

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



GOV. MSG. NO. 1344

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

July 13, 2026

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate,
and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, and Members of the
House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura, and Members of the Legislature:

This is to inform you that on July 13, 2026, the following bill was signed into law:

H.B. NO. 1891, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, RELATING TO EDUCATION.
C.D. 1 **ACT 242**

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josh Green M.D." in a cursive style.

Josh Green, M.D.
Governor, State of Hawai'i

on JUL 13 2026

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026
STATE OF HAWAII

ACT 242
H.B. NO. 1891
H.D. 1
S.D. 1
C.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that in 1853, an
2 estimated seventy-five per cent of the population in the Kingdom
3 of Hawaii over the age of sixteen was literate. By 1878, eighty
4 per cent were literate in Hawaiian, English, or a European
5 language, making Hawaii one of the most literate nations in the
6 world at the time. The legislature recognizes that the
7 department of education is committed to preserving and honoring
8 this legacy by ensuring that all students are proficient in
9 reading by the time they graduate.

10 The legislature further finds that, currently, just over
11 half of Hawaii's students are reading proficiently. To improve
12 student reading proficiency, it is necessary to address the root
13 causes that contribute to the present levels of poor reading
14 proficiency rates. A proactive and systematic approach is
15 required to achieve high literacy rates for all students.
16 Presently, the department of education is striving to address
17 poor reading proficiency rates by administering a universal



1 screening at the beginning, middle, and end of the year for all
2 students from kindergarten to grade nine. The purpose of this
3 universal screening is to identify students who may be at risk
4 for reading failure, and to provide evidence-based interventions
5 to support these students, in addition to core-structured
6 literacy instruction. However, not all universal screenings are
7 able to detect or identify students who may have certain
8 underlying language challenges that impact learning. This is
9 problematic because students with dyslexia or other
10 developmental language disorders may need more intensive support
11 or a more individualized intervention program to address the
12 causes of their reading challenges. Unfortunately, Hawaii is
13 the only state in the country that lacks dyslexia-specific laws
14 to support students in this area.

15 The legislature also finds that evidence shows that
16 students who are not identified and brought to reading
17 proficiency by third grade face significantly lower chances of
18 success in the future. However, a substantial body of evidence
19 also indicates that, with effective assessment and instruction,
20 all students can learn to read. This includes students with
21 language and literacy challenges and students who have dyslexia.



1 The purpose of this Act is to support students with
2 dyslexia and students with language and literacy challenges by:

- 3 (1) Requiring department of education schools to
4 administer department approved dyslexia sensitive
5 linguistically appropriate universal screening as a
6 part of the universal screening process;
- 7 (2) Implementing evidence-based interventions for students
8 who are identified as having dyslexia and students who
9 are flagged as having language and literacy challenges
10 through the Hawaii multi-tiered system of support;
- 11 (3) Providing professional development for teachers to
12 increase the implementation of structured literacy
13 instruction; and
- 14 (4) Supporting pre-service teacher programs in training
15 their general and special education teacher candidates
16 in structured literacy instruction.

17 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
18 amended by adding a new section to part II, subpart C, to be
19 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

20 "§302A- Dyslexia sensitive linguistically appropriate
21 universal screening; evidence-based interventions; professional



1 development; pre-service requirements. (a) Beginning with the
2 2028-2029 school year, all department schools shall administer
3 dyslexia sensitive linguistically appropriate universal
4 screening approved by the department for:

5 (1) All students in kindergarten through third grade; and

6 (2) Any new student entering a department school for the
7 first time in the State.

8 (b) The dyslexia sensitive linguistically appropriate
9 universal screening shall be administered as part of the
10 established universal screening process and shall also include,
11 as developmentally appropriate, the following:

12 (1) Phonological and phonemic awareness;

13 (2) Sound symbol recognition;

14 (3) Alphabet knowledge;

15 (4) Decoding skills;

16 (5) Rapid naming skills, including letter naming and
17 letter sound fluency;

18 (6) Encoding skills;

19 (7) Oral reading accuracy and fluency; and

20 (8) Oral language.



1 (c) All department schools shall implement evidence-based
2 interventions for students identified as having dyslexia and
3 students who are flagged as struggling readers through the
4 universal screening process. Interventions and progress
5 monitoring of the identified students shall be implemented
6 within the established Hawaii multi-tiered system of support
7 framework.

8 (d) The department shall provide professional learning
9 opportunities for staff in complex areas and department schools
10 on the implementation of structured literacy instruction and
11 evidence-based interventions.

12 (e) Structured literacy instruction, as required under
13 this section, shall involve detailed, step-by-step instruction
14 necessary for developing strong reading and writing skills. In
15 addition to explicit and systematic instruction, a structured
16 literacy approach shall provide multiple opportunities for
17 students to practice a skill or strategy and require teachers to
18 provide immediate, specific feedback to students and
19 continuously monitor progress.

20 (f) The department shall collaborate with pre-service
21 teacher programs in higher education institutions to ensure



1 general education teacher candidates and special education
2 teacher candidates are trained on the implementation of
3 structured literacy instruction to support all learners.

4 (g) This section shall not apply to Hawaiian language
5 immersion schools and charter schools.

6 (h) For the purposes of this section:

7 "Dyslexia" means a specific learning disability that is
8 neurological in origin and characterized by difficulties with
9 accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and
10 decoding abilities, which typically result from a deficit in the
11 phonological component of language and literacy development that
12 is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and
13 the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary
14 consequences of dyslexia may include problems in reading
15 comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the
16 growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

17 "Dyslexia sensitive linguistically appropriate universal
18 screening" means an assessment that measures a student's ability
19 to demonstrate phonological and phonemic awareness; sound-symbol
20 recognition; alphabet knowledge; decoding skills; rapid naming
21 skills, including letter naming and letter sound fluency;



1 encoding skills; oral reading accuracy and fluency; and accuracy
2 of word reading on grade-level text.

3 "Hawaii multi-tiered system of support" means a
4 comprehensive continuum of evidence-based, systemic practices to
5 support a rapid response to a student's needs, with regular
6 observation to facilitate data-based instructional decision-
7 making.

8 "Phonological component of language and literacy
9 development" means the ability to recognize that a spoken word
10 consists of a sequence of individual sounds and the ability to
11 manipulate individual sounds when speaking.

12 "Structured literacy instruction" means an evidence-based
13 approach that emphasizes explicit and systematic instruction in
14 the following components of literacy:

- 15 (1) Phonological awareness;
16 (2) Phonics (decoding and spelling);
17 (3) Fluency;
18 (4) Vocabulary;
19 (5) Comprehension; and
20 (6) Written expression.



1 "Universal screening" means the process of administering a
2 brief standardized assessment to all students to identify those
3 who are at risk of poor reading outcomes."

4 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

5 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.



H.B. NO. 1891
H.D. 1
S.D. 1
C.D. 1

APPROVED this 13th day of July, 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Green". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a stylized "G".

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

HB No. 1891, HD 1, SD 1, CD 1

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

Date: May 6, 2026
Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Final Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026.



Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker
House of Representatives



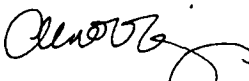
Brian L. Takeshita
Chief Clerk
House of Representatives

THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI‘I

Date: May 6, 2026
Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate
of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawai‘i, Regular Session of 2026.


President of the Senate


Clerk of the Senate