



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

Date: 04/02/2026
Time: 02:00 PM
Location: 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Committee: FIN

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB2877, HD1, RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Department of Education to establish a one-year Student-Authoring Book Publication Pilot Program. Authorizes the Pilot Program to be conducted for fifth graders at Kalihi public elementary schools to be integrated into existing curricula. Requires a report to the legislature. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony regarding SB 2877 HD1, which proposes a one-year Student-Authoring Book Publication Pilot Program for fifth graders at Kalihi public elementary schools. The Department supports the intent of this bill.

The Department would also like to acknowledge and celebrate the many schools and educators across Hawai'i that have already engaged students in high-quality book publishing experiences. These efforts reflect a strong, ongoing commitment to authentic literacy, student voice, and culturally responsive learning, and they provide a solid foundation upon which this pilot can build. We are grateful for the innovation and dedication of our teachers and leaders who have made this work possible and successful in a variety of school contexts.

To maximize the intent of this bill, the Department respectfully suggests structuring the measure so that participation by fifth-grade teachers and students in Kalihi is encouraged but not mandated, and as such appreciates the revisions in HD1. This would preserve principal and school-level autonomy to determine readiness and alignment with existing academic and financial plans, without risk of being out of compliance with the law. The Department also respectfully requests that, where feasible, additional funds for this opportunity be available to interested Department schools in additional complex areas.

The Department also respectfully recommends allowing flexibility in how student work is published. In addition to individual student books, the measure may be revised to allow for the option of student submission to a collective anthology. An anthology

model would provide a cost-effective and inclusive approach that enables all participating students to see their work in print, supports collaborative school-based implementation, and aligns with existing successful publishing practices in many of our schools.

The Department further suggests allowing flexibility for implementation, including the option for the Department to contract with a third-party provider or to pursue other non-contracted publishing approaches that may be more cost-effective or better aligned to school needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.