Over 40 public schools diving into ‘Hour of Code’

More public and charter schools are jumping into Hour of Code this year. Part of Computer Science Education Week, the Hour of Code is a global movement to spark interest in and passion for coding in schools and beyond.

“We want students to explore coding as means to convey their learning,” said librarian Michelle Colte of Hale Kula Elementary.

“Students learn to persevere through coding — to solve problems, to figure out how to make something happen. It empowers them.”

Said technology teacher Shane Asselstine, Momilani Elementary: “Coding affects everything around us from video games to rocket science and it is important that students are aware of just how far reaching these skills can go.”

NEW LEADERSHIP

Carlson, Krieg take helm of facilities, human resources offices

Dann Carlson, who was named Assistant Superintendent of the Office of School Facilities and Support Services, left his position at the Pentagon to join the DOE.

From 2011 to 2013, Carlson was the deputy joint base commander at Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam. He led more than 900 Air Force personnel in six squadrons: civil engineering, security forces, contracting, communications, logistics and force support.

Barbara Krieg, the DOE’s new Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, was the State’s Director of the Department of Human Resources Development since 2011. During her tenure, she established an Equal Employment Opportunity program for state employees, restored an employee training and development program, and reorganized the department’s structure to align the delivery of personnel services within the state. She is also a labor attorney.

2013-14 Strive HI results

Congrats to our Outstanding Strive HI Schools! This month: Top performers in reading proficiency. Online: bit.ly/13-14StriveHI

MOST IMPROVED SCHOOLS 2013 2014
Kula Aupuni Niihau (KANAKA)* -- --
Halau Ku Mana* -- --
Kahuku High & Intermediate 60% 70%
Honokaa High & Intermediate 59% 69%
Olomana School* -- --

TOP-SCORING SCHOOLS 2014
Kula Aupuni Niihau (KANAKA)* --
Kaelepu Elementary 93%
Noelani Elementary 93%
Haleiwa Elementary 92%
Hickam Elementary 92%
Millilani Ike Elementary 92%
Waikiki Elementary 92%

* schools with small student populations have their results suppressed to protect student privacy.
Last month, I attended a gathering at the White House of superintendents from across the country who were driving digital learning in their school communities. Hawaii was invited to the “ConnectED to the Future” event because of our efforts to empower teachers with technology and training, and empower students through individualized learning and dynamic content.

Our systemic effort began with the Access Learning pilot. The Legislature granted $8.2 million to fund device purchases and training on a 1:1 basis at eight schools. The focus was not on the device, however, rather on how technology can be a tool to support teachers’ efforts to personalize instruction and engage students. Teachers were provided devices and training in fall 2013, devices rolled out to students in spring 2014.

The results need to be replicated elsewhere. Teachers and students reported increased engagement and readiness, and teachers reported reduced burden of workload. Parents were reinvigorated in their support for public schools when they saw the digital transformation. (Year 1 report from UH-West Oahu: bit.ly/AccessHILeg.)

One of the key takeaways: Teachers need support on strategies to integrate technology as a tool to support teaching and learning — not just “once and done,” but on an ongoing basis, with chances for individual help.

Now, to the expansion. To get more of our schools, staff and students Future Ready, we have asked the Legislature to fund this effort with $30.8 million over the next two years (bit.ly/DOEFB2015-17). We will partner with private industry and foundations to help us drive the initiative forward. We will support the personal learning networks that have sprouted thanks to the innovation of our tech-savvy teachers.

It was gratifying to be in Washington D.C. to stand with other superintendents driving similar change in their districts. Hawaii is at the forefront. We aim to keep it that way.