

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAY 1 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2877
S.D. 1
H.D. 1
C.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Sir and Madam:

Your Committee on Conference on the disagreeing vote of the Senate to the amendments proposed by the House of Representatives in S.B. No. 2877, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION,"

having met, and after full and free discussion, has agreed to recommend and does recommend to the respective Houses the final passage of this bill in an amended form.

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Department of Education to establish a one-year Student-Authored Book Publication Pilot Program;
- (2) Authorize the Pilot Program to be conducted for fifth graders at Kalihi public elementary schools to be integrated into existing curricula;
- (3) Require a report to the Legislature; and
- (4) Appropriate funds.



Your Committee on Conference finds that increasing early literacy rates is an integral Department of Education goal that is essential to improving long-term academic, social, and economic outcomes for local students. Innovative measures that encourage student engagement and pride in their personal educational development, such as student-authored book publication projects, have proven successful in improving literacy and attendance metrics. The pilot program established in this measure will therefore offer a framework to promote culturally responsive learning and communication and literacy skills.

Your Committee on Conference has amended this measure by:

- (1) Increasing the pilot program to a two-year term, to begin in the 2026-2027 school year and be completed in the 2027-2028 school year;
- (2) Specifying that the pilot program may be conducted at up to five Kalihi public elementary schools;
- (3) Authorizing the pilot program to also be conducted at up to five Nanakuli-Waianae public elementary schools;
- (4) Clarifying that the pilot program shall be conducted on an opt-in basis;
- (5) Clarifying that the pilot program may be made available to students in grades four through six;
- (6) Including personal stories as a potential topic for student-authored books;
- (7) Clarifying that, under the pilot program, each student shall write and illustrate a standard size online book on the selected topic using a classroom student book publishing program;
- (8) Requiring each teacher, rather than the Department of Education, to determine the dimensions and length of the student-authored books according to the availability of funds;
- (9) Deleting language that would have required the Department of Education to facilitate the collection, printing, binding, and return of the student-authored books;



- (10) Deleting language that would have required the Department of Education to contract with a third party pursuant to chapter 103D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to implement the pilot program;
- (11) Inserting language that requires each teacher at a participating school to be given a budget to implement the pilot program in their classroom;
- (12) Requiring the report on the pilot program to be submitted to the Legislature by the principal of each participating school, rather than the Department of Education, no later than twenty days prior to the Regular Session of 2029;
- (13) Inserting an appropriation amount of \$50,000 for the establishment of the pilot program, to be distributed to participating schools based on the number of students and cost of books, contingent on private sources supplying matching funds of not less than twenty-five percent of the appropriated sum;
- (14) Specifying that any unencumbered funds shall lapse to the credit of the general fund on June 30, 2028;
- (15) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2026; and
- (16) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the managers of your Committee on Conference that is attached to this report, your Committee on Conference is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2877, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Final Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2877, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, C.D. 1.



Respectfully submitted on behalf
of the managers:

ON THE PART OF THE HOUSE

ON THE PART OF THE SENATE



TRISH LA CHICA
Co-Chair



MIKE LEE
Co-Chair



DONNA MERCADO KIM
Chair



MICHELLE N. KIDANI
Co-Chair



Hawai'i State Legislature

Record of Votes of a Conference Committee

CLR 135-26

Bill / Concurrent Resolution No.: SB 2877, SD 1, HD 1					Date/Time: 05/1/26 1:45pm					
☒ The recommendation of the House and Senate managers is to pass with amendments (CD).										
☐ The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision.										
☐ The recommendation of the Senate Manager(s) is to AGREE to the House amendments made to the Senate Measure					☐ The recommendation of the House Manager(s) is to AGREE to the Senate amendments made to the House Measure.					
Senate Managers	A	WR	N	E	House Managers	A	WR	N	E	
KIM, Donna Mercado, Chr.	/				LA CHICA, Trish, Co-Chr.	/				
KIDANI, Michelle N., Co-Chr.	/				LEE, Mike, Co-Chr.	/				
HASHIMOTO, Troy N.	/				MURAOKA, Christopher L.	/				
DECORTE, Samantha	/									
TOTAL	4	0	0	0	TOTAL	2	0	1	0	
A = Aye		WR = Aye with Reservations			N = Nay		E = Excused			
Senate Recommendation is: ☒ Adopted ☐ Not Adopted					House Recommendation is: ☒ Adopted ☐ Not Adopted					
Senate Lead Chair's or Designee's Signature: 					House Lead Chair's or Designee's Signature: 					
Distribution: Original <i>File with Conference Committee Report</i>					Yellow <i>House Clerk's Office</i>		Pink <i>Senate Clerk's Office</i>		Goldenrod <i>Drafting Agency</i>	