
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING A REQUIRED PUBLIC SPEAKING AND ARGUMENTATION SEMESTER
TO BE COMPLETED BY EACH HAWAII HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT IN ORDER
TO GRADUATE.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii's Annual Yearly Progress Report for school
2 year 2005-06 found only 6.4% of Hawaii public high schools met
3 their annual progress goal in reading comprehension, and
4 according to NCLB standards, only 40% of students for that same
5 year met the proficiency requirements in language arts; and
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7 WHEREAS, according to an article by Craig Kojima published
8 in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, the Hawaii public school system
9 has struggled for years to improve students' abilities to read,
10 write, speak, and comprehend English, and Hawaii lags far behind
11 the national average, specifically in areas of reading and
12 writing, as well as in critical thinking standards; and
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14 WHEREAS, in his article "Academic Debate and Critical
15 Thinking" published in the *National Forensic Journal*, Robert
16 Greenstreet discussed his finding that debaters significantly
17 outperformed non-debaters on critical thinking tests, and as
18 little as a semester's participation in speech or debate
19 activities resulted in this observed improvement in critical
20 thinking test scores; and
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22 WHEREAS, according to Yale Professor Minh Luong, speech and
23 debate develops valuable skills that colleges are seeking, and
24 according to a study completed by Yale University, students who
25 participate in either speech or debate enjoy a college
26 acceptance rate 22% to 30% higher than those students who do not
27 participate in oral presentation activities; and
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29 WHEREAS, according to the University of Michigan's School
30 of Communication, it was found that speech and debate programs



1 develop crucial life skills such as time management,
2 organization, research, critical thinking and note taking; and
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4 WHEREAS, it was found that speech and debate encourages the
5 active pursuit of knowledge and personal expression, and fosters
6 a tolerance for the options of others; now, therefore,
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8 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
9 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
10 Session of 2008, that the Hawaii Department of Education require
11 a mandatory public speaking and argumentation semester as part
12 of the Language Arts curriculum and as a condition of graduation
13 for all Hawaii high school students; and
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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
16 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor of the State of
17 Hawaii, the Board of Education, the Superintendent of Education,
18 the Hawaii State Student Council, and all secondary school
19 principals.
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OFFERED BY:

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