

Ho'oha'aheo

PUBLIC SCHOOL PROUD

HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION | NOVEMBER/DECEMBER NEWSLETTER 2019



➤ Hale'iwa Elementary uses project-based learning across grade levels. First-graders are designing playground improvements.

Strive HI: Schools credit project-based learning, student-centered cultures for academic gains

On a sunny fall morning at Hale'iwa Elementary School on O'ahu's North Shore, two dozen fourth-graders huddled in small groups and brainstormed ideas to make their rural community a safer place to live.

A few doors down, lively third-graders began measuring their classroom's perimeter to help them grasp the immensity of the Pacific Garbage Patch (hint: it's twice the size of Texas) as the class explores ways to care for the environment.

And in the school's first-grade classroom, students worked in pairs to design ambitious playground improvements and built mini prototypes out of Legos.

The lessons are part of Hale'iwa's commitment to project-based learning (PBL), a multidisciplinary approach where students acquire deeper knowledge by actively exploring real-world problems and challenges.

Hale'iwa Principal Malaea Wetzel said the school implemented PBL last year for its roughly 200

students in grades K-6.

"Our teachers worked really hard to create those multidisciplinary learning opportunities," Wetzel said. "The ability to think critically and problem solve will really afford our students opportunities in the future. It's critical that we start that now."

Fourth-grade teacher Jaydeen Yonekura, who's in her third year of teaching full-time at Hale'iwa, said PBL makes learning meaningful for her students. "It's really just giving them the opportunity to take charge of their learning, and I think that's what makes them engaged and excited to come to school," she said.

That shift is likely behind some of the gains Hale'iwa saw in the Department's latest Strive HI results. The school posted 100% proficiency in science for the 2018-19 school year, exceeding the state average of 58% for science. Meanwhile, 73% of Hale'iwa's tested students demonstrated proficiency in math, up 11 points from the year

before, and 68% were proficient in English language arts, an 8-point increase.

"Achievement and performance are important, but it's more about maximizing every kid. We pride ourselves on this culture of our essence, of belonging, and we try to create this balance between academics and social emotional learning," said Ernie Pai, Hale'iwa's student services coordinator. "If we can get the kids loving school – and that's where PBL fits in – then they will have a passion and desire toward learning."

As part of its school design work, Hale'iwa updated its "essence statement" to: Live life to the fullest with honor, respect, kindness and love – to make the world a better place. The second half of the statement was added this year.

"I've challenged our teachers to purposefully include that in their PBL this year," Wetzel said.

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Editorial Mission

Hawaii's public school system plays an integral role in the Islands as the state's largest education provider. As the Department's primary publication, we aim to live up to the meaning of ha'aheo – to cherish with pride – by bolstering and sustaining pride in public education and touting the successes happening across the system as we deliver on the power and promise of public education.

#PublicSchoolProud

ALUMNI

Believe in yourself. That's what Wai'alea High School teacher, Ms. Debra Miyao, inspired me to do. She,



➤ **Sherry Menor-McNamara**

along with my teachers and principals, inspired me to be the best that I can be. Their guidance helped me pave the path to where I am now. For that, I'm forever grateful. Nothing makes me prouder than to say, "I'm a public school graduate." There are countless stories like mine. This is why we need to continue to support our keiki, teachers, principals and others involved in education to ensure that, together, we can continue to build a robust future for Hawai'i.

Sherry Menor-McNamara is the president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii.



Maui High ornaments to hang in D.C.

Maui High School's visual art students created 24 one-of-a-kind ornaments to represent Hawai'i in this year's National Christmas Tree display in President's Park in Washington, D.C. The student designs embody Nā Hopena A'o (HĀ), honoring the unique qualities and values of the indigenous language and culture of Hawai'i. "It was a great honor to represent the entire state of Hawai'i and to show the world what we can do in terms of art," said Maui High junior Schuyler-Rae Barcoma-Suyat.

Strive HI

Continued from Page 1

"It's broad enough that no matter what they're working on, they can find a way to attack that question. I'm excited about that because I really want our students to be good human beings."

At E.B. deSilva Elementary in Hilo, Principal Dennis O'Brien credits the school's culture for its strong Strive HI performance.

For 2018-19, science proficiency increased to 85%; English language arts and math improved to 80% and 74%, respectively; and chronic absenteeism dropped to 4%. Also, 95% of third-graders are reading near, at or above grade level – the highest among Big Island public schools and tied for third-highest in the state.

"It's students first each and every time; that's been the culture of the school from Day One," O'Brien said. "And to put students first, I strongly believe you have to put teachers first. If you take good care of your teachers, they're going to take good care of the children."

Looking ahead, O'Brien said the school is working on its comprehensive needs assessment and will continue to set high benchmarks.

"The higher you go, the harder it gets to get gains but our goal is to continue to improve in each area," he said. "It's all about getting the kids ready for the next level."



At Jarrett Middle in Palolo, test scores have steadily increased the last three years, which Principal Reid Kuba attributes to implementation of small group instruction for math, and more professional development time for teachers for science.

Jarrett's chronic absenteeism dropped by 7 percentage points, which Kuba attributes to additional counseling support along with home visits and calls to parents to encourage improved attendance.

"Mindset wise, we're always striving to push our kids, in general, beyond one year of learning," he said. "Our teachers work hard to do a little extra, helping with tutoring after-school or during lunch."

Jarrett is working on empowering teachers to design curriculum to support student success.

"Not teaching to the test, but if the types of problems are requiring higher levels of explanation, that's the focus, because being able to explain yourself is a lifelong skill," he said. "And within that is empowering teachers to decide which strategies to use to reach the kids."

At Baldwin High on Maui, the percentage of Career & Technical Education (CTE) completers rose by 24 points, which CTE communications and

Grow Our Own graduate: Becoming a teacher one of the 'best decisions I ever made'

Jacie Miyashiro is a social studies teacher at 'Aiea High School and was part of the first graduating cohort of the Grow Our Own Teachers program.



Jacie Miyashiro

about the Grow Our Own program, which would allow me to continue teaching while going to school, in addition to offering fully subsidized tuition! I really appreciate Sen. Michelle Kidani, HIOE, and the College of Education for making this program possible.

Q: What did you find helpful about the GOO program?

A: The largest benefit was the chance to be a part of a community of beginning teachers. Every week, my professor would give us time to share our successes and failures. So when I had a bad day in the classroom, I had people who would offer advice on how to improve, or validation that I was not the only person experiencing such problems. Because many of us were working while going to school, we got the chance to learn from our real-life classroom experiences.

In partnership with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's College of Education, the Grow Our Own Teachers (GOO) initiative is part of HIOE's multi-pronged approach to teacher recruitment and retention, offering a post-baccalaureate Certificate in Teacher Education in Secondary Education, with full tuition reimbursement for Hawai'i residents. A member of the first graduating cohort in early 2019, Jacie Miyashiro is now a certified teacher at her alma mater, 'Aiea High School. She reflected on her experience in the program and shared some highlights with us.

Q: How did you get into the teaching field and why did the Grow Our Own program appeal to you?

A: I didn't decide I wanted to be a teacher until my last semester of college while pursuing an economics degree. By then, it was unfortunately too late to try to get an undergraduate degree in education. So I graduated, then scrambled to find an education-related job. I visited some of my former high school teachers to get advice, and a day later, one contacted me and asked if I was interested in working as an emergency hire at my former high school! I accepted, of course, and immediately fell in love with teaching, and made a lot of great friends. I dreaded the thought of having to quit my job in order to go back to school to become a certified teacher. Then I heard

Q: What advice do you have for anyone interested in teaching and Grow Our Own?

A: I had gone back and forth on my decision to be an educator for years, and I was nervous because I knew it would not be an easy career. Now that I'm in my third year of teaching, I can definitely say it was one of the best decisions I've ever made. Once in the program, my advice would be to make the assignments work for you. The professors really try to create assignments that are similar to the work you have to complete as a teacher. They also gave us assignments designed to help us understand the communities in which we worked and what social justice issues impact our students. As our director advised us, teaching is not just about what you teach, but who you teach.

digital media teacher Trisha Roy attributes to increased collaboration with counselors and improved tracking of students' courses.

Roy said CTE exposes students to different career paths while teaching them essential skills.

"The expectations of workplace readiness are there: being on time, consistently turning in quality work, presentations, problem solving, thinking critically," she said. "They're learning technical skills as well as essential soft skills."



HAWAI'I STATE DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

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Superintendent

Phyllis Unebasami
Deputy Superintendent

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Facilities and Operations

Ho'oha'aheo

PUBLIC SCHOOL PROUD

Nanea Kalani
Editor

Sara Miyazono
Creative Director

Eileen Carr
Drew Henmi
Nanea Kalani
Jacie Miyashiro
Krislyn Yano
Contributing Writers

Derek Inoshita
Photographers

hawaiipublicschools.org
doeinfo@k12.hi.us
(808) 586-3232



School Design

►► Art opportunities result in windfall of learning



✧ Mānoa Elementary students worked with the Mele Murals public art movement to depict the Hawaiian legend of Kahalaopuna, the rainbow princess of Mānoa Valley, and her aumakua, or family god, the pueo. The mural was inspired by the 'olelo no'eau, or Hawaiian proverb: E waikahi ka pono i manalo. The proverb means: It is well to be united in thought, that all may have peace.

Strong academics, consistent physical education, a variety of extracurriculars, and passionate educators bring forth engaged, happy students at our elementary schools. Mānoa Elementary has begun to find ways of balancing dynamic STEM programs and a world championship-winning robotics team with arts instruction. Accessing art opportunities — many available for HIDOE schools at no cost — has resulted in a windfall of learning. Here are some art resources to consider.

ARTIFACTS

Thousands of geographically arranged artifacts from around the world are housed at Honolulu Museum of Art's [Lending Collection](#). Bringing in a selection of artifacts offers firsthand experiences with these creations. Teachers may borrow up to 12 items at a time for two weeks; items can be curated and shipped for free to Neighbor Islands.



At Mānoa Elementary, fifth-graders complemented their study of North American Native American cultures by examining and then building their own Inuit snow goggles, Ojibwa dream catchers, and Navajo kachina dolls (pictured above).

MURALS

Another meaningful way of infusing art into a school is through a mural. [Mele Murals](#), a program offered by the Estria Foundation, facilitates a soulful process of turning the story of a place into a visual masterpiece. Students, faculty, community members and local artists engage in a visual storytelling journey that deepens their connections to Hawaiian culture and heritage through mo'olelo 'aina. Mānoa's mural, painted by first- and fourth-graders, told the story of Kahalaopuna, the Rainbow Princess of Mānoa. Schools can also "[Offer Your Wall](#)" for future murals.

ART GRANTS

For longer-term, inquiry-based art experiences, the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts offers several grant opportunities. [Art Bento](#) is a free learning experience that steeps teachers and students in art awareness and creative response. The four parts include professional development, pre- and post-art instruction for students, and a visit to the Hawai'i State Art Museum. Art Bento matches each school with an art form that might include music, dance, poetry or visual arts. Mānoa Elementary has participated for two years, with second-, fourth- and fifth-graders learning to use movement as a medium for artistic expression.

[Artists in the Schools](#) (AITS) is another grant that funds a

school-chosen art provider to collaboratively design a series of sessions integrating art with the core curriculum. This year, Mānoa Elementary's fourth- and fifth-graders will participate in an AITS journey entitled "Unpacking History through Artifacts and Movement." It is an eight-part series that explores the physical and political history of Hawai'i and the United States, respectively. Students will learn about objects from the Lending Collection and interpret the stories of these places through collaborative dance.



Opportunities are within reach to make connections to art in deeply personal ways. Not only are students able to tap into left-brain functions of organizing and analyzing factual knowledge, students strengthen right-brain functions, synthesizing creative interactions with information and ideas. Through varied experiences, students better understand where they come from, who they are, who they are striving to become and where they are headed.

Eileen Carr is a fourth-grade teacher at Mānoa Elementary. She has spent 20 years teaching and seeks to promote learning communities that emphasize direct experience, creativity, inquiry and debate.



✧ Eileen Carr

Awards Highlights

►► Ka'imiloa Elementary's Cecilia 'CC' Chung named 2020 State Teacher of the Year

Ka'imiloa Elementary School teacher Cecilia "CC" Chung was named HIDOE's 2020 Hawai'i State Teacher of the Year at an Oct. 28 awards ceremony at Washington Place.

The award represents the Department's highest teaching honor and is presented annually to a classroom teacher selected from among more than 11,000 educators. Chung was one of 16 finalists representing HIDOE's 15 complex areas and one from charter schools.

Each finalist had to meet specific criteria to be considered, including inspiring students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn; maintaining the respect and admiration of students, parents and colleagues; and contributing to their school and



► Above, Teacher of the Year winner Cecilia "CC" Chung poses with Superintendent Christina Kishimoto, Gov. David Ige and First Lady Dawn Amano-Ige at Washington Place.

broader community.

Chung joined the HIDOE family in 2013 and is a sixth-grade teacher at Ka'imiloa Elementary in 'Ewa Beach. A mentor and inspiration to her colleagues,

Chung has led and facilitated a variety of workshops for the education community, including the Schools of the Future Conference, EdCamp for West O'ahu, and Kamehameha

Schools' Ed Tech Conference.

She is also a Hawai'i State Teacher Fellow, a role in which she works with other rigorously selected public school teachers to grow their leadership skills, collaborate to bring teacher voices to decision makers, and elevate the profession.

"I feel there is a real energy and momentum in our Hawai'i public schools right now. There is energy around Teacher Voice, around Student Voice, around people actually caring and wanting to make a better Hawai'i," Chung said. "I'm going to do my best to represent all the amazing teachers in our state — we have so many — and I will do my best to represent this really truly honorable profession."

►► #HI4PublicEd

Here's a roundup of some of the recent accolades received by schools, employees and state offices.

Hickam Elementary Principal Alisa Bender was recognized as one of 10 school leaders nationwide to receive the 2019 Terrel H. Bell Award for Outstanding School Leadership. The award is part of the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. **Hickam, La'ie and Waialua Elementary** schools were named 2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education.

The following teachers were awarded the Presidential Award of Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, or PAEMST: Daphne Okunaga of **Pearl City High**, Nel Venzon Jr. of **Mililani High**, Richard Brian "RB" Ogawa of **Kanoelani Elementary**, and Daniel Taira of **Lehua Elementary**.

The Hawaii Association of Secondary School Administrators (HASSA) honored **Mililani High** Principal Fred Murphy as the state's National Distinguished Principal of

the Year and **Waipahu High** Vice Principal Meryl Matsumura as the Vice Principal of the Year.

Palolo Elementary Health Assistant Sherry Tanna was named Project Vision Hawai'i's Community Partner of the Year in recognition of her work as an active advocate and supporter of school and community programs that are dedicated to the health and welfare of children.

The **Office of Hawaiian Education's** Ka Papahana Kaiapuni program was honored as the 2019 recipient of the

William Demmert Cultural Freedom Award by the National Indian Education Association. The Hawaiian language immersion program delivers instruction exclusively through the medium of Hawaiian language and operates in 18 public schools statewide.

Verna Chinen, an educational specialist in the **Office of Student Support Services**, has been awarded the 2019 Louis M. DiCarlo Award from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation.

Supt's CORNER



► Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto

2030 Promise Plan

What a productive semester it's been as we kicked off collaboration on the 2030 Promise Plan over the summer with extensive community

outreach. So far we've received more than 3,400 points of feedback throughout three phases!

The Promise Plan is organized around five themes – Hawai'i, Equity, School Design, Empowerment and Innovation – with student promises to be realized in every public school by 2030. It focuses on creative ideas and solutions toward a thriving, sustainable state grounded in the values of Nā Hopena A'o (HĀ).

All of the feedback collected is now being used by a team of internal leaders with large principal representation and voice to create the final draft that will go to the board in

February. The draft will include major strategies that will anchor the plan around the most impactful strategies that will drive continued success for the next 10 years with a real focus on empowerment and innovation, including the consideration of two to three indicators to add to the existing Strive HI metrics.

Upon approval by the Board of Education in early 2020, the plan will guide our policies, procedures, operations, planning and other activities to ensure we're on track to deliver on our promises. I'm excited to continue moving this important work forward with all of you.



► Talk Story with Dr. K

Catch up on past episodes of "Talk Story with Dr. K," including a conversation with Office of Hawaiian Education Director Kau'i Sang about a new initiative that will provide access to free introductory Hawaiian language courses for all employees through the University of Hawai'i's community colleges.

<http://vimeo.com/showcase/6228362>