



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

**Date:** 02/11/2026

**Time:** 01:30 PM

**Location:** CR 229 & Videoconference

**Committee:** EDU

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** SB2793, RELATING TO INDIVIDUAL SPORTS.

**Purpose of Bill:** Authorizes homeschooled, high school-aged students to participate as unattached competitors in individual sports available to the public high school that the student would otherwise be required to attend.

**Department's Position:**

SB 2793: Relating to Individual Sports

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) recognizes the intent of SB 2793. The Department respects parent-initiated educational alternatives and respectfully offers comments and strong concerns.

The [Hawaii Administrative Rules, Title 8, Chapter 12](#), allows a compulsory attendance exception for students who are homeschooled, the current admin rule states, "*The parent(s) submitting a notice to homeschool a child shall be responsible for the child's total educational program including athletics and other co-curricular activities.*"

Respectfully, it is a parent choice to homeschool their child, knowing what the responsibilities are which include any athletics.

While it is understandable the homeschool parent may want their child to participate in high school athletics, school athletics are part of the total public school experience, which homeschool parents have elected to not participate in.

The interscholastic sports leagues are built around school teams, which builds school pride and spirit, teamwork and team sportsmanship, and camaraderie. It is not intended as a venue for unattached student competitors. Public school athletes who participate in what is described as an "individual sport" are part of the school team, and with that, represent their school, practice with teammates, and operate as other athletic school teams. Having "unattached" athletes in high school competitions does not align with the purpose of high school athletics. Any student athlete, including public school students, may participate in off-season and independent athletic programs if they wish, just as homeschool students may do the same. Respectfully, homeschool students

should compete in these non-high school opportunities which may not have the same purpose as high school athletes. Likewise, even in post-high school athletic teams, participation of “unattached competitors” is not heard of as college athletes represent their schools. The Department respectfully disagrees that it is an equity matter to allow homeschool students to participate in public high school sport events, as homeschool students have every opportunity to attend a public school.

Schools receive funds based on a weighted student formula, and plan for the student body, which does not include funding for homeschool students. Costs for participation for sporting events are borne by the various leagues which are shared by the schools of that league. Public school funds are required to be used for public school students.

Operationally, school athletic directors and coaches know their students, and students are bound by existing disciplinary expectations and consequences, as well as grade requirements. Having unattached homeschool students participate in competitions could cause a safety concern as the public school adults would not have relationships or know the unattached students as they work with their own athletes during the season. Having parents as the supervisor or “coach” of the unattached student would also raise concerns as there is no assurance of the parent's knowledge of the game, rules, or procedures; intentions; or conduct during the event which may not be limited to only their own child. The public school athletes must also meet grade point average requirements as determined by teacher grades to participate in games and competition; there is an element of possible bias if the parent is providing the grades for eligibility for their own child.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2793.

**SB-2793**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 1:49:18 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/11/2026 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daniel Patrick Lopez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Danny Lopez, I am a teacher on Maui. This bill should not be passed. If parents want their kids to participate in sports at their local school, then their students should be in enrolled in the school. If they don't want their kids to be part of the school's community, then they have made the choice not to participate in school sponsored programs. It is unfair to others and might push more parents to opt their kids out of schools keeping them away from peers and the community.

Mahalo

**SB-2793**

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 11:36:37 PM

Testimony for EDU on 2/11/2026 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
M. Leilani DeMello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I KĀKO‘O this bill, allow our keiki to participate in school sports and have the experience as their regular DOE counterparts do.

Mahalo,

M. Leilani DeMello

‘Ōla‘a, Puna, Hawai‘i