

ka huaka'i

2014 Native Hawaiian Educational Assessment

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2014 Native Hawaiian Educational Assessment

Kamehameha Schools
Strategic Planning and Implementation Division

Kamehameha Publishing

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Artwork for the cover and divider pages is adapted from a conceptual drawing for a mural project by Solomon Enos. His illustration depicts a woman, taro, the sun, the moon, plants, animals, land, and sea, all of which represent the Mākaha community.

The mural project was initiated to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Mākaha Elementary School in 2011. Children, parents, families, teachers, and students were part of the creative process. Years ago, when Enos himself was a sixth-grader at Mākaha Elementary, he was asked to make illustrations for the fifth grade curriculum. Leading the effort to make a commemorative mural was a way for Enos to give back to the school that helped him develop as a young artist.

Design by Stacey Leong Design

No nā kūpuna a me nā ‘aumākua

For the kūpuna and ‘aumākua

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The Po‘o of Our Wa‘a

While we continue to mourn the passing of Hawai‘i’s longest seated United States senator in December of 2012, it is with gratitude and respect that we dedicate this fourth major update of the Native Hawaiian Education Assessment, *Ka Huaka‘i*, to the late Senator Daniel Ken Inouye. Through the urging of the first navigator of these assessments, Myron “Pinky” Thompson, honored as such in our last update, Senator Inouye was the po‘o leading the enactment of federal laws to bring fairness and equity to Native Hawaiians. Both were veterans of World War II and colleagues in local governmental affairs. Those commonalities, however, were not what provided their strongest bond; rather, their shared love and appreciation of the native peoples of our land united and empowered them to pilot and navigate our wa‘a (canoe) towards excellence for Native Hawaiian young people.

Two events were critical to Senator Inouye’s commitment to Hawaiian people and he mentioned them often. Many do not know that Senator Inouye’s mother was orphaned as a child while growing up on Maui. She immediately became hānai to a Hawaiian family there. Although she did not stay with them throughout her youth, she remembered with gratitude and love being embraced by this caring family. This act of kindness planted the seed for the Senator’s commitment to our native peoples. Later, after being elected to Congress, he was led on a tour of schools on the Wai‘anae Coast. He was stunned that he did not see any Native Hawaiian teachers. Senator Inouye, keenly aware of the power role modeling has as a learning tool, was dismayed to find that most of the groundskeepers, cafeteria workers, and custodians were the Native Hawaiian roles being modeled for the children in their environment.

When Pinky Thompson approached Senator Inouye to ask for legislation to address the challenges faced by young Native Hawaiian learners, the Senator’s memory of both his mother’s upbringing and his experience in Wai‘anae easily galvanized his commitment to what would become a career-defining partnership between him and Pinky. Starting with inclusion of Native Hawaiians as Native Americans in 1974, myriad laws assisting Native Hawaiians were enacted through this team of po‘o and navigator. Major milestones include the Native Hawaiian Education Act in 1988, the Carl Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act Amendments of 1990, the Housing and Urban Development Reform Act of 1989, the Indian Health Care Amendments of 1988, the Native American Languages Act of 1990, and the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990.

Ka wā mamua, the theme of this volume, speaks to reflecting on the past in planning for the future. Senator Daniel K. Inouye was instrumental in providing Native Hawaiians many tools to prepare for the future. We honor him for his lifelong dedication to the cause. We thank and aloha you, Senator Daniel K. Inouye, for your care and devotion to our people.

Sherlyn Franklin Goo

Message from the CEO

In her day, Ke Ali'i Pauahi Bishop witnessed the decline of the Hawaiian population and resolved, through education, to channel resources to remedy the problems she observed. Kamehameha Schools has a specific mission to address the educational needs of Native Hawaiians. However, educational success does not happen in a vacuum. Well-being is a complex concept with multiple, interlinked dimensions.

In keeping with the vision and mission imparted to us by Ke Ali'i Pauahi, Kamehameha Schools is proud to support the publication of *Ka Huaka'i 2014*. This volume is the fourth major installment in a series that started in 1983. The original purpose of the series was to identify the unique educational needs of Native Hawaiians and to identify or foster the development of programs to effectively address these needs. This purpose continues today.

Since the inaugural volume, we have seen the passage of the Native Hawaiian Education Act and the Native Hawaiian Health Act that bring much needed financial resources to our community to address the enduring effects of the loss of land and culture experienced by Native Hawaiians in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We have also seen the creation of the Native Hawaiian Education Council, which serves as a key focal point for the development of strategies and services for Native Hawaiians.

In this volume, we build on the model of well-being first published in the 2005 edition to look at the inter-relationship between material and economic, social and emotional, physical, and cognitive well-being. We also offer projections for the growth of the Native Hawaiian population. While we recognize that we have a long journey before we see a fully thriving Native Hawaiian lāhui, we find hope and inspiration in the progress that the statistics in this volume convey and hope that other readers will see the same.

Ka Huaka'i has been a decades-long tradition for Kamehameha Schools to produce the Native Hawaiian Educational Assessment. We share that tradition with dozens of individuals and community and state organizations. In this regard, this publication represents a kākou effort of which we can all be proud. We offer this latest volume to you in hopes that it will help us better serve Ke Ali'i Pauahi's vision of a thriving lāhui.

Dee Jay Mailer
Chief Executive Officer, 2004–2014
Kamehameha Schools

He Waiwai Nui ka Lōkahi

Unity is a precious possession

In ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, the words that describe relationships refer not to groups of people but, rather, to the mana (energy) created by the coming together of two or more individuals. The mana from the joining of so many in unity of purpose has been critical to our ability to accomplish this work. Together we have accomplished more than any one of us could have done alone.

We acknowledge the vision of Ke Ali‘i Pauahi Bishop, who believed that education was the key to the survival of Native Hawaiians and who established the trust that is Kamehameha Schools today. We are grateful for the support of the trustees, CEO, and executive leadership of Kamehameha Schools, particularly that of Chris Pating and Lauren Nahme of the Strategic Planning and Implementation group. We acknowledge the many contributors to the 1983, 1993, and 2005 versions of the Native Hawaiian educational assessments, whose mana‘o forms the foundation on which this present work is built.

Many organizations supported the publication of this report by publishing data and statistics, sharing special tabulations, reviewing our analyses, and verifying our findings. We are particularly grateful for the extensive contributions of the Hawai‘i Department of Education.

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With humility we offer *Ka Huaka‘i 2014* to our leaders and hoa hana who are working in so many important ways to improve the well-being of the Native Hawaiian lāhui.

Katherine Tibbetts
Principal Research Associate
 Kamehameha Schools

INTRODUCTION

Ka Wā Mamua

Native Hawaiians traditionally view the world by looking at what came before because the past is rich in knowledge and wisdom that must inform the perspectives and actions in the present and future. As Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa reminds us,

In Hawaiian, the past is referred to as *Ka wā mamua*, or “the time in front or before.” Whereas the future, when thought of at all, is *Ka wā mahope*, or “the time which comes after or behind.” It is as if the Hawaiian stands firmly in the present, with his back to the future and his eyes fixed on the past, seeking historical answers for present-day dilemmas. Such an orientation is to the Hawaiian an eminently practical one, for the future is always unknown, whereas the past is rich in glory and knowledge. (1992, 22–23)

As we introduce *Ka Huaka‘i 2014*, we start with positioning this work relative to previous volumes. *Ka Huaka‘i 2014* is the fourth full-length volume in the Native Hawaiian Educational Assessment (NHEA) series. The two earliest volumes of NHEA pushed the limits of the political discourse on education at the time. In 1983, the first assessment was published with two primary purposes: to identify the unique challenges and needs facing Native Hawaiians in education, and to identify program models that might improve outcomes for Native Hawaiian children (Kamehameha Schools/Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estate 1983). That report showed outcomes for Native Hawaiians and other ethnic groups in the state on various educational indicators. It briefly touched upon promising practices that support culturally relevant teaching and learning of Native Hawaiian children. The report was a crucial element in the passage of the Native Hawaiian Education Act and the provision of funds to address the educational needs of Native Hawaiians. Data collection and analysis continued through the 1990s, resulting in the NHEA 1993 study, which served as an additional major point of reference for Native Hawaiian education (Kamehameha Schools/Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estate-Office of Program Evaluation and Planning 1993).

The first two NHEA volumes established a theoretical and empirical case that disparities in Native Hawaiian educational outcomes are rooted in the historical trauma and cultural marginalization of the Native Hawaiian population. The studies posited that the greatest hope for progress and improvement lay in a return to the foundations of Hawaiian culture and greater responsiveness of schools to the home culture of Native Hawaiian learners.

Since the first two volumes, there has been increasing recognition of the need for data that represents the strengths of indigenous and minority communities and the need to ground solutions to contemporary problems in ancestral wisdom and traditions. This is reflected in Maenette Ah Nee-Benham’s challenge to us to envision “where we can collectively be that is greater than where we are now.” To chart a course to this place we need to heed her call:

Where is the native voice? We have a charge, a calling, to voice the native perspective that will define the future progress of native people. (Ah Nee-Benham 2004, 38)

A partial response to this challenge can be found in *Ka Huaka‘i 2005* (Kana‘iaupuni, Malone, and Ishibashi 2005). *Ka huaka‘i* translates literally as “the journey,” and the metaphor was intended to echo the Hawaiian community’s journey toward a balanced, strengths-based understanding of Hawaiian needs and successes. Toward that end, *Ka Huaka‘i 2005* drew on new types of data and adopted a more

holistic approach that connected the multifaceted nature of well-being. That volume introduced the well-being pua (flower). The pua model was intended to reflect a contemporary Hawaiian worldview and was developed based on other well-being models and a substantial body of cultural and social research.

The 2005 volume also attempted to position available data within a strengths-based framework, devoting more attention to emerging approaches and programs based on community and cultural practices, acknowledging the significant strengths within the Hawaiian community and the connections to people, place, and community that distinguish Native Hawaiians and other indigenous peoples. In *Ka Huaka'i* 2005, we mixed Western deficits-based indicators with strengths-based data and perspectives in an effort to more fully understand and reflect well-being within the Native Hawaiian lāhui.

With the release of this fourth iteration, hindsight and a historical perspective highlight a deepening realization about the role that culture plays in shaping perceptions of well-being and the need to define success from a Hawaiian worldview. Although the data to do this are very limited and the result falls far short of what we would like to achieve, we continue to strive to identify both strengths and needs within the Native Hawaiian community.

The data presented are organized in chapters on population; material and economic well-being; social, cultural, and emotional well-being; physical well-being; and cognitive well-being. The following is a summary of some of the major findings and implications of *Ka Huaka'i* 2014.

Population

The Native Hawaiian population is growing rapidly. According to the 2010 US Census, there were more than 525,000 Native Hawaiians in the United States, with 290,000 (about 55 percent) living in Hawai'i. If current trends continue, the Native Hawaiian population is projected to exceed 1.2 million by the year 2060. Of particular note is the relatively large growth occurring in the population of preschool- and school-age Native Hawaiian children, which indicates an increasing need for educational programs and services.

Material and Economic Well-Being

Homeownership is increasing among Native Hawaiians, from 56 percent in 2003 to 58 percent in 2009. Native Hawaiians are now more likely to be employed in the typically higher-paying professional and managerial occupations.

Although there has been a decrease in the percentage of Native Hawaiian households with income below the poverty guideline, Native Hawaiians continue to have the lowest mean income of all the major ethnic groups in Hawai'i. And, the proportion of Native Hawaiian households with a livable income declined by 10 percentage points between 2003 and 2009 (from 67 to 57 percent of all households—a larger decrease than that of any other major ethnic group in the state).

Education can serve as a vehicle of economic mobility and security, with higher levels of educational attainment among Native Hawaiians linked to increased earnings and livable income rates. Continued investments in education and postsecondary options for Native Hawaiians will be a key driver in future improvements in material and economic well-being.

Social, Emotional, and Cultural Well-Being

The existing body of quantitative data on Hawaiian cultural well-being is limited and incomplete as evidenced by the narrow set of cultural data included in this volume.

Although Native Hawaiians have disproportionately high rates of child abuse and neglect, suicide, and arrests for most major categories of crime, the prevalence of these negative outcomes is declining. Native Hawaiian youth are more likely than their non-Hawaiian peers to have an adult with whom they can talk about their challenges. And, Native Hawaiian adults are more likely than non-Hawaiians to belong to a religious organization and to rely on family for support in times of need. In fact, Native Hawaiians are more likely to live in family households than are non-Hawaiians and to have grandparents in the household who take an active role in their grandchildren's upbringing.

On life satisfaction surveys, Native Hawaiians are relatively less likely to report a high quality of life. However, Native Hawaiians are more likely to report that life has improved over the last five years and that they are optimistic about the future than are non-Hawaiians.

Although progress is apparent in many areas of social and emotional well-being, Native Hawaiians continue to face disadvantages, limited opportunities, and institutionalized inequities that leave a negative social impact. Taken together, these data indicate the need to leverage Native Hawaiian social networks, spiritual strength, and cultural traditions to navigate contemporary problems and create a path toward a more positive future.

Physical Well-Being

The proportion of Native Hawaiians without health insurance continues to decrease—from roughly 10 percent in 2005 to just over 7 percent in 2009. Native Hawaiian rates for late or no prenatal care, births to teenage mothers, and infant mortality also decreased over time. Compared with non-Hawaiians, Native Hawaiian youth are more likely to be physically active, and more Native Hawaiian adults engage in muscle-strengthening activities on a regular basis. Although most measures of tobacco use are higher for Native Hawaiian youth and adults compared with the other major ethnic groups in the state, there have been substantial improvements on all these measures over the last decade.

Despite these signs of progress, Native Hawaiians are the most likely of all the major ethnic groups to miss a medical treatment because of cost, the most likely to have late or no prenatal care, and the least likely to have medical insurance. Native Hawaiian youth are also more likely to be overweight or obese, to engage in risky sexual behaviors, and to abuse alcohol. Native Hawaiians are more likely to suffer from asthma and diabetes than are non-Hawaiians, and are more likely to die from coronary heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. Native Hawaiians have the highest mortality rates and lowest life expectancy among the major ethnic groups in Hawai'i.

Similarities in the health indicators of Native Hawaiian teens and adults suggest that patterns of behavior are established early in life and that intervention from a child's formative years through adolescence is critical. As individuals, communities, and organizations that serve Native Hawaiians seek to preserve recent gains and accelerate Native Hawaiian well-being, affordable healthcare and community-based outreach and educational programs will be essential.

Cognitive Well-Being

Native Hawaiian preschool enrollment has increased over the last decade and now mirrors the statewide average. In public schools, proficiency in reading and mathematics has increased for Native Hawaiians, and the achievement gap between Native Hawaiian and other students is narrowing at some grade levels. By Grade 8, Native Hawaiian youth in Hawaiian-focused charter schools—despite starting at a distinct disadvantage in Grade 4—close the reading proficiency gap with their Native Hawaiian peers in conventional public schools. In mathematics, Native Hawaiian youth in Hawaiian charter schools show the same amount of growth between Grades 4 and 8 as their peers, although the gap remains essentially unchanged.

After more than a decade of improvement, Native Hawaiian enrollment in postsecondary education and postsecondary degree completion have plateaued. About one in four young Native Hawaiian adults is enrolled in college, compared to one in three young adults statewide. The proportion of Native Hawaiian adults with a bachelor's degree or higher is roughly half the statewide average (14 percent compared to 30 percent).

Greater understanding of the personal, family, school, social-cultural, and political factors that promote or impede school success for Native Hawaiians is needed to develop programs and initiatives that eliminate disparities in educational outcomes. The identification and dissemination of successful methods used in Hawaiian culture-based education may help pave the way forward.

Ka Wā Mahope

Similar to previous volumes in the NHEA series, *Ka Huaka'i 2014* looks to the past to inform the future. In this volume, we have provided a broad accounting of available data about the well-being of Native Hawaiians. However, as Kame'elehiwa remarks, "The history has come to an end, but the story is not yet told" (1992, 321). The history reflected in the statistics reported here reveals both challenges and progress. Most importantly, this history reveals resilience and assurance that the stories yet to be told about Native Hawaiians will be stories of a strong and vibrant lāhui.

E ho'omau kākou.

