



**S E A C**  
**Special Education Advisory Council**  
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 March 22, 2022

**Special Education  
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Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
 Committee on Ways and Means  
 State Capitol  
 Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB 1600, HD 1 - Relating to the State Budget

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) supports funding of the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) budget request for FFY 2023 and, more specifically, funding for EDN 150 (special education). After a budget briefing by Budget Director Alex Kagawa at our February 11, 2022 SEAC meeting, our membership agreed with DOE's priority of **making the budget whole again**. By rebuilding this foundation, the Department will be better able to improve outcomes for students with disabilities through evidence-based initiatives providing by qualified and effective educators. Specifically, we ask your support for the following:

SEQ # 100-001 Special Education and Student Services \$4,431,663  
 EDN 150 monies lost to the base budget during the pandemic

SEQ # 101-001 SPED & Student Support Services \$97,202

SEQ # 102-001 SPED & Student Support Services \$193,740

SEQ # 103-001 SPED & Student Support Services \$197,904

Monies needed to restore general fund salaries for positions that were converted to temporary federal funds during the pandemic.

SEQ # 104-001 SPED & Student Support Services \$189,559

SEQ # 105-001 SPED & Student Support Services \$99,298

Five office support staff positions and one Educational Specialist position lost to shortfalls.

SEAC also supports the the following EDN 150 **initiatives that advance education** for students with disabilities:

SEQ # 107-001 18 Skilled Nursing Positions \$2,404,936

Additional Complex Area Registered Nurses and a School Nursing Section Administrator needed to address the unmet health needs of all



students, including students with disabilities who have chronic health conditions such as seizures, asthma, diabetes, and life- threatening allergies.

SEQ # 108-001	Systems Analyst IV - Medicaid Claiming	\$52,956
SEQ # 109-001	Office Assistant IV - Medicaid Claiming	\$31,056

Additional funds for staff to assist in reclaiming Medicaid monies for expenses incurred in providing related services to Medicaid eligible students with disabilities to help to bring additional federal dollars back to the state.

Finally, SEAC asks your Committee’s consideration in considerably **increasing funding for the following budget item to adjust pay rates for skilled nursing services:**

SEQ # 106-001	Skilled nursing hourly rate increase	\$274,076
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The Governor only left \$274,076 in his budget request to adjust the current hourly rate for contracted skilled nursing services to be in alignment with the Medicaid fee-for-service reimbursement rate for nursing services in Hawaii. **For the Department to meet student medical needs at a competitive rate, it would need a total of \$10,462,677 to move from the current rate of \$50/hour to the competitive rate of \$90/hour for skilled nursing services.** Contracted skilled nursing services are critical to Hawaii’s medically fragile students in order to allow them to attend school and benefit from their individualized education services. When there are staff shortages, it can prevent these students from being able to come on campus, and their educational progress is jeopardized. Providing competitive pay rates makes it more likely that schools can maintain an adequate supply of nursing personnel.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this important legislation.

Respectfully,

Martha Guinan  
 Chair