

Local News

Resurrected after-school proposal gets approval from Senate committee

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A playground at Pauoa Elementary School

The state Department of Education may be on its way to receiving additional funding for a prominent after-school program

[House Bill 69](#) would give an additional \$2.5 million to the DOE's Resources for Enrichment, Athletics, Culture, & Health (REACH) program for middle and

intermediate school students. It would bolster existing schools and their programs, but not expand to other campuses.

Last week, the [measure was deferred](#) by the Senate's Ways and Means Committee. Advocates believed the bill was dead, despite overwhelming support.

"There's so much need for after-school programs. Especially for middle and intermediate school kids," Paula Adams, executive director of the nonprofit Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance, told HPR last week.

Adams added that the state only invests \$500,000 toward public after-school programs.

According to the nonprofit, the state relies mostly on federal or private funding for after-school support. State contributions only amount to roughly 1.3%, according to their [recent report](#). Compared to other states, California contributes more than 80% to its programs, New York 50% and Alaska 17%.

Senate Ways and Means chair Donovan Dela Cruz resubmitted the measure on Tuesday, after having a discussion with DOE administrators about what the bill would do.

"Previously, we deferred this measure because we wanted more information from the department to see how we could develop an after-school program statewide," Dela Cruz said. "However, DOE felt that the schools, statewide, not all are ready. So they're going to keep the program to its current form of 40 schools."