

KANU O KA 'ĀINA

ANNUAL SELF-EVALUATION REPORT



Kūlia i ka nu'u - Strive to reach your highest level

Kanu o ka 'Āina New Century Public Charter School

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KANU O KA 'ĀINA – ANNUAL SELF EVALUATION REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This Report has been prepared by Kanu o ka 'Āina New Century Public Charter School (KANU) in accordance with Act 62, which requires that "every new century charter school shall submit a report of its self-evaluation to the Board of Education." The Act further states that, "the department shall have thirty days to respond to any recommendation regarding improvements and modifications that would directly impact the department." It is our sincere hope that the recommendations presented in this report will be considered by the BOE/DOE and initiate a process of active collaboration between the BOE, the DOE, the Unions and KANU, as required by Act 62. This collaboration is absolutely essential for the continued success of KANU.

This report is also part of KANU's accountability plan to provide all interested stakeholders with a comprehensive account of our school's performance and progress. As Hawai'i's first indigenous K-12 public charter school, it is absolutely vital that we share the impact of culturally-driven education on native student performance. The data presented in this report clearly validates that native students prefer and therefore perform better in a culturally-driven educational milieu. KANU has also clearly demonstrated that Hawai'i's indigenous people are able to design and control our own quality models of education and that we are ready to initiate the creation of a comprehensive native-designed and controlled system of education, as advocated by the federally-funded Native Hawaiian Education Council, as we usher in a new era of Hawaiian self-determination. Article 1.7.1 of the Coolangatta Statement states, "meaningful, empowering and culturally sustainable education for indigenous people will be possible only when indigenous people have the control (a fundamental right) and the resources (an inarguable responsibility of states/governments) to develop educational theories, curriculum and practices that are indigenous and determine the environment within which this education can best occur." Over the past year, KANU has had some control and received some resources - although not nearly enough as this report clearly validates. All we are asking is that our students are given the same amount of resources / funding as all other public school students and that we are included in the decision making process as it relates to the operation and management of our school.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Incredible milestones have been reached since December of 1998, when members of the Kanu o ka 'Āina Learning 'Ohana (KALO) first explored the possibility of establishing an academically rigorous, culturally-driven K-12 charter school in Waimea on the island of Hawai'i. Thanks to tremendous community support, an exceptionally dedicated staff, extremely supportive parents and community partners, and an incredible group of high-spirited student pioneers, KANU's first year of operation was a phenomenal success. We progressed beyond our wildest dreams. Together we will also achieve our goal to create a culturally-driven, multi-purpose, multi-agency Hawaiian cultural learning center in North Hawai'i, part of a comprehensive native-controlled system of education, that will provide students of all ages with a viable choice in education.

Excerpt from *Ka Mu'o*, KANU Yearbook 2000-2001:

"My heart is filled with pride and joy as we end the 2000-2001 school year. The birth of Kanu o ka 'Āina was truly a strenuous endeavour. Yet, like all new parents, when we behold this new, unique and very worthwhile product that has emerged, the obstacles are quickly forgotten, and a deep happiness arises. Kanu o ka 'Āina has succeeded because of the hard work of our teachers, students, families and supporters. I would like to express my deep appreciation to the many courageous people who helped and supported this special labor of love, the elders, the parents, the children and the community partners who believe in the visions of our ancestors and trust their hearts. Because we united, we were able to progress quickly and with great strength and vigor. As we continue to strive for our highest goals, I humbly ask each one of you who is part of our Kanu o ka 'Āina learning 'ohana to continue to search for pono and to hope for the best. Because no task is too big if done together."

With deepest love and appreciation, Kū Kahakalau, Director

KANU'S LĀLĀMILO CAMPUS Waimea, Hawai'i Island



A rainbow greets students
on the first day of school

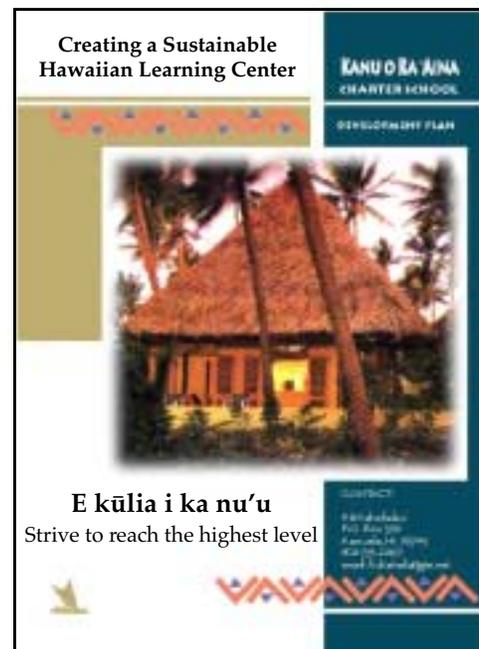
KANU'S MISSION, VISION, BELIEFS, GOALS AND OUTCOMES

MISSION

The mission of KANU is to encourage all stakeholders to *kūlia i ka nu'u* — **strive to reach the highest** – as we design, implement and continuously evaluate a quality, culturally-driven, family-oriented and community-based model of education. A philosophy and culture of excellence guides KANU. We deliver a meaningful curriculum, integrated instruction, authentic assessment, and set high expectations for students and staff, as well as for the liberatory possibilities of education. As a community-based, family-oriented school, KANU actively involves parents, extended family and community members in the educational process. As a result, the community and the surrounding environment become our living learning laboratories, where students and community work together to create a future that is *pono* (everything that is good and right from a Hawaiian perspective).

VISION

The vision of KANU is to expand our quality, K-12, standards-based charter school into a comprehensive Native Hawaiian learning center or *kauhale*, which can address the educational and cultural needs of all stakeholders from the womb to the tomb. This *kauhale* would include our K-12 charter school as well as Pre-K and post-secondary programs, including a preschool, college courses, community workshops, cultural camps, career training etc. We envision this *kauhale* to be designed and constructed by students, parents and community members and to be as self-sustaining as possible. This *kauhale* will model 'green' energy efficiency, recycling all possible materials and also employ Polynesian design, local materials and expertise. In addition, this *kauhale* will embrace culturally appropriate entrepreneurial components that will contribute to the self-sustainability of the learning center. Besides serving as an educational venue for learners of all ages, this *kauhale* will also function as a Hawaiian multi-agency, multi-service center and cultural meeting place. As such, we envision this *kauhale* becoming a prototype for Hawaiian cooperation and empowerment throughout the archipelago.



Cover of the *Kauhale* Development Plan

BELIEFS

- We believe that Hawaiian knowledge structure differs significantly from the Western system of education.
- We believe that as an indigenous people, Hawaiians have the right to design and control our own education.
- We believe that Hawaiian students can succeed in the 21st century without having to give up their Hawaiian cultural values and traditions.
- We believe that when Hawaiian culture, language and values are incorporated into the pedagogical process at all levels, education has its deepest relevance and meaning for Hawaiian children. As a result, students are able to learn, to grow and to excel both in the academic setting and in life.
- We believe that the integration of the natural environment into a quality Hawaiian curriculum is absolutely essential.
- We believe that systemic educational reform can only be implemented with the support and assistance of the community, including parents and extended family members.

SCHOOLWIDE GOALS



Student Artwork

Via the implementation of indigenous teaching and learning approaches developed over nearly a decade of action research by our founders, KANU encourages each student to reach his/her highest potential. Our pedagogy is designed to give each student the skills and the sense of responsibility to perpetuate Hawai'i's native culture, language and traditions into the next millennium.

As a performance-based model of education, where individual and collective progress and accomplishment are the shared purpose, KANU brings together the best of 21st century educational paradigms with the strength of Native Hawaiian cultural traditions. Students learn how to think strategically, to problem solve effectively, to work collaboratively, to take responsibility for their own actions and to evaluate their own performance and products— all skills necessary in a world that is getting more and more complex. In addition, students become active participants in the perpetuation of Hawaiian language, culture and traditions, the transformation of their neighborhoods into more sustainable communities, and agents for the pre-servation of Hawai'i's unique natural resources.

SCHOOLWIDE LEARNER OUTCOMES

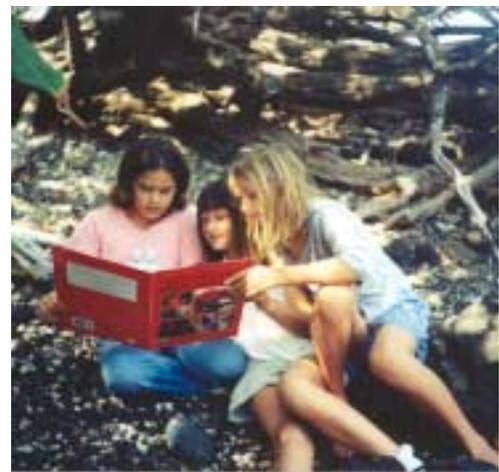
During the decade of planning and conferring that has brought KANU from community vision to reality, KANU stakeholders have generated a series of statements to articulate specifically what students at KANU should know and be able to do. Achievement of the following goals related to core knowledge and competencies will indicate that KANU students are able to contribute positively to society:

- Students effectively demonstrate reading, writing and communication skills in both English and Hawaiian
- Students demonstrate mastery of cultural, academic and workplace competencies
- Students demonstrate the ability to access, evaluate, synthesize and present information using a variety of ancient and modern technologies
- Students apply critical thinking skills and problem solving techniques, and demonstrate the ability to apply these to mathematics and science
- Students demonstrate understanding of life-long learning, cooperation and the practice of Hawaiian cultural values as essential elements in the transition to economic and political self-sufficiency

STANDARDS BASED STUDENT OUTCOMES

The following three standards-based student outcomes are goals which were developed during the 2000-2001 school year using the Standards Implementation Design (SID) process. SID action plans are currently under development.

1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in three key areas of literacy:
 - decoding/fluency
 - comprehension/thinking
 - enjoyment of reading, writing and math
2. Students will develop their skills in both Hawaiian and English languages, working toward fluency from each of their personal starting points
3. Students will engage in authentic inquiry, designing and creating units of study and assessments as part of KANU's ongoing action research project



KANU students enjoy reading at the Kawaihae Outdoor Learning Laboratory

STANDARDS-BASED CURRICULUM

Built upon a decade of intensive action research, KANU is a model of education that incorporates both Hawaiian Cultural Standards and the State of Hawai'i Content and Performance Standards. As a result, students become fluent speakers of Hawaiian and English and learn how to walk successfully in two worlds, the Hawaiian and the Western. Through project-based, multi-age learning that utilizes the environment, the community and the latest in multimedia technology, students may become as familiar with working at the computer as in the taro patch.

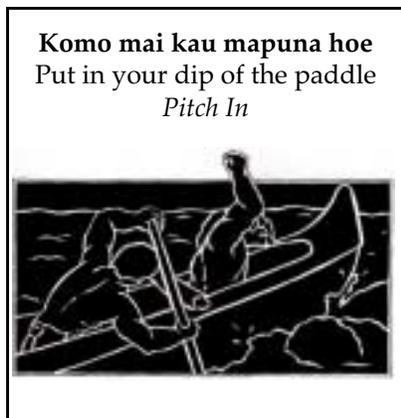
KANU uses the following strategies to implement a standards-based curriculum:

1. Core Knowledge workshops which provide students with a strong academic foundation.
2. Project-based learning, focusing on culturally relevant scientific field research and multi-media production.
3. Student development workshops that cultivate competencies in areas such as fine arts, Hawaiian language and culture, health, character development, and career/college prep internships.
4. Rubrics and other tools for self-evaluation to help students learn to recognize quality products, processes and performances.

SYSTEMIC IMPACT

As a start-up K-12 Charter School, KANU is the first of its kind in Hawai'i nei, and a beacon of hope for many who believe that education can be both academically rigorous and culturally driven. KANU is also a founding member of Nā Lei Na'auao, Native Hawaiian Charter School Alliance, whose mission it is to establish models of education throughout the Hawaiian Islands which are community designed and controlled, and reflect respect, and embrace Hawaiian cultural values, philosophies and ideologies. Utilizing the charter school movement as a vehicle, the Alliance hopes to implement and evaluate Hawaiian models of education, which have the potential to improve educational success for Hawai'i's 50,000 K-12 public school students of Hawaiian ancestry, currently Hawai'i's largest and most underserved ethnic student population. Nā Lei Na'auao's ultimate vision is to create a comprehensive system of Hawaiian education that is culturally-driven, family-oriented and community-based which allows all stakeholders to achieve their highest level, while actively contributing to the perpetuation of Hawai'i's indigenous language, culture and traditions. All Nā Lei Na'auao charter schools have agreed to:

- **Pool our strengths**, according to the Hawaiian concept of *kūkulu kumuhana* and assist each other in setting up and operating individual Hawaiian charter schools throughout the archipelago. This includes collaboration on grants, implementation plans etc., as well as sharing a variety of resources including educational materials, teacher trainers etc. To date, alliance members have been awarded over \$3 million in grants.
- **Meet on a regular basis** to discuss progression of individual charter schools and assist each other with external and internal problems and concerns
- **Participate in an ongoing action research project** to gather and evaluate data documenting the impact of native designed and controlled educational programs on Hawaiian students, to validate our claim that Hawaiian people are ready, willing and able to design and control our own educational system
- **Contribute to the design of culturally appropriate standards** for students, teachers and schools in collaboration with other Native Hawaiian educators
- **Assist each other in developing quality tools for evaluation and assessment**
- **Participate in professional development** and certification programs for teachers and staff, based on native philosophies of education
- **Work together with other Hawaiian organizations**, to establish sustainable Hawaiian learning centers and communities, particularly in the rural areas of the Hawaiian archipelago



Komo mai kau mapuna hoe
Put in your dip of the paddle
Pitch In

One of KANU's weekly
'Ōlelo No'eau

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PROFILE*



Hālau Kukui, KANU Outdoor Learning Laboratory in Kawaihae

The majority of KANU's 127 students come from North Hawai'i, including the districts of North Kohala, South Kohala and Hāmākua; a handful travel from North Kona and Hilo districts. Our main feeder schools are Waimea Elementary & Intermediate, and Honoka'a High School, the latter of which formerly housed Kanu o ka 'Āina Hawaiian Academy, the forerunner of Kanu o ka 'Āina New Century Public Charter School.

KANU's main campus is located in Waimea; students also have access to outdoor learning laboratories stretching from Kawaihae to Waipi'o Valley. The North Hawai'i community is rapidly expanding from a close-knit rural paniolo town to a suburban, small-business center at high risk for drug traffic. Increasing alcohol and drug use, teen birth rates, juvenile arrests, and an exceptionally high rate of confirmed child abuse are cause for concern, particularly because statewide, these trends are decreasing.

COMMUNITY INDICATORS

When polled by Hawai'i Community College, only 33% of North Hawai'i employers reported that job applicants had satisfactory basic skills in written/verbal communication, math and time management. Part of the reason for this may be that in North Hawai'i, the percent of adults who have completed high school is up to 13% lower than the State average. This low level of educational attainment may be one element which contributes to the fact that the percentage of children who are "significantly below average" on standardized tests is far higher in North Hawai'i than across the State. This discrepancy increases progressively between third and tenth grade.

ETHNIC COMPOSITION

KANU's pedagogy is rooted in the Hawaiian knowledge base, and is designed to meet the unique needs and learning styles of Hawai'i's indigenous children. One main goal of KANU is to increase the educational success of students of Hawaiian ancestry, whose profile as an ethnic group is significantly lower on all educational performance indicators, both in North Hawai'i and across the State. Statewide and on the Big Island, Hawaiian students make up 26% of the school population, but in other North Hawai'i community schools, percentages of those with Hawaiian ancestry range from 42% to 47%. Many of these Hawaiian students in North Hawai'i feel disenfranchised within a system that fails to comprehend or value Hawaiian ways of learning. While KANU welcomes students of all ethnic groups, KANU's culturally-driven curriculum and project-based learning methods attract a large percentage of Hawaiian families. During the 2000-2001 school year, 83 % of the students who chose to come to KANU were Hawaiian; KANU makes no distinction between Hawaiian and Part-Hawaiian; all are considered *kanaka maoli*, native people of Hawai'i. Ten percent of KANU students were Caucasian and 6% were "Other".

KANU STUDENT DESCRIPTION

KANU's student body was 46% female and 53% male, with all grade levels from K-12 generally evenly represented. Special education students comprised 10% of the student body, a proportion comparable with other schools in North Hawai'i. Of these, two are identified as 504 and 11 as IDEA. Nine of these students and their families received mental health services on campus or within the community. According to KANU's definition, all KANU students are gifted. KANU is a Title I school with 53% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. Attendance at KANU averaged 92% during SY 2000-2001. This translates into 10 days absent per child, which is significantly below the statewide absence rate of 16 days per student.



KANU Students at Kawaihae Lab

*(For data sources and more complete information, see North Hawai'i Community Outcomes Forum Report 2000, Department of Education SSIR statistics, Hawai'i County Databook and Kamehameha Schools' Native Hawaiian Educational Assessment 1999-00)

KANU'S IMPACT ON STUDENTS

School Year 2000-2001 data confirm that KANU has made a profound impact upon the lives and learning experiences of its students. Dramatic improvements were reported by parents, students, teachers and even community members after only a few weeks of school. These improvements are all the more significant considering that KANU is only a year old, and that many of the students who entered KANU were considered "uneducable."

The following pages highlight a few of the areas in which we witnessed profound changes and improvements among our student population:



Peer Education: a 7th-grader and 1st grader practice chords together

- PERSONAL GROWTH
- ATTENDANCE
- SPECIAL EDUCATION
- MATHEMATICS
- TECHNOLOGY
- SUCCESS INDICATORS

"I used to have to drag my son to school—and now he's out at the car every morning telling me: Mom! Hurry up, I don't wanna be late!"
--Parent of an eighth grader

Social progress and academic growth have been tremendous for some individual students, as evidenced by their comments and their families' statements. Due to the culturally-driven nature of our program which presented students with a familiar learning environment, students were able to make outstanding achievements which they might never have attempted in other learning environments.

END OF THE YEAR STUDENT SURVEY

When surveyed at the end of the year, the student body overwhelmingly agreed that their self-confidence and focus had improved since coming to KANU, and two-thirds agreed that their basic skills in the areas of reading, writing and math had improved greatly.

A majority also expressed that they feel KANU's curriculum is teaching them how to manage their time and is preparing them with skills for succeeding in life beyond school.



Multi-age Learning

END OF THE YEAR PARENT SURVEY

As a group, parents expressed overwhelmingly positive opinions about their children's experiences at Kanu o ka 'Āina:

- 92% of parents saw their children showing more Hawaiian values
- 74% noticed their children becoming more self-aware of their behaviors
- 93% expressed that their children's self-confidence and focus had improved since starting at KANU
- 74% saw significant improvements in math skills.
- 71% noticed an increase in their children's problem-solving skills
- 88% of parents felt the school had informed them of ways to help children with schoolwork and agreed that they knew how to get involved in school meetings, decisions & activities
- 95% of parents agreed that parent-teacher communication had been useful and frequent
- 100% of parents agreed that the Hunehune Kalo 'Ohana Update Newsletter (right) was an effective communication tool

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent Attendance at 'Ohana gatherings averaged 85%, an extremely high level of participation in comparison with the average 15 to 20% reported by two other North Hawai'i DOE schools.



Happy KANU students showing off their pū'ohē

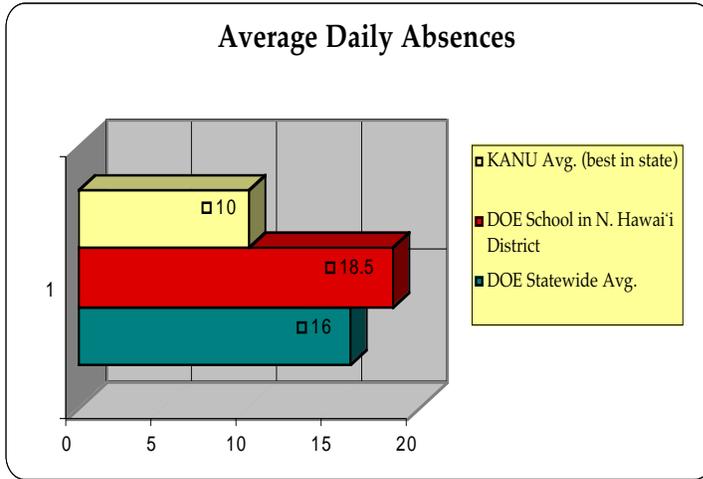


KANU WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Excerpt from a parent's thank you letter to KANU:

Her grades have never looked like they do now. Her attitude, her pride in herself and in her culture, her respect for people and school have all changed for the better. We've watched her grow to be a better person largely due to the influences at Kanu o ka 'Āina..."

KANU'S IMPACT ON STUDENTS

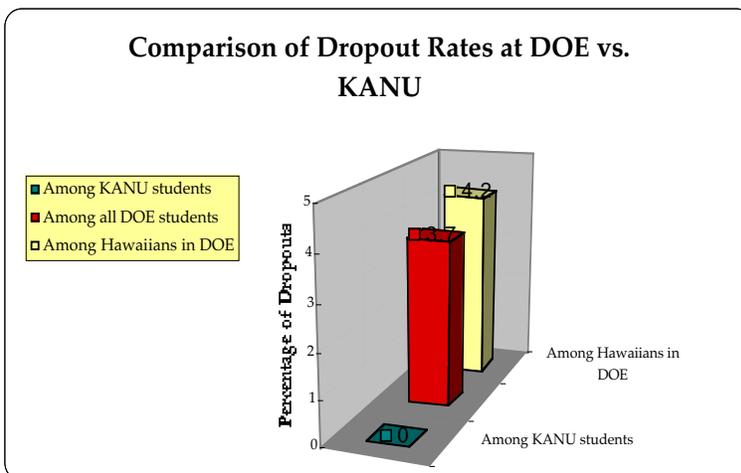
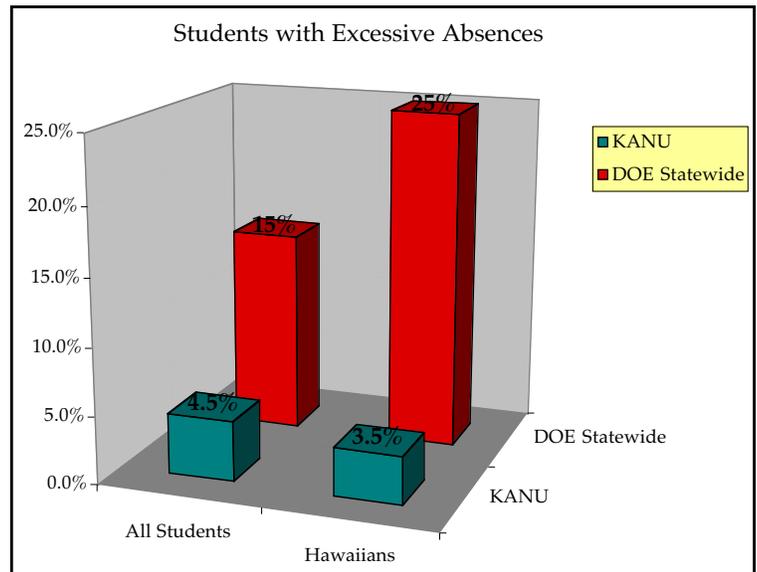


BEST ATTENDANCE IN THE STATE!

Probably the best indicator that students like their education and that they want to learn is quantitative attendance data. When KANU received notification that our school had the lowest number of "Average Daily Absences" in the state, we sought to compare our students not only with the statewide average, but also with the attendance of their peers who go to other community schools and deal with similar life-circumstances. KANU's average of 10 daily absences was nearly half of the rate of 18.5 reported by other schools in North Hawai'i.

MINIMAL EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Excessive absences tend to significantly impact a student's potential for educational success. Statewide, 15% of all students have "excessive absences," meaning more than 20 absences during a quarter. During SY 2000-2001, only 4.5% of KANU students had excessive absences. (see left side of graph for data on students of all ethnicities; right side for Hawaiian students). Among Hawaiian students across the state, excessive absences are even higher, amounting to 25%. Among KANU's Hawaiian students the excessive absence rate of 3.5% was even lower than among KANU students of all ethnicities.



ZERO DROPOUT RATE

Although a handful of students transferred to other schools throughout the school year for a variety of reasons, no KANU students officially dropped out of school during SY 2000-2001. Statewide, the dropout rate is 3.7%, and among Hawaiians, the rate is even higher at 4.2%. Yet even though 83% of KANU's student body is Hawaiian, the dropout rate was zero percent. When compared to the Statewide average, it becomes apparent that the methods KANU is using with its at-risk students are extremely effective.

KANU'S IMPACT ON STUDENTS

DRAMATIC GROWTH FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Special Education students at KANU have perhaps experienced the most profound transformations in their experience of learning and in their sense of successfulness. This is especially significant because statewide, students of Hawaiian ancestry are overrepresented among those labeled "Special Education."

KANU's data is consistent with other DOE data which states that between 60% and 70% of all Hawaiian SPED students, particularly those in the lower grades, tend to be diagnosed as having special learning disabilities (LD). As they get older, many of these students are diagnosed as severely emotionally handicapped (SEH). One DOE official explained this SEH increase in the upper grades as follows: "LD cases may experience such frustration with school that they end up as SEH cases, when the core problem may originally have been severely limited reading/school skills." (NHEA 1993)

KANU data indicate that the core problem relating to Hawaiian SPED students is not that Hawaiian SPED students have special learning disabilities, but that they— like all other Hawaiian students - have special ways of learning, which are not parallel with Western ways of learning. Subsequently, when Hawaiian SPED students are immersed in a meaningful, culturally-driven, inclusive educational settings, their performance dramatically increases.

All KANU's SPED students have either increased or maintained their GPA. Over half improved their GPA between .2 and 2.0 points. For example, one SPED student went from a 1.33 GPA at Honoka'a School to a 3.20 at KANU.

The foster parent of a SPED 5th grader said:

"He wakes up every morning excited about going to school. Last year he hated school and it was always a struggle."

"I got a spirit award for my class. I like dance hula, sing Hawaiian songs. I luv my kumu because he helps me when I get real mad."
3rd grade SPED male.

I would probably get kicked out of other schools because other people in other schools don't care as much as people in this school care..."
11th grade SPED male.

"I have accomplished a lot in my learning and understanding skills. I have been able to do my work and understand it."
11th grade SPED female.

Eleventh grade SPED student:

I am privileged to have had the opportunity to intensively learn about photography and video production and then use my newfound knowledge to document all the interesting and educational activities going on at KANU. It pleases me to know that my teacher trusts me enough to allow me to handle and operate equipment worth thousands of dollars. Photography has helped boost my confidence and allowed me to come out of my protective shell and interact with other people. These skills can take me far in life and they cannot be easily found in other schools. The teachers constantly push me to *kūlia i ka nu'u* and although I grumble, it means a lot to me to know that someone cares about my education.

The father of a SPED student in fourth grade said:

"We have had a terrible experience with special education in the past; now my son really loves coming to school and is doing work he would never do before..."



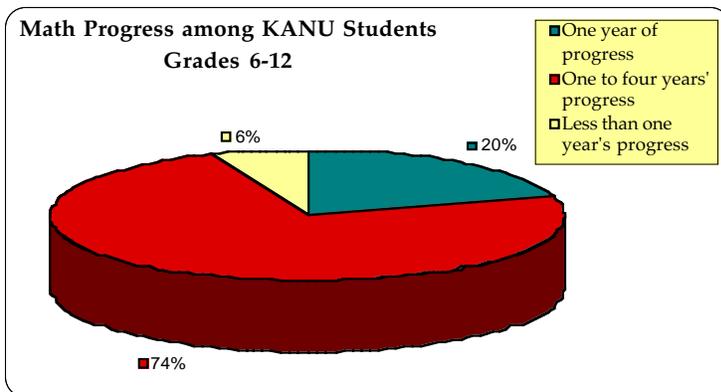
When rooted in the context of native ways of learning, the SPED inclusion approach allows students to progress at their own speed and learn from each other.

Progresses in Mathematics

Traditional math settings typically fail to recognize the student's current level and needs, breezing by topics and leaving students further and further behind as the years pass. When they entered KANU, the vast majority of students in grades 6-12 were significantly below their average grade level performance in mathematics. Use of a nationally acclaimed self-paced mathematics program has enabled many of these students to dramatically increase their successes in the area of math. At the beginning of the school year, students in grades 6-12 were placed into small workshops based on pre-assessment data. This data assigned many students into workshops three and four years below their grade level. This low math ability of Hawaiian students is congruent with statewide DOE statistics. Because of the small size of the relatively same-level workshops, students were able to receive personal and small group tutoring at a level within their zone of understanding and comfort. As a result of this individualized attention, 93 percent of 6-12 students improved at least one grade level, with 40 percent climbing two grade levels in one year and 33 percent two or more grade levels.

Grade Cluster	% making one year's anticipated progress	% moving up one grade level	% moving up two or more grade levels	% making less than one year's progress	% working at or above grade level (post-test)
K-5	80	0	16	4	95
6-12	20	40	33	6	25

Due to low levels of success at prior educational institutions, at the start of the year only nine students in the 6-12 cluster tested to grade level in math (seven of whom were sixth graders). By the end of the year, 25% of all students 6-12 were working at or above their grade levels. 20% had made the typical yearly progress expected, 6% made less progress than expected; 40% completed 2 years of math in two semesters, 34% completed between 3 and 4 years of math in only two semesters. Students reported dramatic shifts in their attitudes toward math realizing for the first time that through setting goals, ***"I could do it!"***



Twenty percent of students (represented in blue), successfully completed a year of math lessons. Six percent (represented in yellow) made less than one year's progress, as defined by the standards of our math program. The majority of KANU's 6-12 students (represented in red) advanced between one and four grade levels.

K-5

Compared to our 6-12 hui, fewer K-5 students were seriously deficient in math when they first entered KANU. Rather than grouping by ability, K-5 students were generally grouped by grades, due to their age and need for guidance, stability and manipulatives. Yet, because the workshops were small and lots of individual attendance was provided, 96% of all K-5 students progressed. The vast majority (80%) progressed at the rate expected, However 16% of the fourth and fifth graders progressed through two entire years of lessons, moving up two grade levels in math. By the conclusion of the school year, 95% of students in K-5 were working at or above grade level.

Such statistics as which indicate significant student achievement among our younger students make us not only extremely hopeful, but incredibly glad that we chose to expand our 9-12 Hawaiian Academy to a K-12 format. It is for these students that KANU was created.

Director's Comment

KANU'S IMPACT ON STUDENTS



ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY

One of the most important aspects of computer literacy is simply having sustained access to technology. In order to allow all students to achieve a high degree of computer literacy and become technologically proficient and confident, KANU procured two grants which have allowed us to develop a solid computer and video editing program.

KANU technology data shows that schoolwide, students have made great strides in their knowledge of computers and other multi-media equipment. Some of this learning includes a significant amount of exploration of the internet, familiarity with diverse writing and graphics programs, photography and video experience; as well as ventures by some students into animation and the structure/construction of networks.

Students in K-5 enjoyed progress in weekly keyboarding sessions, progressing through adaptive lessons at their own pace and learning skills essential in education and the workplace.

Students in 6-12 were able to work with more complex programs such as Hyperstudio, Photoshop and Pagemaker as they created a variety of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i greeting cards, cultural presentations and documents as demonstrations of knowledge. Students also built the Kanu o ka 'Āina web page which was featured on the Hawai'i DOE "School of the Week" website.

A cohort of advanced computer students tackled the Netprep Program, a complex and intensive program of study exploring the fundamentals of system design and computer network construction.

All 21 of the Kanu students who had never previously used a computer, either at school or at home received an introduction to the basics such as operating a mouse, connecting to the server, word processing and searching the internet.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

For their 2nd Quarter Hō'ike, all KANU students grades 4 - 12 had to complete a science project. The best four KANU projects were chosen to attend the District Science Fair in Hilo. Out of these, the three listed below were selected by judges to go on to the Hawai'i State Science and Engineering Fair in Honolulu to represent KANU.

Emalani Case, grade 12, presented a report on Traditional Use of Black Dye to Waterproof Canoe Hulls. Emalani's research won her the Earl Bakken Award.

Kalā Thomas, grade 11, presented his research on the question, "Which Substrate is Best for Growing Milo?"

Mokukea Bates, grade 7, presented her project on Pineapple Enzymes.

Comparison of pre- and post-assessments of students' knowledge in the area of technology revealed growth for all KANU students, whether their level of prior knowledge was beginning or advanced.



Custom-made Family Tree Advertisement created by KALO Inc. student enterprise

KANU's technological and general achievements are highlighted on the National School-to-Work Little Red Schoolhouse website, where the school was selected as a model of Project-Based Learning methodologies.

Professional development in educational technology is an integral part of KANU's technology program and all teaching staff receive training in the same programs that their students are learning. This way, teaching staff can proficiently address questions as they arise for students. All teaching staff were also provided with innovative options to purchase their own wireless I-book computers, in order to have sustained access to technology at school and at home.

KANU'S IMPACT ON STUDENTS

STUDENT SUCCESS INDICATORS

When students' first quarter grade point averages (GPA) were compared to year end grades, 56% of K-12 students showed improvements in their GPA throughout the course of the year. Among our K-5 students, 82% improved their GPA, while among the 6-12 students, 36% improved their GPA, in some cases over 2 points.

SENIOR POWER

100 percent of SY2000-01 graduates were accepted into at least one 2-year college or a 4-year university.

Seven former graduates returned to the KANU 'ohana during the summer for part-time employment, working as classroom aides, librarian's assistants, office aides, and doing construction with the site team.

Each year, the Hawai'i Association of Language Arts Teachers sponsors an essay competition. KANU submitted essays written by Kehaunani Pascubillo and Emalani Case (9-12 division) and also by Auli'i Case and KaiPo Stender (6-8 division).

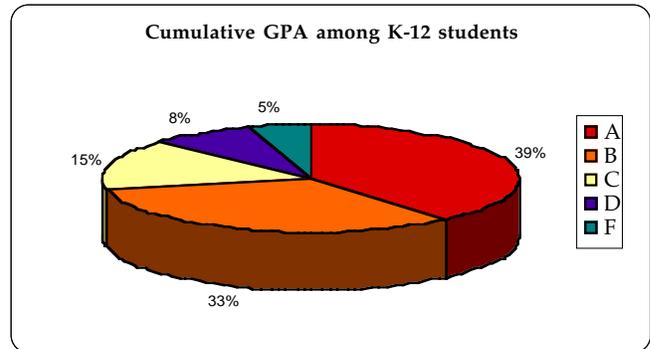
CONGRATULATIONS TO SENIOR EMALANI CASE:



Emalani's essay "About the Koa Canoe" won first prize among twelfth graders statewide and was published in the Association's Annual Showcase.

Emalani also won the Earl A. Bakken Chemistry award for "Best in Subject" in the area of Chemistry at the Big Island District Science Fair.

In addition, Emalani received several significant scholarships.



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS AND AWARDS

Throughout the year, student successes were celebrated at KANU and announced to parents and the community through the weekly Hunehune Kalo Newsletter.

Congratulations to Kalā Thomas!

Eleventh-grader Kalā Thomas was selected from among thousands of students nationwide, to participate in a research expedition to the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), along with 73 other students from across the U.S. They will gather in New Mexico as part of the Earthwatch Institute 2001 Student Challenge Awards Program. These students who have demonstrated talents in the arts and humanities will be given opportunities to work with scientists in disciplines ranging from astrophysics to microbiology.

Kalā, who interns at Keck Observatory, will be studying astronomy and working with different kinds of telescopes, including the big radio telescope instruments at the LANL's Fenton Hill observatory. The object of his study will be so-called "transient events" in astronomy, events observable only for brief periods, such as gamma-ray bursts, supernovae, comets and asteroids. Using the telescopes and powerful computers, Kalā and his mentors will be studying such events and searching for new ones.

Congratulations to fifth grade girls Leianna Eads and Kealoha Kakalia, for being selected to participate in GEMS: Girls Exploring Math and Science.

Mahalo to KANU students and families who joined the annual Sanctuary Ocean Whale Count, staking out sites to monitor activity from Onomea to 'Upolu Point.

Last quarter, some 3rd-5th graders wrote a proposal for an Easter Fair. With the help of Aunty Pōmai Kamoku and others, the students requested donations of prizes from local businesses and planned an event that was enjoyed by everyone in the K-5 hui. The organizers, pictured from left to right, were: Hannah Lipson, Leinā'ala Santos-Colburn, Aunty Pōmai, Kealoha Kakalia (back row), Carly Smith, Hi'ilei Levenson, Kamalani Aikau (center) and Leianna Eads (front).



BEST PRACTICES IN EDUCATION



Student Art Work

Fundamentally different in educational philosophy, curricular structure, and approach from presently existing models, KANU includes many unique features that are ancient and modern. Much of KANU's curriculum and structure is based on traditional Hawaiian pedagogy. Action research continued during our opening year as Hawai'i's first native-designed and controlled K-12 charter school. Findings indicate that Hawaiian students today still respond best to confirm ancient ways of learning. At the same time, KANU's curriculum and structure include many of the latest 21st century educational practices. Interestingly, there is often an astonishing overlap between the two aforementioned ways of learning and knowing.

This section focuses on some of KANU's best practices in education. These features distinguish KANU from other presently existing public schools. During the 2001-2002 school year, some of these practices will be incorporated by other Nā Lei Na'auao – Native Hawaiian Charter School Alliance schools, who view KANU as a model. It is our belief, that some of these practices may also be successfully integrated into existing DOE schools, particularly those with high concentrations of Native Hawaiian students. In that respect, KANU fulfills the fundamental charter school mandate of Act 62: "to create new approaches to education that accommodate the individual needs of students and provide the State with successful templates that can dramatically improve Hawai'i's educational standards for the twenty-first century."

INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES

CULTURAL PEDAGOGY

Since Hawaiian culture is the educational foundation at KANU, students gain the skills to perpetuate Hawaiian language culture and traditions into the next century. All projects, as well as many daily activities involve some aspect of the Hawaiian culture and allow the students to actively practice Hawaiian ways. One culturally rooted project involves the Makali'i, a double hulled voyaging canoe. Students' project-based approach to the study of the Makali'i incorporates vital cultural aspects from genealogy to astronomy and navigation.

EMPHASIS ON TECHNOLOGY

Provided with sustained access to the latest in educational technology, KANU students are able to develop a high degree of the computer literacy skills that are essential for survival in today's global economy. Via a strong focus on multi-media production, students learn how to become not just consumers, but actually creators of information about their native culture and traditions.

INTEGRATION OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Throughout the year, students participate in a variety of projects and activities which actively involve parents and other Learning 'Ohana members, as well as KANU's numerous community and educational partners. KANU's most extensive community project is our Gifted and Talented AHO LOA Student Development Program, which involves all KANU students grades K-12 every Friday.

AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

Performance-based assessment, called "*hō'ike*" in Hawaiian, is both an ancient and modern method of evaluation that allows students to share significant aspects of their learning with authentic audiences. Throughout the school year, KANU students share their research results with parents, community groups, public officials and policy makers, as they attempt to solve authentic problems and share new insights. KANU's most significant "*hō'ike*" is our yearly Hula Drama which involves all students grades K-12.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In order to empower the KANU teaching staff to design and implement a quality curriculum, KANU's founders have developed an extensive professional development component. Each Friday, all KANU staff members meet for a minimum of four hours to learn more about computer technology, cultural pedagogy, project-based learning, authentic assessment and other innovative KANU methodologies.

BEST PRACTICES IN EDUCATION

MAKALI'I VOYAGING PROGRAM



Captain Clay Bertelmann sharing his knowledge

STUDENT COMMENTS:

"We fell in love with the Makali'i crew members who took the initiative to teach us what our ancestors have passed down to them, making us the next generation to perpetuate our culture"

"The crew members that have learned these techniques of navigating by the elements have shared with us gained knowledge and given us something to pass on to others"



Tricing the Main

"We had to learn how to tie knots and rigging. Safety always comes first, so we also had to master water safety and CPR"

"We used maps, compasses and simple math techniques to find the estimated times of arrival, the distances of different courses and how long it would take to sail from one point to another. Later on, we found out that we actually met state science standards for earth systems and the universe."

One of KANU's authentic interdisciplinary learning projects which integrates Hawaiian cultural standards with modern educational standards involves the Makali'i, a double hulled outrigger sailing canoe berthed at Kawaihae. This canoe was built by *Nā Kālaiwa'a - Moku o Keawe*, one of KANU's many community partners.

During the third quarter, KANU students in grades 9 - 12 worked closely with *Nā Kālaiwa'a* under the guidance of Captain Clay Bertelmann, as they prepared the Makali'i for a 10-day sailing trip along the Western side of Hawai'i Island.

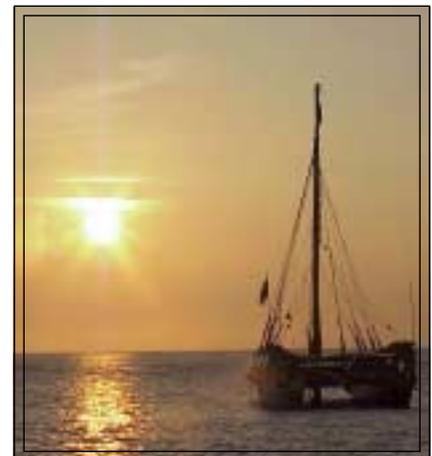
In order to be eligible to participate on the voyage, KANU students needed to maintain good grades and discipline, and master all elements of the Makali'i curriculum. This included knowing a series of knots and the parts of the canoe in Hawaiian and English and being familiar with the points of the Star Compass. In addition, all students had to know a variety of chants and hula that were to be performed on the voyage as part of traditional protocol. Furthermore, all participants, students and chaperones alike, were required to earn an American Red Cross Certificate in CPR, First Aid, and Water Safety before stepping on the wa'a.

From March 18 through March 28, a dozen KANU students and eight adults participated in a wonderful sailing experience on the wa'a kaulua Makali'i. Starting from Kawaihae, the students sailed the Makali'i to Ka'upūlehu, Kealakekua, Miloli'i, Hōnaunau and Ka Lae, stopping at Haleopau (Papawai) and Mahukona on the way back.



Makali'i Emblem

At each landing, students performed traditional protocol and had opportunities to meet with kama'āina, who shared their knowledge of each of the places visited and the unique issues faced by each of the communities. During the sail, the students were required to maintain a daily sailing log, which included journal entries, personal insights, each day's lesson, weather and ocean conditions, and any significant events that happened during the day. As their final project, Kanu seniors completed a 10 minute video of the sail.



Makali'i at Mahukona

BEST PRACTICES IN EDUCATION

KANU is not only at the vanguard of culturally-driven education, the school is also distinguished by the availability of cutting-edge technology to all KANU students on a daily basis. From Kindergarten through high school, students are provided with in-depth, sustained opportunities to use a variety of educational software and hardware as they complete a wide variety of projects. Because KANU anticipated that many of our staff would need technology training, KANU procured an ALU LIKE grant to hire two full-time and one part-time computer technicians. These technicians assist both students and staff in becoming adept at using the latest in educational technology. Students and staff are increasingly confident in their ability to function not only as consumers but also as creators of information.

To allow students to have access to the latest in multimedia production, KANU set up a state-of-the-art Macintosh computer laboratory and video-editing suite, which allows students to create websites, professional publications, interactive CD ROMs and digitally edited videos. In addition, grant monies allowed us to purchase 35 i-books, which are wireless and can connect to the network server from anywhere on campus, allowing students to backup their work on the server, use the internet and print as long as they are within 1000 feet of the two 'Airport' bases.

NETPREP

With the help of our two technicians and a TCIP grant, KANU has initiated a program called NETPREP which allows students from grades 8 – 12 to participate in an in-depth computer networking, maintenance and repair training course. As part of this course, which meets every Friday for four hours, students learn how to maintain and repair our school computers, and have a weekly opportunity to maintain those at a neighboring public elementary and intermediate school.



Peer education is the BEST way to learn computers!

EMPHASIS ON TECNOLOGY



Page from a student-created
Powerpoint Presentation

I'm greatly encouraged by the progress our students have exhibited. I'm confident that Kanu o ka 'Āina is producing technologically literate students equipped to face the demands of modern society.

Nancy Levenson, KANU Tech Coordinator

Hyper Studio, a multi-media presentation software package was used extensively by KANU students of all ages. Students created culturally based presentations, mastering technologies at an age appropriate level.



Student-created Hyperstudio Card

KALO INC.

Another project known as KALO Inc. involves a high degree of technology and is spearheaded by one of our technicians. This project involves the creation of a wide variety of multimedia products, which are marketed and sold by students in an effort to develop entrepreneurial skills. Some of the products created by the students include greeting cards, calendars, bookmarks, stickers, magnets, booklets and decals. In the future students will also create and market interactive CD ROMs, videos, books and other publications. KALO Inc. is supported by Federal grant monies through Alu Like.

BEST PRACTICES IN EDUCATION

KANU has many unique partnerships including a comprehensive gifted and talented student development component called AHO LOA, which involves family and community members. The concept of AHO LOA evolved from a Hawaiian proverb which states, that the fisherman of the shallow waters, who uses a short line, catches only small fish with lots of bones; the deep-sea fisherman, who uses a long line (aho loa), catches choice fish. The purpose of AHO LOA is to allow individual students to "go deep" and explore their unique gifts and interests, while they contribute to the cultural and economic sustainability of their communities. Throughout the school year, students spend their Fridays participating in a variety of workshops, headed by parents, community members or cultural experts, held at various sites in Waimea.

During the first semester, the K-2 group participated in community exploration fieldtrips, where they visited the police and fire station, the library, the park and various businesses. The 3-5 cluster could pick between Hawaiian arts and a physical fitness workshop, while students in the 6-8 cluster could choose multi-cultural art, sewing, horsemanship or landscaping. During the second semester, the K-2 group learned Hawaiian crafts, while the 3-5 and the 6-8 cluster participated in a workshop that integrated Hawaiian values with living healthy and staying drug-free. Students interested in technology participated in NETPREP, a computer repair, maintenance and network development workshop. Those who exhibited natural leadership skills participated in a special youth development program known as the Youth Leadership Forum.

To prepare students for life after high school, all 9-12 graders completed an in-depth career exploration component where they researched future careers, developed a career portfolio and completed a variety of post-secondary preparation assignments.

In March 2001, KALO received a \$2 million Federal Grant which will expand our AHO LOA program to other Nā Lei Na'auao schools.



AHO LOA Physical Education Workshop



KANU students march in the Waimea Aloha Week Parade

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



AHO LOA Sewing Workshop
at ACE Hardware

MAHALO

The KANU Local School Board would like to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge and thank all our numerous community and educational partners. It was their generous assistance and enduring support of KANU that made our first year of operation extremely successful. Below are just a few of the partners who have significantly contributed to KANU's success:

University of Hawai'i Mānoa College of Tropical Agriculture:
Lālānilo Main Campus

Department of Land and Natural Resources/Waimea YMCA:
Kawaihae Learning Lab

Department of Hawaiian Home Lands:
Pu'upūlehu Learning Lab

Kamehameha Schools:
Waipi'o Valley Learning Lab

ALU LIKE: Sponsor of KALO Inc,
Student-run business focusing on technology

Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center:
Sponsor of Makali'i Voyaging
and AHO LOA Community Integration Program

Nā Kālai Wa'a:
Makali'i Voyaging Program

UH Mānoa College of Education:
Kaho'iwai Hawaiian Education Cohort

Waimea Elementary & Intermediate School:
NETPREP partner - computer networking and repair

Honoka'a YWCA:
E Ola Pono Program

Ho'oulu Lāhui:
KANU Pu'upūlehu Agricultural and Forestry Program

BEST PRACTICES IN EDUCATION

AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT



Opening 'Awa Ceremony

HAWAI'I PONO'I HULA DRAMA



Students working on ipu heke

Throughout the 2000-2001 school year, KANU students learned a variety of chants, songs and hula. On May 21, 2000, they presented this learning to an authentic audience of nearly 500 people in a one-and-a-half hour hula drama. The development, preparation and performance of this hula drama project was a major focus during the fourth quarter and involved all K-12 students. In addition to performing all of the chants and hula listed in the sidebar, the students handled publicity, stage/prop design, costumes and the making of implements.



Hole Waimea



Ke Ao Nani

EXCERPTS FROM THE PROGRAM:

Hawai'i Pono'i is a hula drama in six acts created and performed by students of Kanu o ka 'Āina, Hawai'i's first native-designed and controlled K-12 public charter school. Following our motto *kūlia i ka nu'u*—strive for the highest, we invite you to join us as we explore via conversations, *hula* and chants, the concept of *pono*, which has guided the Hawaiian psyche from our ancient past into the present. Starting with the Kumulipo – a cosmogonic genealogy which takes us back to the beginning of time – and moving through history into the present, each act focuses on the question: *pehea lā e pono ai?* Or, how can we be *pono* or balanced? On one level, Hawai'i Pono'i constitutes the students' *hō'ike*, or performance-based assessment of a multi-age, interdisciplinary learning project completed jointly by students from Kindergarten through 12th grade. At the same time, Hawai'i Pono'i is part of Kanu o ka 'Āina's effort to revitalize and perpetuate Hawaiian language, culture and traditions, something each student must make a commitment to – as well as our desire to educate the public about the rich heritage of our Hawaiian ancestors.

HULA DRAMA 2001

Hula, Oli & Mele

E Hō mai
Nā'Aumākua
Eia ka 'Awa
Kumulipo
Ke Kanahā
Ke Ao Nani
Kamali'i o ka Pō
'O Wākea
Holo mai Pele
Aia la o Pele
Nāmakaokaha'i
Hole Waimea
Kohala kāpa'a kō kea
Kawika
He'eia
Kamali'i 'ike 'ole
Eō mai!
'Aiha'a Makali'i
Haka Hōkūle'a
Iā wa'a nui
Kumulipo Song
E iho ana o luna
Au'a'ia
He Hawai'i au
Hawai'i Pono'i



'Aiha'a Makali'i

AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

"I was just stunned!" - "This was very impressive!" - "This performance was SO powerful. I learned SO much. Mahalo!"

BEST PRACTICES IN EDUCATION

Creating a brand-new school, radically different from existing educational models, requires staff members that are not only extremely flexible, but willing to continuously learn and improve themselves, as we "grow" our school together. Even with extensive planning and preparation, all KANU staff faces complex challenges and choices on a daily basis. As a result, it is essential that all our staff members are willing to collectively and individually solve problems, overcome obstacles and pursue answers. In order to assist our staff in meeting these challenges, KANU has developed a unique system of support and professional development opportunities for our teaching staff.

Throughout the school year, all KANU teaching staff participate in an extensive professional development component which includes:

- Attending weekly KANU inservices and planning meetings, as well as staff development workdays
- Participating in conferences/workshops and conferences and reporting back to staff
- Participation in training workshops by visiting experts such as Michelle Swanson (PBL) and Leanna Traill (Balanced Literacy)
- Working on personal and professional goals
- Conducting meaningful action research
- Meeting cultural expectations
- Maintaining a professional portfolio
- Participating in KANU committees and extracurricular events
- Modeling KANU's motto and behavioral expectations

KAHO'IWAI HAWAIIAN TEACHER CERTIFICATION & HOLOMUA GRANT

In order to allow non-certified KANU teaching staff to attain teaching certificates while participating in authentic professional development, KANU and other Nā Lei Na'auao schools entered into a partnership with UH Mānoa College of Education. This partnership allows all non-certified Hawaiian charter school teachers who meet College of Education requirements to participate in a strand of the *Kaho'iwai Hawaiian Education Cohort* specifically designed for Hawaiian charter school educators. UH tuition, books, travel and even a wireless computer are provided to each Kaho'iwai Charter School Strand participant thanks to an ANA grant entitled HOLOMUA. Non-certified KANU teaching staff who do not qualify to enter the Kaho'iwai Cohort have the option to enroll in *Hālau Wānana*, Hawai'i's first native institution of higher learning, one of KANU's numerous partners.

STAFF SUPPORT

EXCERPT FROM KANU STAFF HANDBOOK:

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Behavioral expectations at KANU apply not only to the students, but also to the faculty, staff and all members of the Kanu o ka 'Āina Learning 'Ohana (KALO). The following four 'Ōlelo No'ēau describe the values which communicate our schoolwide expectations for behavior:

Aloha kekahi i kekahi - We need to exhibit ALOHA at all times, as we are modeling behavior for our students.

Mālama i kou kuleana- We need to be responsible for our personal belongings, for school supplies and equipment, clean up our mess and make sure everyone mālama the things that they use.

Kōkua aku, kōkua mai - We all need to help each other so that we can all kūlia i ka nu'u.

Mahalo i ka mea loa'a - We need to make the best of what we have!

As active participants in KANU's action research project, each KANU staff member identifies an **Essential Question** and collects data throughout the year. At the end of the school year a report of findings is presented to the rest of the staff, sharing the key strategies for success that the teachers have observed in the area of their Essential Question.

All KANU staff members select two **Professional Goals**, one in the area of "Hawaiian Language and Culture," and the other in "Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment" or their specialty area. Throughout the year, evidence is collected to determine how each goal has been reached. This evidence is presented at the 'end of the year' conference. All KANU staff members meet regularly with the "heads" of their respective teams to discuss individual progress. In addition, **Regular Observations** allow team "heads" to identify strengths and provide feedback that helps KANU staff to work as effectively as possible.



Dr. Manu Meyer explains
Hawaiian Epistemology

AREAS FOR CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT

As an ongoing indigenous action research project, KANU continuously is working toward achieving even greater excellence in education. Guided by our motto: *kūlia i ka nu'u*, we strive to reach our highest level as a school, as a community, as native people, and as individuals.

Throughout the 2001-2002 school year, KANU has demonstrated outstanding flexibility in virtually all areas, which we believe will allow our students to achieve even greater educational success. Adjustments have been based directly on data gleaned during our first year of operation. Studying and analyzing this information, as well as collecting more quantitative and qualitative data is one of the areas of further development identified by KANU.



DATA COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT

Acquiring the appropriate software and a comprehensive databank that tracks students during their years at KANU and after graduation is a major KANU goal for the 2001-2002 school year. KANU is presently negotiating with Vision Link regarding the creation of a custom-designed web based software that would create a comprehensive system of data collection and analysis for all Nā Lei Na'auao Native Hawaiian Charter Schools. In addition, funding has been requested to implement a multi-island action research project, which will measure the effects of culturally-driven education on native student performance. Such data will be crucial to validate our assertion that native-design and control of education produces greater student achievement and success - and that Hawaiians should be in complete control over our own educational systems, with funding equal to all other public schools.

As part of our desired focus on data collection and analysis, KANU would also like to develop:

- an archive of teacher developed curriculum and rubrics
- an archive of student work samples

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLANS

Originally it was KANU's intention to create Individual Learning Plans for all students by the end of the first quarter. It was not long into the school year that we realized that this goal would not be attainable in the time span we had originally anticipated. As a result, the creation of Individual Learning Plans is listed here as an area for continued development. Besides the time factor, another major obstacle in developing these plans concerns the availability of the appropriate software to create such plans, and the extensive labor involved in programming a system to monitor and document individual student progress.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Another area KANU aims to focus on during the 2001-2002 school year is the expansion and solidification of our Professional Development component. Eleven KANU employees have applied to Kaho'iwai UHM Hawaiian Education Cohort to commence in January 2002. The others plan to enroll in a parallel Hawaiian Pedagogy Certificate program sponsored by Hālau Wānana, Hawai'i's first native-controlled university.

Pele and Nāmakaokaha'i



Student Art featured in
the Hula Drama Program

STANDARDS-BASED ASSESSMENT

Other "improvements" scheduled at KANU, include a drive to create Hawaiian cultural and academic standards for grades K-12, and develop a standards-based system of grading and assessment that will satisfy both native and 21st Century accountability requirements. This move towards student-based report cards and a new way of looking at assessment and accountability is congruent with current educational reform efforts.

On one level KANU has progressed beyond our wildest dreams, on another level we have a long way to go!

REPORT SUMMARY

The extended Kanu o ka 'Āina Learning 'Ohana is deeply appreciative of Hawai'i legislators' decision to pass charter school laws, beginning the long overdue process of decentralizing one of America's largest and most complex public school systems. Such a decentralization of Hawai'i's massive public school bureaucracy has been strongly recommended for several decades, yet until the passage of Act 62 in 1999, few genuine opportunities existed for communities to implement innovative models of community-based education. While we applaud legislators' approval of the law, there is also general agreement among charter school supporters that improvements to Hawai'i's current charter school laws are necessary in order to expand and clarify the role of charter schools in education. Legal changes will also give Hawai'i access to the \$53 billion in Federal funds that are available to states with strong charter school laws.

KANU feels very strongly that if all stakeholders will collaborate and act in the spirit of Act 62, a great deal of the conflict, miscommunication and frustration (as outlined in administrative/legal barriers) can be eliminated.

Act 62 provides unprecedented opportunities for Hawai'i's indigenous people, the only native people in the United States whose internationally recognized right to educational self-determination is neither acknowledged nor supported by State and Federal governments. The fact that over half of all start-up charter schools in Hawai'i are governed by native communities and based on native Hawaiian cultural traditions clearly demonstrates desire and commitment on the part of Hawaiian communities to assert our right to indigenous self-determination in education. The creation of Nā Lei Na'auao Native Hawaiian Charter School Alliance reveals how, after witnessing decades of native Hawaiian failure within the DOE, indigenous Hawaiian communities have taken action to work together using the traditional concept of *kūkulu kumuhana* (pooling our strengths) and the charter school movement as a means to reach our goal. This report clearly shows that native Hawaiian communities are able to provide quality 21st century education to students of all grade levels; education that is community-based and controlled, reflecting and incorporating the unique traditions, histories and geography of each particular locale. This report recommends that native Hawaiians be acknowledged as an indigenous group and given resources to develop educational theories, curriculum practices and learning environments that reflect indigenous values.

THE SPIRIT OF ACT 62

Act 62 calls for **“the implementation of alternative frameworks with regard to curriculum, facilities management, instructional approach, length of the school day, week, or year and personnel management,”** through the creation of new century public charter schools. According to the Act, establishing such schools “will allow educators to better tailor the curriculum to enhance the learning of the students.” The Act further states, “to nurture the ideal of more autonomous and flexible decision-making at the school level, the legislature supports the concept of new century charter schools. The legislature finds this concept defines a new approach to education that is free of bureaucratic red tape and accommodates the individual needs of students to allow the State to dramatically improve its educational standards for the twenty-first century.” This notion of autonomy is clarified as “the legislature finds that as long as a public school complies with the requirements that it be free to all attending students, that its admissions policies be nondiscriminatory, and that it comply with statewide performance standards, a school should otherwise be free from statutory and regulatory requirements that tend to inhibit or restrict a school's ability to make decisions relating to the provision of educational services to the students attending the school.” Increased autonomy and flexibility for schools is intended to be an explicit result of Act 62: “The purpose of this Act is to increase the flexibility and autonomy at the school level. New century charter schools shall have a local school board as a governing body, and shall operate independent educational programs from those provided by the department of education statewide.” Immediate action and collaboration are required before relations between the Hawaii DOE and charter schools can truly reflect the spirit of Act 62.

MANDATE TO SUPPORT

Act 62 states clearly that the DOE has an incontrovertible mandate to support:

“The department, together with key representatives of the major divisions in the department, representatives from the unions, as well as individuals from the new century charter schools shall collaborate together on a system of technical assistance that will provide a baseline for success of each new century charter school. In addition, the department, through the board and its superintendent, shall provide any other information and technical assistance upon request necessary to support the establishment and expansion of new century charter schools.”

REPORT SUMMARY



A TESTIMONY OF SUCCESS

In one short year, KANU has been able to achieve impressive outcomes with a student population that has been grossly underserved and treated as ineducable by the DOE. Our action research results clearly indicate that Hawaiian students and their parents prefer a more culturally consistent approach to learning over the dominant model of education in Hawai'i, which ignores the student's cultural heritage and way of life. Implementing a culturally driven pedagogy based on traditional values has clearly resulted in significant success not just for our KANU students of Hawaiian ancestry, but for all our student body — as well as our staff, our parents and our community partners. This positive impact is validated by numerous quantitative and qualitative data, some of which have been presented in this report. This data leaves no doubt that Hawaiian communities like ours are ready and fully capable of creating, implementing and evaluating quality models of education.

EFFORTS TOWARD COMPLIANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

While KANU has worked hard to achieve educational success, we have also gone to extremes to comply in all matters with our obligations as a public charter school. To our knowledge we have adhered to all applicable rules and regulations and tried our utmost to satisfy all DOE/BOE requests in a timely fashion, even if that translated into stretched resources and personal hardships for school leaders. KANU is committed to continue to do all we can to be in compliance with all regulations. As a school we set high expectations not just for our students, but for all our staff and our program as well. It is in this spirit of achieving excellence, that we hope we can work together with all charter school stakeholders as we fulfill the vision of Act 62. KANU is fully committed to a comprehensive accountability program which will assure that KANU is held accountable on all levels.



NEED FOR COLLABORATION

KANU feels very strongly that our continued and long-term growth and progress is highly dependent on successful collaboration between the BOE/DOE, the Unions and Hawai'i's charter schools (as outlined in Act 62). This collaboration must begin immediately and focus not only on remedying past problems, but also on addressing present obstacles, which are currently providing incredible hardships to KANU and other Hawai'i charter schools. KANU strongly believes that it is absolutely essential that these barriers between charter schools and the BOE/DOE are tackled in a coherent and comprehensive way.

FAIR AND EQUAL TREATMENT

KANU wants to reiterate that we are not asking for any more support or resources -or any less- than are expended for other public school students in Hawai'i. We want to receive an equal and fair share of the education budget so that we can offer services to our students that are parallel with those they would receive elsewhere. With this equal portion, KANU can make a significant long-term difference in the lives of our students and fulfill our common goal, to provide Hawai'i's public school students with quality community-based education.



REPORT SUMMARY: RECOMMENDATIONS

To begin the comprehensive solution-oriented process, KANU recommends the following five items for action:

1. A MEETING WITH KANU REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SUPERINTENDENT

Such a meeting should be held at the earliest date the Superintendent has a two-hour block of time available. Specifically we are asking the Superintendent to immediately assist KANU with the following:

a. **Expedite the hiring process for KANU personnel (as was done last year)** On July 9, 2001 twelve new staff members who were not previously in the system were employed by the KANU Local School Board. To date, none of these employees have received any pay or benefits. In addition, eight staff members were promoted from Educational Assistants to Instructors. These staff members continue to receive EA salaries - and are paying HGEA Union dues - even though Charles Higgins, as well as State and District Personnel staff were informed in June 2001 of this discrepancy. We are requesting reinstatement of retroactive pay and benefits to the effective date of hire for these employees, as was done last year. Four certificated positions requested in June also need to be processed immediately.



b. **Rectify SY 2000-2001 budget discrepancies.** Act 62 states, "All federal and other financial support for new century charter schools shall be no less than all other public schools; provided that *IF* administrative services are provided to the school by the department, the school shall reimburse the department for the actual costs of the administrative services in an amount that does not exceed six and one-half per cent of the school's allocation. Local school boards may enter into an annual business contract for centralized services to be provided by the department prior to the beginning of each school year."

KANU's actual allocations for the 2000-2001 school year were \$ 33,288.26 less than the amount determined by the Auditor. When itemized, calculations show that KANU was shorted a additional \$43,226.24 for services that the DOE elected to retain, yet which the DOE refused to provide even when specific requests were submitted. These budget discrepancies need to be rectified as soon as possible.

c. **Resolve Special Education issues as soon as possible.**

To our knowledge, KANU has been in compliance with Felix requirements in all possible areas. In addition, our staff has provided quality SPED services to 22 SPED students since July 16 without receiving any SPED funding from the DOE. As suggested by the DOE SPED Department, KANU recommends that we be compensated for past and future SPED services provided by KANU personnel in accordance with the students' IEPs. Therapeutic services must be provided immediately to all eligible students. While KANU is delighted that SPED policies are finally being created, we are disappointed that the views of the charter schools have been categorically ignored. Nonetheless, KANU supports current efforts to create and implement SPED policies relating to charter schools. We are aware of the current DOE SPED proposal and hope that it can be put in writing and implemented as soon as possible to assure our compliance with the Felix Consent Decree and, most importantly, that we can meet the needs of our students.



REPORT SUMMARY: RECOMMENDATIONS

2. THE CREATION OF A CHARTER SCHOOL ACTION COMMITTEE

In order for charter schools to have a fair chance at achieving success, KANU recommends the immediate creation of a Charter School Action Committee. A standing Charter School Action Committee should be made up, as required by Act 62, of key representatives of the DOE/BOE, i.e. staff with decision-making power, the Unions and the charter schools. The Committee shall meet on a monthly basis until a solid system of technical support as required by Act 62 is established, and an ongoing process of collaboration and support is underway. Until such an atmosphere of collaboration has been created, KANU feels it is necessary to have the services of an independent professional facilitator to assure effective meetings that maintain positive relations, and to encourage equitable outcomes.

The main task of the Charter School Action Committee is to collectively create a quality support system that offers technical assistance to Charter Schools and establishes a process for communication and collaboration between all charter school stakeholders; a system that is absolutely essential for the success of Hawai'i's Charter Schools.

One function of the Charter School Action Committee is to assure that charter schools can really be free from statutory and regulatory requirements that tend to inhibit or restrict a school's ability to make decisions. Act 62 states, "...a school should otherwise be free from statutory and regulatory requirements that tend to inhibit or restrict a school's ability to make decisions relating to the provision of educational services to the students attending the school." The Committee should create and implement policies and procedures that will streamline the relationship of processes between the charter schools and the DOE. This committee should also meet with the AG and an independent legal advisor representing charter schools to clarify legal interpretations and assure that legal decisions are put in writing and disseminated to all interested parties in a timely, uniform manner. Meetings with the BOE, the Auditor's Office, the Governor's Office, Legislators and others should be requested by this committee until the various issues surrounding charter schools are resolved.

3. THE CREATION OF A CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

KANU and other charter schools strongly recommend the creation of a non-contiguous charter school district with the same rights and privileges as other DOE districts. We suggest the re-structuring of the current Public Charter Schools Office headed by Charles Higgins, into the center for management of this new charter school district. This district office should facilitate the operations of charter schools by providing management, fiscal, planning, logistical, and other related supporting services as requested and required by charter schools. In essence, such a district office would provide the systemic support to charter schools that is required by law, and would assure compliance with both BOE/DOE and legislative mandates. Like all other districts, the charter school district should be provided with EDN 300 monies as negotiated by the charter schools and the DOE. Districts serve as a critical link in the administrative hierarchy of the DOE. In many aspects, charter schools want to and have the right to be exempt from DOE policies and rules, yet we recognize complete autonomy from the DOE is unlikely in the immediate future. In the interim, KANU supports the creation of a non-contiguous charter school district which will provide direct support services to charter schools in areas such as: school improvement efforts; accountability issues; a range of operational support services; and communication and coordination of services between charter and DOE schools, state and district offices.



REPORT SUMMARY - RECOMMENDATIONS

4. ACTIVE BOE SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

Act 62 states: Following consultation with the new century charter school, the board shall represent the new century charter school in communications with the governor and with the legislature."

KANU strongly recommends that during the upcoming legislative session, the BOE take a more active role in representing the needs of Hawai'i's charter schools to the governor and the legislature. We further recommend that the Charter School Action Committee with input from all stakeholders develop a united legislative agenda to advance the progress of charter schools. This agenda should be agreed upon and supported by schools, Unions and the DOE/BOE.

Act 62 states: "The financial requirements for state funds of the new century charter school shall be submitted through the board and included in the budget for the department." KANU hopes that by the time the new budget is submitted, the various issues surrounding charter school funding can be resolved and a methodology created with input from all charter school stakeholders that assures equal and fair funding to charter schools. Furthermore, we hope that charter schools are included in this new DOE budget as is mandated by law.



5. RESPECT AND TRUST

One of the most frustrating and disappointing aspects during our first year as a public charter school has been the general atmosphere of distrust and resistance among BOE/DOE representatives at all levels, when it came to helping and supporting KANU and other charter schools. Many held the misperception that charter schools were going to suck up all the resources, money and support—even some of our former colleagues reacted to us with bitterness. Instead of following the mandate to support, it almost seemed as if there was a secret mandate of non-support, fueled by the hope that if charter schools did not receive the needed support, they would not be able to survive. Frequently the lack of support seemed to be based on the widespread erroneous notion that charter schools are not eligible for certain services including district support. Other times it appeared to be malicious efforts by adversarial DOE employees who resented the extra work. KANU sincerely hopes that a clear communication reiterating the mandate of support be issued by the BOE and the Superintendent to all DOE personnel so that everyone is aware of our status. Furthermore, we hope that as new policies are developed by the Charter School Action Committee, all stakeholders are informed in a timely, uniform manner of the most recent developments concerning charter schools.

Act 62 states, "the board or the superintendent of education shall not have the power to supervise or control the new century charter school in the exercise of its functions, duties, and power." This past year has seen various attempts to control charter schools, as policies regarding charter schools were created by DOE personnel and the BOE Charter School committee without input from charter schools, or with opportunities for input restricted to 3 minute general testimonies at the beginning of a meeting. KANU sincerely hopes that the upcoming year is guided by a spirit of collaboration, respect and trust between the DOE/BOE and the charter schools. **Allow us to do what Act 62 empowers us to do.** KANU has an impressive history of educational success. All current evidence indicates that KANU is succeeding. Please assist us as we continue to fulfill our mission to "*kūlia i ka nu'u*" —strive to reach the highest level.

REPORT SUMMARY - FINAL WORDS

In his keynote address at the 2001 Education Leadership Conference, Superintendent Dr. Paul LeMahieu described "these times" as times of "efforts to completely overturn and redirect the affairs of a huge institution ... times of ambiguity, of effort to make things different than they ever were before, to reinvent them in ways that cannot be predicted with certainty ... times of considerable risk, of great criticism of mistakes, of the loud objections of those who prefer the comfort of an unacceptable present over the potential in an uncertain future." The Superintendent continued saying that, "in the midst of such times... it is hard sometimes to find the basis upon which to persevere."

During the past school year, KANU has certainly been in the midst of such times - and they have certainly 'tried our souls'. Were it not for our opportunity to witness students' profound personal and intellectual growth on a daily basis, and our faith that what we were doing was *pono*, KANU might not have made it through this first year. Our struggles within a system guided by administrative convenience, rather than student interests seemed unrelenting; we look forward to the time when, through collaboration, an administrative structure will exist that honestly supports all schools in their pursuit of standards.

KANU joins Dr. LeMahieu in affirming that continued optimism and perseverance can guide us into a bright future. **Considering KANU's history, our accomplishments, our vision and our values, we know that we have every reason to be optimistic.** The Superintendent ended his keynote saying that "We must, starting with me, support each other as never before. We must recognize and respect the many fine people that inhabit our professional ranks as well as their tremendous accomplishments. We must nurture in each other the spirit that motivates great accomplishments. **KANU is humbly asking for this support during the upcoming year: technical/bureaucratic support, legislative support, moral support and any other support you can lend to charter schools.**

Charter schools were designed to initiate systemic change by creating models 'outside of the box' that can implement and test innovative practices on a small scale which can then be adopted by the larger system. KANU has no doubt that if we all work together, we can "overturn and redirect the affairs of a huge institution," (LeMahieu) we *can* make things "different than they ever were before, to reinvent them in ways that cannot be predicted with certainty." Together, we can change the "unacceptable present" and bring about a future full of success for Hawaiian children.

During this past school year, when legislation threatening the future of charter schools in Hawai'i came to the Senate floor, KANU students mobilized in great numbers to write letters to their Senators. It is with these passionate requests from our students, which echo the sentiments of Hawaiian students throughout the archipelago, that we would like to conclude this report.

I have witnessed the immense effect that Kanu o ka 'Āina has had on all those affiliated with it. Students want to come to school, are eager to learn and are filled with pride each day as they are encouraged to perpetuate their culture...For many of us, we have finally found a system where we are happy, where teachers care about our progress, and where we know that we can be successful....Since the establishment of charter schools like Kanu o ka 'Āina, students have had the opportunity to recognize their potential and find learning once again fun and valuable....Hawaiian charter schools are building blocks that will take us into a brighter future."

Female KANU Senior

"Remember nā keiki o ka 'āina, the children of the land...the ones whose ancestors kept a great nation alive for thousands of years. This school supplies us with their knowledge and much more. Here we have the technology and the staff to get us ready for anything this world has to offer...you better come and see us with your own eyes. Stop and look at all the other regular schools, then make your decision."

Male KANU 7th Grader

