A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that education is the bedrock of a healthy democracy. To advance the fundamental democratic principles of equality, liberty, and justice for all, a quality school system must deliver instruction that is historically and scientifically accurate and free from discrimination.

The legislature further finds that the department of education used the Acellus Learning Accelerator to facilitate virtual learning during the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic. However, teachers, parents, and community members found that the Acellus Learning Accelerator curriculum contains content that engages in racial, sexual, gender-based, and religious discrimination. Teachers and parents also expressed concerns that certain content provided by Acellus Learning Accelerator is historically prejudicial and scientifically inaccurate. In October 2020, these concerns prompted the board of education to direct the department of education to phase out the Acellus...
Learning Accelerator curriculum by the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

The legislature additionally finds that social justice issues are a growing concern for Hawaii and the rest of the United States. In 2020, large protests were coordinated in Hawaii and throughout the nation to highlight systemic racism, economic inequality, and police abuse faced by minority communities. These demonstrations highlighted the urgency of establishing structural reforms to address socioeconomic inequality. The legislature therefore finds that to prepare students to participate in the development of a more equal society, it is important to create educational content that is culturally relevant, nondiscriminatory, and inclusive of the historical injustices endured by marginalized populations.

The purpose of this Act is to advance equality in Hawaii's public education system by requiring:

(1) The board of education to adopt performance standards that are culturally relevant, historically and scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory;

(2) A standards-based curriculum and educational materials that are nondiscriminatory with regard to race,
ethnicity, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, color, religion, ancestry, or disability; and

(3) School complexes to develop, to the greatest extent possible, a standards-based curriculum that includes content on the injustice endured by the indigenous people of Hawaii and other historically underrepresented populations.

SECTION 2. Section 302A-201, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§302A-201 Statewide performance standards. The board shall establish statewide performance standards and the means to assess the standards based upon the recommendations in the final report of the performance standards commission established pursuant to Act 334, Session Laws of Hawaii 1991; provided that the board may review and modify the performance standards, as the board deems necessary, to reflect the needs of public school students and educational goals adopted by the board[…]; provided further that the performance standards adopted by the board may be culturally relevant, historically and scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory."
SECTION 3. Section 302A-321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"[§302A-321] Standards-based curriculum. (a) When developing a standards-based curriculum and implementing it in a school or complex, at the minimum, the curriculum and any related educational materials shall:

(1) Be specific in its standards-based scope and sequence over a school year for each grade level and course;

(2) Be consistent in course content;

(3) Be aligned across all grade levels;

(4) Specifically address the state content and performance standards and related benchmark maps; [and]

(5) Be implemented in all appropriate classrooms in the school or complex; provided that the curriculum may be historically and scientifically accurate and nondiscriminatory with regard to race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, color, religion, ancestry, or disability.

(b) School complexes may choose to develop an articulated and aligned K-12 standards-based curriculum in one or more of the following core content areas:
(1) Language arts;
(2) Mathematics;
(3) Science; and
(4) Social studies.

(c) School complexes shall provide professional development.

(d) School complexes that develop a standards-based curriculum shall use standards-based formative assessment tools to monitor student progress, not less than on a quarterly basis throughout the school year.

(e) School complexes shall develop rigorous classroom-based performance assessments.

(f) School complexes may implement software programs at the school level to help to align school course material with Hawaii content and performance and federal educational standards.

(g) To the greatest extent possible, school complexes shall develop a standards-based curriculum that includes content on the historical injustice, cultural subjugation, and discrimination faced by the indigenous people of Hawaii and
other historically underrepresented populations as applicable to
units of study."

SECTION 4. The department shall submit a report to the
legislature regarding the implementation of this Act no later
than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular sessions
of 2022 and 2023.

The report shall include:

(1) Efforts made to improve the cultural relevance,
historical and scientific accuracy, inclusivity, and
nondiscrimination of Hawaii's performance standards
and standards-based curricula;

(2) Policies adopted to assist teachers, parents, and
community members in reporting inaccurate or
discriminatory educational content;

(3) Opportunities for increasing teacher engagement in the
development of culturally relevant, historically and
scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory
performance standards and standards-based curricula;

and

(4) Any proposed legislation.
SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.
Report Title:
Statewide Performance Standards; Standards-Based Curriculum; Nondiscrimination; Education Equality

Description:
Allows the board of education to develop statewide performance standards to be culturally relevant, historically and scientifically accurate, and nondiscriminatory. Authorizes a standards-based curriculum and its related educational materials to be nondiscriminatory. Establishes certain requirements for school complexes when developing standards-based curricula. Requires reports to the legislature. Effective 7/1/2050.  (SD1)

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