
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO BEGIN INITIATIVES TO
ADDRESS TEACHER RETENTION IN THE STATE.

1 WHEREAS, teachers play an essential role in shaping school
2 environments, fostering student engagement, and providing
3 mentorship and guidance to the next generation, serving as the
4 foundation of Hawaii's public education system; and
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6 WHEREAS, teacher retention continues to present a
7 significant challenge across the State, with approximately fifty
8 percent of teachers leaving the profession within their initial
9 five years of teaching and approximately ten percent of
10 teachers, or roughly one thousand three hundred educators,
11 departing the profession annually; and
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13 WHEREAS, during the 2024-2025 school year, nearly fifty
14 percent of newly hired teachers entered the classroom without
15 full licensure, underscoring ongoing workforce shortages and the
16 urgent need to strengthen recruitment and retention efforts; and
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18 WHEREAS, Hawaii's high cost of living continues to be a
19 major factor contributing to teacher attrition, as entry-level
20 teacher salaries begin slightly above \$50,000 annually for those
21 with a bachelor's degree and may not include step increases
22 until tenure is achieved after approximately five years of
23 service, while emergency hires may earn salaries closer to
24 \$38,500 annually; and
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26 WHEREAS, these salary levels often leave educators rent-
27 burdened and struggling to secure stable housing, particularly
28 in communities where housing costs significantly outpace wages;
29 and
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31 WHEREAS, rural and neighbor island communities face
32 additional barriers to teacher retention, including geographic
33 isolation, limited housing availability, and increased workloads



1 due to staffing shortages, making it especially challenging to
2 recruit and retain experienced educators in these regions; and
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4 WHEREAS, the Teacher Education Coordinating Committee was
5 established to identify, study, take action, or make
6 recommendations on matters of education of common interest to
7 the Department of Education and institutions of higher learning
8 in Hawaii, including the development of teacher training
9 programs and improving education in the State; and
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11 WHEREAS, the Teacher Education Coordinating Committee
12 continues to work on its strategic plan, which centers on three
13 interconnected objectives:
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- 15 (1) Building capacity within teacher preparation programs;
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- 17 (2) Increasing satisfaction among in-service teachers; and
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- 19 (3) Providing competitive compensation and incentives to
20 attract and retain quality educators; and
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22 WHEREAS, this body recognizes teacher retention as a
23 critical issue impacting the strength and stability of Hawaii's
24 public education system; now, therefore,
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26 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
27 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
28 of 2026, that the Department of Education is urged to begin
29 initiatives to address teacher retention in the State; and
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
32 urged to conduct research, data collection, and analysis to
33 better understand the factors contributing to teacher attrition
34 in Hawaii, including educator experiences, compensation, housing
35 challenges, and regional workforce needs, and inform policy
36 solutions that strengthen teacher retention; and
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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
39 urged to encourage schools, community organizations, and local
40 partners to uplift and support educators through expanded
41 recognition and appreciation efforts throughout the year,



1 building upon existing initiatives such as Teacher Appreciation
2 Week; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Teacher Education
5 Coordinating Committee is requested to submit an update on its
6 strategic plan, including any initiatives or other efforts made
7 that address teacher retention in the State, to the Legislature
8 no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular
9 Session of 2027; and

10

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
12 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Chairperson of the
13 Board of Education, Superintendent of Education, President of
14 the University of Hawaii, and Dean of the College of Education
15 of the University of Hawaii.

