LEGISLATIVE REPORT

SUBJECT: Relating to Sustainability Education and Environmental Stewardship in Hawaii’s Public Schools

REFERENCE: HCR 178, HD1, SD1 (2013)

ACTION REQUESTED: Report to the 2014 Legislature

DOE REPORT: HCR 178, HD1, SD1 requests the Board of Education and Department of Education to review and modify BOE Policy #6710 to identify ways to incorporate sustainability education and environmental stewardship at the classroom level. Refer to the attachment entitled “Sustainability Education and Environmental Stewardship in Hawaii’s Public Schools.”

Findings: See attachment.

Recommendations: None

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Superintendent
Department of Education

Date
Sustainability Education and Environmental Stewardship
in Hawaii's Public Schools

The United States Department of Energy and Department of Education, the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan has signaled the need for the values, activities and principles inherently linked to sustainability to be integrated into the educational endeavors of schools.

Passed during the 2013 regular legislative session, HCR 178, HD1, SD1 focuses on the Board of Education's (BOE) Policy #6710 and the Department of Education's (DOE) responsibility to educate students about sustainability and to model sustainability in Hawaii's public schools.

The following provides the actions taken in response to directions iterated in the aforementioned resolution:

1. Review and modify BOE Sustainability Policy #6710 (Appendix) to identify ways to incorporate sustainability education and environmental stewardship at the classroom level, specifically identifying the common core and/or content areas that may incorporate such classes.

Pending before the BOE are the following recommendations provided by the DOE:

- Update language of BOE Sustainability Policy #6710 to solely focus on sustainability as related to DOE school and office facilities, including but not limited to energy efficiency, conservation and recycling.
- Create a sustainability education policy to encourage incorporation of sustainability and environmental stewardship in the curriculum at each grade level.

(Note: The enumerated items in the current Policy #6710 primarily focuses on facilities. The above recommendations will place equal emphasis on facilities and curriculum.)

The BOE will consider and deliberate these recommendations as part of its overall policy audit.

2. Identify opportunities to engage students, classes and schools in activities including but not limited to project-based learning, mentorships and data collection at the complex area support level.

With an overall objective of integrating sustainability and environmental literacy into its infrastructure and school culture, the DOE has been compiling applicable classroom resources and activities. Completion of the compilation and options for sustainability curriculum is targeted for February 2014. Thereafter, these resources will be shared with the Complex Area Support Teams (CAST) to lead the Complex Areas' efforts towards implementation of sustainability curriculum.
APPENDIX

BOE Sustainability Policy 6710

The Board of Education (Board) is committed to supporting sustainability in the Department of Education. Sustainability is the long-term maintenance of the well being of humankind, which in turn depends on the well being of the natural world and the responsible use of natural resources. The Board recognizes that schools play an integral part in educating and exposing students to sustainability concepts and sustainable practices.

The Department of Education (Department) has a fundamental responsibility to educate students about sustainability and to model sustainability. The Department shall establish regulations or guidelines to implement this policy. The regulations or guidelines shall include, but shall not be limited to:

(1) establishing standards for facilities that ensure schools and Department facilities are designed and operated in a manner that maximizes Hawaii’s natural environment and ensures the lowest environmental impact possible;

(2) incorporating energy efficiency and conservation measures whenever possible;

(3) reducing water consumption across facilities and utilizing grey water/storm water when possible;

(4) utilizing on-site renewable energy and adopting a series of clean energy goals that guides DOE to 90% Clean Energy by 2040:

25% clean energy by 2015
40% clean energy by 2020
80% clean energy by 2030
90% clean energy by 2040

(5) promoting the longevity and responsible procurement of facilities, equipment and vehicles;

(6) promoting material conservation and recycling across facilities;

(7) incorporating the importance of sustainability and environmental stewardship at the classroom level;

(8) conveying the mission of sustainability and environmental stewardship at the faculty and staff level;

(9) working with local partners to collaborate on projects, as well as informing the public on the efforts being made by the Department; and

(10) developing and implementing a plan for measuring implementation of the sustainability policy.

Approved: 7/17/80; Amended: 12/07 and 11/10