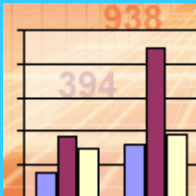




KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

Successful Schools for Hawaiians Study (SSHHS): School Conditions and Academic Gains among Hawaiian Children



A collaborative project between the Hawai'i Dept. of Education, Kamehameha Schools, and The Evaluation Center at Western Michigan University

Presentation of Overall Findings: June 1, 2007

The SSHS is a Collaborative Project.

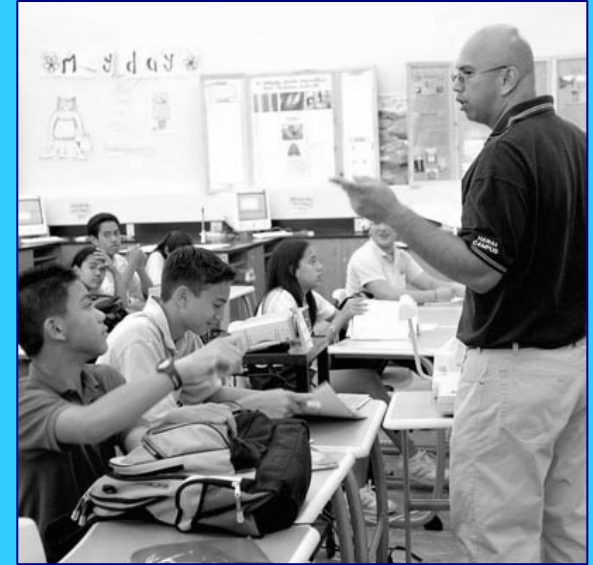
- **Department of Education**
System Accountability Office (SAO)
 - Data, schools, personnel
- **Kamehameha Schools**, Strategic Planning and Implementation, Research & Evaluation (SPIRE)
 - Funding, personnel, project oversight
- **The Evaluation Center** at Western Michigan University (TEC)
 - Implemented study design (data collection, management, analysis, report)



The Purpose of the SSHS

The SSHS is designed to help us answer the following questions:

1. In which public schools do Hawaiian students exhibit greatest growth in test scores?
2. What are the conditions in these schools that may contribute to this growth?
3. How can we replicate these successful models throughout the public school system?



The SSHS Phases

Phase I: Identify higher and lower growth schools

- Selection based on Hawaiian student change in test scores
- Proportion of Hawaiian students in school population (25% +)
- Gap between scores for Hawaiian students and all others



Phase II: Identify Distinguishing Characteristics

- Develop framing propositions
- Develop data gathering tools
- Collect data (observations, surveys...)
- Interpret and disseminate findings



SSHS uses Qualitative and Quantitative Data

Multi-case study approach

- Data collection approaches:
 - Interviews with administrators & teachers
 - Site visits and classroom observations
 - Surveys with teachers and students
 - Secondary sources (DOE reports such as the School Quality Survey [SQS], School Status and Improvement Report [SSIR])

Data Elements

- *State and case-level SQS data*
- *24 site-visits to 11 schools*
- *85 classroom observations*
- *68 interviews*
- *Nearly 900 surveys*



Findings

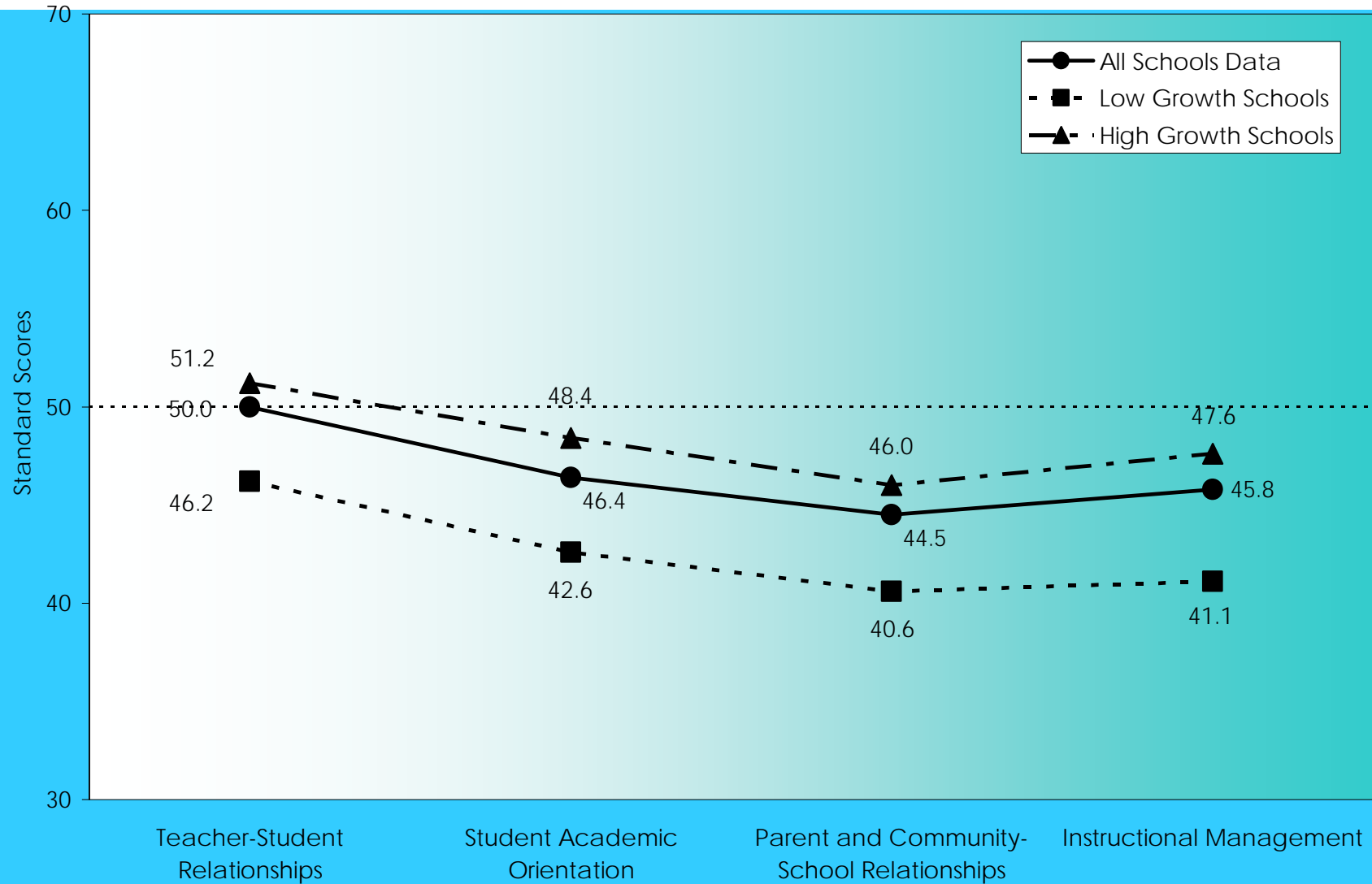
Findings: Clear Differences Evident

Consistent with findings from national research, clear differences emerged distinguishing higher growth and lower growth schools on several dimensions:

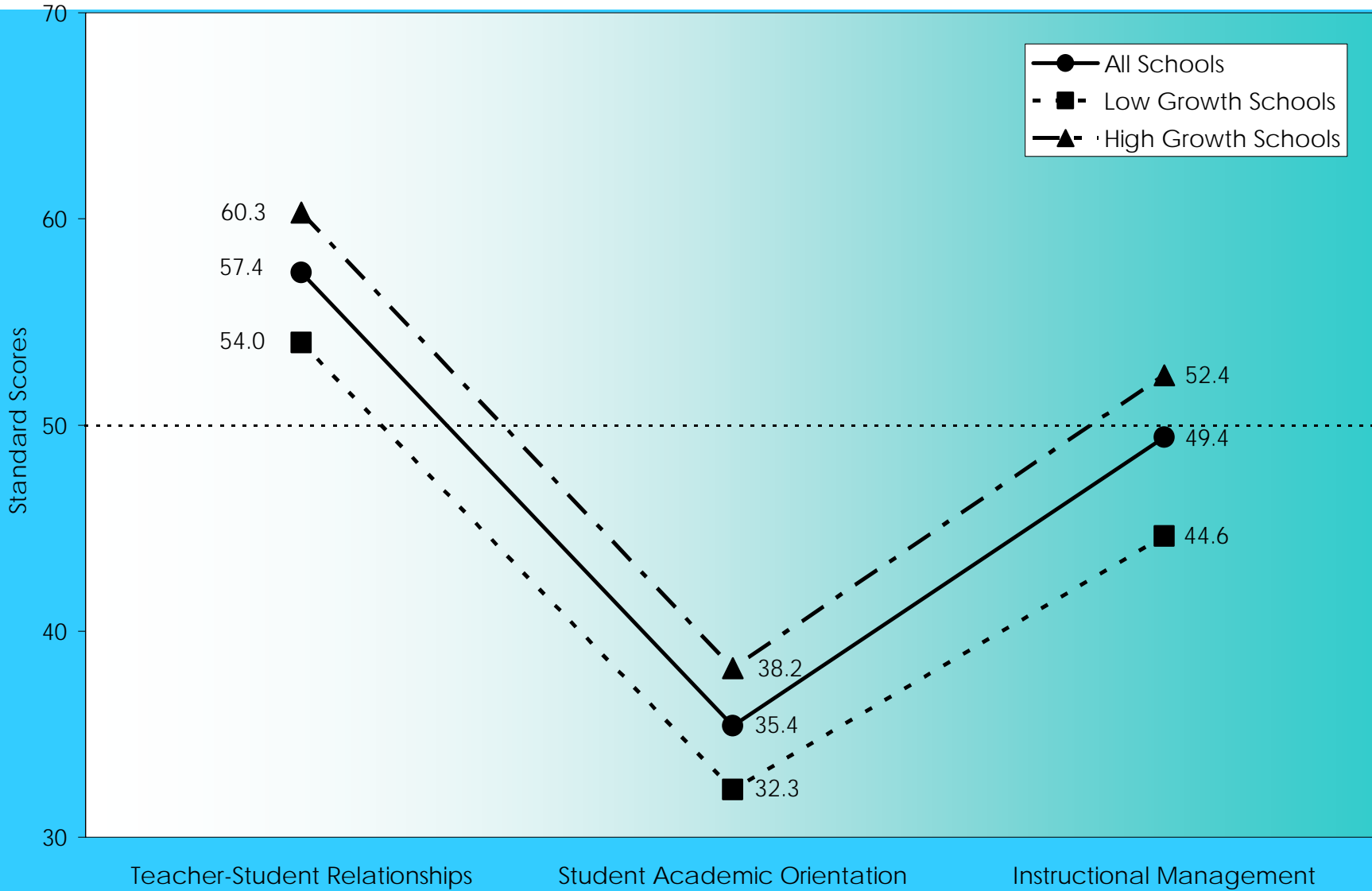
- Teacher–student relationships
- Student academic orientation
- Parent and community relationships
- Instructional management



Teachers' Perceptions in Higher Growth Schools



Students' Perceptions in Higher Growth Schools



Organizational Characteristics of Higher Growth Schools

Higher growth schools were characterized by...

- Collaborative school governance
- Decisions linked to data
- Dedicated, stable teaching force
- Focused learning communities
- Strong, engaged leaders
- Shared accountability

Collaborative School Governance

Higher growth schools more often have collaborative, shared governance processes where teachers, parents, and the wider community feel empowered and participate in school decision-making.

- *It [collaborative school governance] spawns that creativity because you have the meeting of the minds, and not where it's only one person's mind calling the shots in an era of compliance. By giving teachers some of that autonomy, the creativity that can come about can create that jump outside of the box. (Principal in a higher growth school)*
- *It [shared, collaborative decision-making] has been truly effective and has really increased teacher morale, and I think performance [of both teachers and students]. Teachers are now much more engaged in thinking about school policies and have been more involved in shaping them. (Teacher in a higher growth school)*

Decisions Linked to Data

Effective access to and use of various types of data in decision-making was a common feature in nearly all higher growth schools.

- *[Test scores] provide information about what works and what doesn't. These data can challenge teachers to reexamine long-held beliefs about student capacity and effective instruction. Since we have given greater attention to not only our HSA results, but also formative testing, we have seen better teaching and better performance by students. (Principal in a higher growth school)*
- *Now, we are also conducting more regular and systematic assessments of our teachers too and I think that it is just now beginning to make a real, observable difference in the way our teachers teach. They think and plan more carefully, they pay more attention to students' needs rather than just getting through the curriculum and standards, and they learn from more experienced teachers. (Principal in a higher growth school)*

Dedicated, Stable Teaching Force

Two observable factors contribute to a stable teaching force in this study:

1. Administrators who are perceived to value teachers, their perspectives, and their contributions and
 2. Presence of support mechanisms and structures (e.g., mentoring of new teachers, cohesive school vision).
- *We take our work very seriously and our principal gives us the support and encouragement that we need. It has created a truly unique environment where teachers feel that they are needed and wanted and that they truly make a difference in the lives of our students. He [the principal] has helped create and foster all of this. Teachers like working here. They are recognized for their efforts. (Teacher in a higher growth school)*



Focused Learning Communities

Research shows that a professional community among teachers is a key ingredient contributing to successful schools and school improvement.

- *For the past several years, we have been given time to work in teacher teams, grade-level teams, subject-matter teams, and teams across grades and subjects. This has really improved our focus on what and how we teach. ... We know what is expected of our students entering the next grade and we can develop curricula and assessments that are more closely aligned to those needs. (Teacher in a higher growth school).*
- *We have a common vision now. ... Everyone is on the same page and striving after making this school the best it can be. If we didn't have time to meet as a group I don't know that this would be the case. ... We have been fortunate that he [the principal] values this time and gives us the opportunity to work together to create materials and discuss our curricula. (Teacher in a higher growth school)*



Strong, Engaged Leaders

Evidence indicates that school leadership is critical to student learning, second only to quality of curriculum and teachers' instruction. Having a strong, engaged leader is a powerful element of school success in this study.

- *Everything this school has accomplished we owe to him [the principal]. He really cares, he listens, and he involves everyone.* (Teacher in a higher growth school)
- *She [the principal] has really helped his school to improve. ... She is involved in everything, but doesn't make decisions for us [collaborative school governance]. ... She advocates for us and takes our opinions and concerns seriously.* (Teacher in a higher growth school)



Shared Accountability

Greater success occurs when students are viewed as everyone's responsibility (i.e., a shared moral community; "it takes a village"). Teachers know what is going on not only with their students, but also [with] other teachers' students.

- *[Shared accountability is] a real strength for our school, we have created a very warm and loving atmosphere here and we continue that, I mean that we really build on that. So our kids know that they are cared for and that they are well taken care of and if they have a problem they know that they can go to any person on this campus and that person is going to help them. They also know that if they have contributed to that problem that they will be held responsible too, so there is a high level of accountability. (Principal in a higher growth school)*



Policy Implications and Summary

Policy Implications

1. Promote programs and interventions that stimulate collaborative schools:

- Find new methods to engage community and families and teachers in shared school vision and relationship building
- Promote programs and interventions that build school-wide leadership
- Develop shared accountability between teachers, principals, and students



Policy Implications

2. Support professional dialogue and ongoing learning communities in schools:

- Develop focused learning communities aligned with goals
- Share information and data to identify strengths/challenges and drive forward successes
- Support ongoing professional development for teachers (techniques for enhancing student engagement, knowledge construction, cooperative learning)



Mahalo!

