
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 it is important for
2 the State's schools to have enough teachers to create a stable
3 and qualified teaching workforce that can maintain educational
4 quality and improve academic outcomes for students across the
5 State.

6 The legislature further finds that employing unlicensed
7 individuals as teachers on an emergency basis offers a critical
8 mechanism for schools to ensure every classroom, from
9 kindergarten through grade twelve, is staffed by a dedicated
10 educator. The existing emergency hiring policy was designed to
11 address the ongoing chronic teacher shortage by allowing schools
12 to utilize qualified individuals from diverse professional
13 backgrounds and locations while those individuals work to attain
14 teaching credentials.

15 To continue as educators on a non-emergency basis,
16 prospective teachers must complete the appropriate undergraduate
17 coursework, standardized tests, an accredited certification



1 program, fieldwork, and successful teaching evaluations to earn
2 their teaching credentials in the State within three years.
3 However, the legislature recognizes that many prospective
4 teachers are not able to complete these requirements within the
5 existing timeline. Completing a licensure program, which often
6 includes student teaching and rigorous exams, while managing a
7 full-time classroom workload is incredibly difficult. Under
8 existing law, a teacher who is performing well in the classroom
9 but has not completed each licensure requirement by the end of
10 the third year as an emergency hire will be let go and replaced
11 with a new, untrained recruit.

12 The legislature therefore finds that extending the term to
13 five years for an unlicensed individual to be employed on an
14 emergency basis while earning the teaching credentials will
15 acknowledge the difficulty of the teachers' dual workloads and
16 reduce the turnover of new teachers who are close to completing
17 licensure requirements but need more time. Extending the
18 emergency hiring timeline will also allow the education system
19 to capitalize on the valuable experience an emergency hire has
20 gained and circumvent the difficulties associated with vacant
21 positions and employing a replacement as a long-term substitute



1 or new hire. Furthermore, allowing for more time to complete a
2 licensure program can help retain those teachers who are
3 passionate about education but need additional time to attain
4 licensure.

5 The legislature also finds that the current three-year
6 timeline often hinders the ability of schools to maintain long-
7 term classroom stability through consistent, uninterrupted
8 instruction; foster stronger connections between educators,
9 students, and the community; and provide ample time to allow
10 emergency hires to complete the path to becoming licensed
11 teachers. Granting emergency hires an additional two years to
12 teach would provide for five years of continuous instruction at
13 the same school. This extended term would facilitate stronger
14 relationships within the school community, particularly by
15 affording educators better opportunities to support struggling
16 students. Additionally, studies indicate that teacher
17 effectiveness significantly improves with experience and that
18 teachers require up to five years to reach peak effectiveness.
19 Forcing emergency hires to exit the classroom after only three
20 years creates unnecessary disruption to student progress and a



1 loss of valuable skillsets developed through on-the-job
2 experience.

3 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

4 (1) Allow the department of education and charter schools
5 to employ unlicensed individuals on an emergency basis
6 for up to five years;

7 (2) Require the Hawaii teachers standards board to extend
8 the five year limitation in the case of a declared
9 state of emergency;

10 (3) Establish a goal for the university of Hawaii to
11 double the number of persons who graduate as newly
12 licensed teachers; and

13 (4) Require the department of education to provide
14 training to assist emergency hire teachers in passing
15 the Praxis examination and require the training to be
16 mandatory for certain emergency hire teachers.

17 SECTION 2. Section 302A-804, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
18 amended as follows:

19 1. By amending subsection (b) to read:

20 "(b) The department's powers and duties under this subpart
21 shall be limited to:



- 1 (1) Hiring, except in emergency situations as described in
2 this chapter, licensed teachers to teach in their
3 fields of licensing;
- 4 (2) Reporting data annually to the board about the supply
5 of, and demand for, teachers in department schools,
6 including the identification of shortage areas,
7 out-of-field teaching assignments, number of
8 classrooms without a licensed teacher for a quarter or
9 more, numbers of teachers teaching out-of-field,
10 numbers and types of courses and classes taught by
11 out-of-field teachers, and numbers and types of
12 students taught by out-of-field teachers;
- 13 (3) On an emergency and case-by-case basis, hiring
14 unlicensed individuals; provided that:
- 15 (A) A list of the names, work sites, teaching
16 assignments, and progress toward licensing of
17 these individuals shall be reported to the board
18 and any changes shall be updated on a monthly
19 basis by the department;



- 1 (B) There are no properly licensed teachers for the
2 specific assignments for which the individuals
3 are being hired; and
- 4 (C) No individual [~~may~~] shall be employed by the
5 department on an emergency basis for more than
6 [~~three~~] five years; provided that in the case of
7 a declaration of a state of emergency pursuant to
8 section 127A-14, the board, pursuant to its
9 powers in section 302A-803(a)(18), [~~may~~] shall
10 extend the [~~three-year~~] five-year period by
11 authorizing an extension to complete licensing
12 requirements. During this time, the individual
13 shall demonstrate active pursuit of licensing in
14 each year of employment;
- 15 (4) Submitting an annual report to the board documenting:
- 16 (A) The number of emergency hires in department
17 schools by subject matter areas and by school;
- 18 (B) The reasons and duration of employment for the
19 emergency hiring enumerated in subparagraph (A);
20 and



1 (C) The department's efforts to address the shortages
2 described in subparagraph (A); and

3 (5) Providing any other information requested by the board
4 that is pertinent to its powers and duties."

5 2. By amending subsection (d) to read:

6 "(d) A charter school's powers and duties under this
7 subpart shall be limited to:

8 (1) Except in emergency situations as described in this
9 chapter, hiring licensed teachers to teach in their
10 fields of licensing;

11 (2) On an emergency and case-by-case basis, hiring
12 unlicensed individuals; provided that:

13 (A) A list of the names, work sites, teaching
14 assignments, and progress toward licensing of
15 these individuals shall be reported to the board
16 and any changes shall be updated on a monthly
17 basis by the charter schools;

18 (B) There are no properly licensed teachers for the
19 specific assignments for which the individuals
20 are being hired; and



- 1 (C) No individual [~~may~~] shall be employed by the
2 charter school on an emergency basis for more
3 than [~~three~~] five years; provided that in the
4 case of a declaration of a state of emergency
5 pursuant to section 127A-14, the board, pursuant
6 to its powers in section 302A-803(a)(18), [~~may~~]
7 shall extend the [~~three-year~~] five-year period by
8 authorizing an extension to complete licensing
9 requirements. During this time, the individual
10 shall demonstrate active pursuit of licensing in
11 each year of employment;
- 12 (3) Submitting an annual report to the board documenting:
- 13 (A) The number of emergency hires in the charter
14 school by subject matter areas;
- 15 (B) The reasons and duration of employment for the
16 emergency hiring enumerated in subparagraph (A);
- 17 (C) The number of classrooms without a licensed
18 teacher for a quarter or more;
- 19 (D) The number and type of courses and classes taught
20 by out-of-field teachers; and



1 (E) The number and type of students taught by out-of-
2 field teachers; and

3 (4) Providing any other information requested by the board
4 that is pertinent to the charter school's powers and
5 duties."

6 SECTION 3. (a) The university of Hawaii shall endeavor to
7 increase the number of persons who graduate as newly licensed
8 teachers on an annual basis with the number of persons who are
9 projected to graduate as newly licensed teachers in the class of
10 2031 to be at least one hundred per cent more than the number of
11 persons who graduated as newly licensed teachers in the class of
12 2026.

13 (b) The university of Hawaii shall submit a report of its
14 progress toward achieving the benchmark established under
15 subsection (a) to the legislature no later than twenty days
16 prior to the convening of the regular sessions of 2027, 2028,
17 2029, 2030, and 2031.

18 SECTION 4. (a) The department of education shall provide
19 training to assist emergency hires in passing the Praxis
20 examination. The training under this section shall be mandatory
21 for an emergency hire in the individual's fourth and fifth years



1 as an emergency hire and shall be a condition of employment to
2 remain employed as an emergency hire after three years.

3 (b) This section shall apply to all persons employed or
4 hired as an emergency hire by the department of education after
5 the effective date of this Act.

6 (c) For the purposes of this section, "emergency hire"
7 means persons hired by the department of education pursuant to
8 the authority under section 302A-804(b)(3), Hawaii Revised
9 Statutes.

10 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
11 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

12 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000;
13 provided that on June 30, 2031, this Act shall be repealed and
14 section 302A-804, Hawaii Revised Statutes, shall be reenacted in
15 the form in which it read on the day prior to the effective date
16 of this Act.



Report Title:

DOE; HTSB; Charter Schools; Emergency Hires; Rules; UH;
Graduation Goal Report; Training

Description:

Permits the Department of Education and charter schools to hire unlicensed individuals as teachers on an emergency basis for five, rather than three, years. Requires the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board extend the five-year period in the case of a declared state of emergency. Establishes a graduation goal for the University of Hawaii and requires a report to the Legislature on the progress toward achieving that goal. Requires the Department of Education to provide training to assist emergency hires in passing the Praxis examination and require the training be mandatory for emergency hires in their fourth and fifth years as a condition of employment. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD2)

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