



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 03/20/2026

Time: 01:00 PM

Location: CR 229 & Videoconference

Committee: EDU

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB2297, HD1, RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Updates Hawaii's statutory framework for adult and community education programs to ensure alignment with federal funding requirements and current best practices in those programs. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) strongly supports HB 2297, HD 1, which updates the scope of the Department's adult education programs to align with the federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The amendments to Section 302A-443, Hawaii Revised Statutes, not only aligns with the federal AEFLA grant requirements, but also aligns with the Department's priority to enable all students to be globally competitive and locally committed. There is a greater emphasis on workforce readiness and workforce development, providing underskilled individuals with educational activities to develop the skills necessary to be gainfully employed.

The amendments also align the basic and secondary education programs with the Department's K-12 programs and provide for family and community literacy that includes financial literacy and health and wellness instruction. Thus, the adult education programs enable adult learners to develop the foundational skills necessary for a productive home and work life.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure and for your continued support of the Department's adult education programs.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
March 20, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.

By

Lui Hokoana

Interim Vice President for Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

HB 2297 HD1 – RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Community Colleges testifies in support of HB 2297 HD1 to modernize Hawai'i's adult education statute and align with federal requirements.

We note that the primary responsibility for implementation appropriately rests with the Department of Education. UHCC's role would be collaborative, particularly in supporting transitions into postsecondary and workforce pathways where appropriate.

We are open to continued partnership with DOE to strengthen alignment between adult education and workforce preparation programs.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
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P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

McKinley Community School for Adults
634 Pensacola St., Room 216
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

March 19, 2026

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Committee on Education

Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

McKinley Community School for Adults (MCSA), **strongly supports** House Bill 2297 HD1, which updates Hawaii's statutory framework for adult and community education programs to ensure alignment with federal funding requirements and current best practices for those programs.

The updates are crucial to meet the federal AEFLA grant requirements as well as the Department of Education's priority to prepare our students for the workforce. Workplace literacy and workforce preparation programs offered by the Community School for Adults are designed to improve the basic and employability skills of students and enable them to function effectively in the workplace.

Education and workforce development are central to Hawaii's economic vitality. MCSA currently provides workforce training and preparation services across Oahu, Kauai, Maui, Molokai, and Lanai, as well as within Department of Public Safety correctional facilities statewide.

As leaders of our school and campuses, we sincerely appreciate your consideration and support to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality educational services to the people of Hawaii. These amendments enable our students to receive the necessary work preparation skills. Thank for this opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "H. Sanpei".

Helen Sanpei, Principal
McKinley Community School for Adults