

EDU 2016-01 Requesting that the State Board of Education and Department of Education Require Arts Education and Instruction

Whereas, The National Center for Educational Statistics reported in 2015 that 45 states require arts instruction at the elementary level, 45 states require arts instruction at the middle school level, 44 states require arts instruction at the high school level, and 26 states require course credits in the arts for graduation; and

Whereas, Arts education is not required at any level in Hawai'i; and

Whereas, Research suggests that arts education has a positive impact on school success for disadvantaged children; and

Whereas, Currently, there appears to be no overt strategy by either the State Board of Education or the Hawai'i Department of Education to increase arts education in Hawai'i public schools; and

Whereas, Arts education prepares students to engage meaningfully in their communities, strengthens perseverance, and develops students' capacity to persist in the face of a challenge; and

Whereas, Through arts study, students improve their abilities to turn barriers into opportunities, overcome difficulty in completing complex tasks, and sustain attention; and

Whereas, In a longitudinal study of 25,000 secondary school students, those with higher involvement in the arts scored better on measures of persistence than their peers with lower arts involvement; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, In a major legislative proposal covering a wide range of reforms, the Hawai'i State Teachers Association has included a requirement for "whole child education," which is defined as "instruction in visual arts, music, theater, dance, Hawaiian and Polynesian studies, Hawaiian language, native Hawaiian culture, native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, and physical education;"

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i urge the State Board of Education and the Department of Education to begin the process of requiring arts education and instruction at all levels of the K-12 system and incorporate this into their financial planning; and be it

Ordered, That copies of this resolution shall be transmitted to the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Education.

EDU 2016-02 **Urging the Hawai'i State Legislature to increase funding for public education**

Whereas, The Hawai'i Department of Education school district is the only statewide school district in the United States; and

Whereas, According to a Ballotpedia analysis of the largest school districts in the United States, Hawai'i has the lowest expenditures per student when including a cost of living adjustment; and

Whereas, Hawaii's major private schools spend approximately \$15,173 per student, not including endowments, and approximately \$19,173 per student when Catholic schools, subsidized by the Roman Catholic Diocese, are not included; and

Whereas, The Hawai'i Department of Education school district spends just \$11,823 per student for general and special education students and approximately half as much as private schools when only general education students are taken into account; and

Whereas, Hawai'i ranks last in capital improvement funding per student, spending roughly \$300 per student on capital improvements compared to a mainland average of \$1,200 to \$1,500; and

Whereas, According to a WalletHub.com study, Hawai'i ranked fifty-first out of fifty states and the District of Columbia in starting and median teacher salaries when including a cost of living adjustment; and

Whereas, Hawai'i has one of the highest teacher turnover rates in the nation, with approximately fifty percent of the State's newly hired teachers leaving the profession within the first five years and nearly half of the teachers hired annually being emergency hires; and

Whereas, Hawaii's public school campuses are on average, over sixty-five years old and contain nearly seven thousand classrooms that lack air conditioning or other heat abatement technology, despite classroom temperatures that regularly exceed ninety degrees during the school year; and

Whereas, Increasing funding for public education will upgrade school infrastructure, help to recruit and retain effective teachers, and increase student achievement; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i urges the Hawai'i State Legislature to increase funding for public education; and be it

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i urges the Hawai'i State Legislature to support legislation to establish a dedicated funding stream for public education; and be it

Ordered, That copies of this resolution be delivered to the Governor of the State of Hawai'i, the Lt. Governor of the State of Hawai'i, the Hawai'i State Board of Education, the Hawai'i State Superintendent of Education, all Democratic Party members of the Hawai'i State Legislature, and Hawaii's Congressional Delegation.

EDU 2016-03 **Respect, Honor and Protect Gender Diversity in Hawaii's Public Schools**

Whereas, The Democratic Party of Hawai'i supports the right of every student to have equal access to educational opportunity free from bullying and discrimination as well as the fact that every student deserves dignity and respect, as stated in the Education Plank of the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i and in resolution OC 2012-07 Bullying in the Schools; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i recognizes that the State of Hawaii's Department of Education has failed to protect the rights of transgender and gender nonconforming students by not establishing an appropriate policy to address the needs of transgender and gender nonconforming students as well as neglecting to educate and train staff on the issues of transgender and gender nonconforming students; and be it

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i calls upon the Board of Education to establish and fully implement a gender diversity policy to ensure that all students are safe, included and respected in school, regardless of their actual or perceived gender identity and/or expression; and be it

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i requests that the gender diversity policy to include the following requirements: ensure that students may participate in graduation and other school sponsored activities consistent with their gender identity; equal access to all activities that take place in our public schools, at school-sponsored functions, and on school transportation; protect public students' right to be addressed by educators and in school records by a name and pronouns that correspond to their gender identity; enforcement of existing policies that prohibits bullying, harassment and discrimination based on gender identity and expression; provide equal access to all facilities that are consistent with the student's gender identity (or a safe and non-stigmatizing alternative upon student request); and protect the privacy of students' gender identity and medical information from others, including parents, guardians and other school staff, unless the student has authorized such disclosure and a yearly required anti-bias education for all K-12 students that includes age appropriate, culturally responsive, Hawai'i-based information and curriculum materials on gender identity, expression and diversity; and be it

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i calls upon the State of Hawaii's Department of Education to conduct training, professional development and educational activities to ensure awareness of and compliance with this policy and to provide an environment in which students have the opportunity to learn, express themselves, and live authentically, included in the training a mandate for all staff members including teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers and health staff on their duties, responsibilities, and expectations under the policy, as well as provide opportunities for professional development to educate staff on the terms, concepts, and current developmental understandings of gender identity, gender expression, and gender diversity, and to build their skills to prevent, identify and respond to bullying, harassment and discrimination; and be it

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i calls upon the Governor of the State of Hawai'i to appoint members to the State of Hawaii's Board of Education that have shown that they understand the need for and will work to implement and enforce a gender diversity policy; and finally be it

Ordered, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of the State of Hawai'i, the Lt. Governor of the State of Hawai'i, all members of the Hawai'i State Legislatures who are members of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, all members of the State of Hawaii's Board of Education and the Superintendent of State of Hawaii's Department of Education.

EDU 2016-04 **Participation of Young Adults In the Political Process**

Whereas, Young adults are our future, and their participation in the political process is essential for them to play a significant role in electing public officials and determining public policy that is in their best interest; and

Whereas, Political analysts say voting is a learned behavior, and newly eligible voters need to believe that their vote will matter, and their voice will be heard; and

Whereas, The number of people ages 18-24 registered and voting in general elections has reached an all-time low both nationally and in the State of Hawai'i; and

Whereas, Recent nationwide presidential elections indicate that young adults ages 18-24, more than any other age group, are less likely to vote; and

Whereas, The Democratic Party of Hawai'i recognizes the critical need for young adult participation in both current elections and for the long-term growth and sustainability of the Party; and

Whereas, The Democratic Party of Hawai'i recognizes the critical need for young adult participation in the political process, for long-term growth, sustainability, and future leadership of the Party; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i supports public and private high schools that view Civics education as a high priority in their core requirement curriculum; and be it

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i supports efforts by high school administrators and social studies teachers to schedule field trips to local government meetings for students to acquire first hand knowledge of how the political system works and ways that their participation can affect decision making; and be it

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i encourages currently elected public officials to visit high school and college campuses for open discussions on important subjects of interest to young adults; and be it

Ordered, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to all members of Hawaii's Congressional Delegation, the Governor of the State of Hawai'i, the Lt. Governor of the State of Hawai'i, the Hawai'i Department of Education, members of the Board of Education, and all members of the Hawai'i State Legislatures who are members of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i.

EDU 2016-05 Urging Expansion of Educational Funding by Taxing Legalized Cannabis

Whereas, Educational funding is in desperate need of an influx of funding in order to teach the next generation of Hawaiian leaders; and

Whereas, Cannabis already has an extensive supply and delivery infrastructure in Hawai'i that as of now pays no tax and operates in the shadows; and

Whereas, The legal cannabis industry is projected to be worth \$20 billion nationally by the year 2020, and the longer we wait the smaller the market share Hawai'i will receive; and

Whereas, Resolution OC 2013-02, the O'ahu County Democrats of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i urges legalization of cannabis for personal use; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Democratic Party of Hawai'i urge the taxation of legalized cannabis for means of expanding funding for the educational system; and be it

Ordered, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Democratic members of the Hawai'i State Legislature, and the members of the Hawai'i Congressional delegation.