration during these activities.

3 The legislature additionally finds that wet-bulb globe
4 temperature measurements are widely recognized as the gold
5 standard for assessing heat stress, as used by the United States
6 military, Occupational Safety and Health Administration,
7 National Collegiate Athletic Association, and professional
8 sports organizations.

9 The legislature further finds that in hot, high-risk areas
10 of West Oahu, students have already experienced severe heat-
11 related illness during outdoor school activities, including an
12 incident requiring emergency medical care. In response to the
13 urgency of this risk, a public middle school and high school in
14 West Oahu are piloting the use of wet-bulb globe temperature
15 thermometers during physical education and other outdoor
16 activities to guide safety decisions and collect localized data.
17 Despite these known risks and the expectation of increasing
18 temperatures, Hawaii currently lacks statewide requirements for
19 managing extreme heat during outdoor school activities, leaving
20 students at risk of preventable heat-related illnesses.



1 The legislature notes that the Korey Stringer Institute,
2 the nation's premier academic research institution on exertional
3 heat illness and athlete safety, has recommended that Hawaii
4 adopt comprehensive heat safety policies to protect student
5 athletes.

6 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

7 (1) Require the board of education to adopt a heat
8 acclimatization and practice policy, based on the
9 Hawaii Athletic Trainers Association's Hawaii High
10 School Athletic Association Heat Acclimatization and
11 Practice Policy of 2017, for students in grades
12 kindergarten to twelve in department of education
13 schools and public charter schools statewide; and
14 (2) Appropriate funds for training and implementation of
15 the policy and for the purchase of wet-bulb globe
16 temperature thermometers for public schools.

17 SECTION 2. Heat acclimatization and practice policy;
18 student activities. (a) The board of education shall adopt a
19 heat acclimatization and practice policy to be applicable at all
20 department of education schools and charter schools in the State
21 for grades kindergarten to twelve.



6 (1) Thresholds for modifying, postponing, or canceling
7 activities based on wet-bulb glove temperature
8 measurements;

9 (2) The minimum time before activities at which a wet-bulb
10 globe temperature measurement must be taken and the
11 frequency of additional measurements once activities
12 have begun;

13 (3) A requirement that wet-bulb globe temperature
14 measurements occur onsite at the school campus or
15 location where the activity shall take place;

16 (4) Protocols for ensuring adequate hydration during
17 activities;

18 (5) Training for school staff on recognizing and
19 responding to symptoms of exertional heat illness

20 (6) Measures to safeguard students with medical conditions
21 or medications that impair thermoregulation; and



4 (c) In implementing the policy required by subsection (a),
5 the department of education and each charter school shall ensure
6 that the policy:

7 (1) Is utilized for conducting, scheduling, and the
8 implementing the modification or cancellation of sports
9 conditioning practices, games, and recess; and

10 (2) Uses, as the standard for measuring heat stress, wet-
11 bulb globe temperature standards that are consistent
12 with the wet-bulb globe temperature component of the
13 policy.

14 (d) As the Hawaii Athletics Trainers Association, or a
15 successor organization, may issue updates to the Hawaii Athletic
16 Trainers Association's Hawaii High School Athletic Association
17 Heat Acclimatization and Practice Policy of 2017 from time to
18 time, the board of education shall update to its policy with any
19 applicable updates as soon as practicable. Nothing in this
20 section shall prohibit the department of education or a charter
21 school from implementing its own procedures to address



1 applicable updates to the Hawaii Athletic Trainers Association's
2 Hawaii High School Athletic Association Heat Acclimatization and
3 Practice Policy of 2017, as amended, until such time the board
4 of education amends its policy.

5 (e) The board of education may adopt rules pursuant to
6 chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to implement this section.

7 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$15,000 or so much
9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to the
10 department of education for training and implementation of the
11 policy adopted by the board of education pursuant to section 2
12 of this Act.

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

15 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$15,000 or so much
17 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to the
18 public charter school commission for the training and
19 implementation of the policy adopted by the board of education
20 pursuant to section 2 of this Act.



1 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the state public
2 charter school commission for the purposes of this Act.

3 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$143,000 or so much
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to provide
6 wet-bulb globe temperature thermometers to all department of
7 education schools statewide; provided that the devices shall
8 meet or exceed the performance specifications model identified
9 by the Korey Stringer Institute as the gold standard for
10 scholastic heat safety, or any successor recommendation, or an
11 equivalent device as determined by the department of education.

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

14 SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the general
15 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$22,000 so much
16 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to provide
17 wet-bulb globe temperature thermometers to all public charter
18 schools statewide; provided that the devices shall meet or
19 exceed the performance specifications model identified by the
20 Korey Stringer Institute as the gold standard for scholastic
21 heat safety, or any successor recommendation, or an equivalent



1 device as determined by the state public charter school
2 commission.

3 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the state public
4 charter school commission for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

6

INTRODUCED BY: Mike Gabbard



S.B. NO. 2583

Report Title:

BOE; DOE; Charter Schools; Heat Exposure; Physical Activities; Policy; Appropriations

Description:

Requires the Board of Education to adopt a heat acclimatization and practice policy based on the Hawaii Athletic Trainers Association's Hawaii High School Athletic Association Heat Acclimatization and Practice Policy of 2017 for students in grades kindergarten to twelve in Department of Education schools and public charter schools statewide for certain physical activities. 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.

