

East Hawai‘i High School Diploma Plan for Native Hawaiian Adults (2012)

Native Nations Education Foundation’s

Pane‘e Mua Project



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NATIVE NATIONS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Native Nations Education Foundation (NNEF) was founded in 2002 as a global, nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization, dedicated to serving indigenous people through advocacy, education, information, service and volunteer efforts. It focuses on the training, development, research and scholarship of such related projects geared towards improving the lives of indigenous peoples and to protect native cultural integrity through education. In Hawai‘i, NNEF is focused on creating and supporting diverse educational opportunities for Native Hawaiians.

NNEF began direct services in urban Honolulu in 2004, serving approximately 2,500 Native Hawaiian participants and their families via three USDOE funded grants. These grants provided funds for the establishment of a Community Learning Center (CLC) providing Adult Education and Hawaiian cultural activities as well as a High School diploma program with Farrington Community School for Adults where we were successful in graduating Native Hawaiians with High School diplomas. NNEF also created a Hawaiian culture based Math and Science curriculum in partnership with Nā Pua No‘eau: Center for Gifted and Talented Native Hawaiian Children in Hilo. The third grant funded a mentoring program with students from Hālau Lōkahi Public Charter School and Kalihi area elementary schools.

In 2008, NNEF moved our base of operation to Hilo town, Hawai‘i; and in 2010, NNEF’s Pane‘e Mua Project (PMP) was awarded a three-year grant under the Administration for Native Americans (ANA). This program offers a GED/C-Based High School certificate course along with life skills, workforce preparedness, and Hawaiian culture classes for Native Hawaiians adults 18 years and older in East Hawai‘i. All programs are offered at NO COST to participants.

PANE‘E MUA PROJECT

Pane‘e mua is a Hawaiian phrase, meaning to progress forward, one move at a time. In 2010, when NNEF identified a need for community and adult education in East Hawai‘i, especially for individuals seeking a High School diploma, we developed a project to address these issues, providing educational opportunities that would allow for supported and steady progression forward. In the Fall of 2010, NNEF’s Pane‘e Mua Project (PMP) received a three-year grant from the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) to provide a comprehensive High School diploma and Community Learning Program with workforce preparedness, life skills, and a Native Hawaiian cultural component to East Hawai‘i’s Native Hawaiian adult community.

In PMP’s GED/C-Based High School diploma courses we are directly assisting Native Hawaiians in meeting the State of Hawai‘i’s high school diploma requirements. We also provide mandatory supplemental classes in life skills, workforce preparedness, and Hawaiian culture to our High School diploma students and separate workshops in these same areas to the East Hawai‘i Native Hawaiian community.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN DATA

This High School Diploma Plan for Native Hawaiians in East Hawai‘i is a plan for the Pane‘e Mua Project to follow as it seeks to accomplish its objectives and provide comprehensive coursework to our Hawaiian community that fulfill State of Hawai‘i Department of Education requirements and provides mandatory supplementary courses that provide training in the areas of life skills, workforce preparedness, and Hawaiian culture. The course selection of the supplementary courses will be guided by the preferences of the Hawaiian community as expressed in the NNEF *East Hawai‘i Educational Needs Assessment Survey*. This Plan gives an overview of the challenges that continue to face the Native Hawaiian people as well as important strategies used to alleviate these challenges. It covers the status of Native Hawaiians as it relates to education and income; and it gives a brief synopsis of the *East Hawai‘i Educational Needs Assessment Survey* that NNEF commissioned and the resulting interest indicators of East Hawai‘i Native Hawaiian adults. The East Hawai‘i Native Hawaiian Adult High School Diploma Plan is drawn from the original goals and strategies expressed in the ANA grant, the *East Hawai‘i Educational Needs Assessment Survey* and the needs of the community relating to education and income. PMP’s goal for its Adult High School Diploma Plan is to consider the interests and needs of our community and plan accordingly.

POPULATION

The *2010 Census* reports the population of Hawai‘i Island to be at 185,079. That is a 24.5% increase since 2000 when it was reported at 148,677. 12.1% of 185,079 identified themselves as being Native Hawaiian and/or Other Pacific Islander. As of the writing of this Plan, the 2010 Census has not tabulated results for further breakdown of the specific Native Hawaiian demographics. Other statistics that are used are from *Aloha Counts*, extracted from the *Census 2000 Special Tabulations for Native Hawaiians* and compiled by Kamehameha Schools. These tabulations separate out the Native Hawaiian statistics from other Pacific Islanders, providing a more complete picture of how Native Hawaiians are progressing in various areas such as education and income. More recent statistics utilized are from the Hawai‘i Department of Education (DOE), *County of Hawai‘i Data Book* and the NNEF’s *East Hawai‘i Education Needs Assessment Survey*.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION

According to recent DOE statistics for the school year 2003-2004, Native Hawaiians enrolled in public schools in East Hawai‘i comprised 37.6% of the total population of East Hawai‘i school students which has followed a 20 + year trend of increased enrollment of Native Hawaiian students in the public school system, thereby constituting the largest population therein. And yet, a higher percentage of Native Hawaiians are less likely to graduate from high school as opposed to their non-Hawaiian constituents. The Native Hawaiian high school student faces many obstacles to their matriculation from high school; and for those who do leave with diploma in hand, it remains questionable whether they have been adequately prepared for future social and economic opportunities.

A study by Kamehameha Schools Research & Development entitled, *Left Behind? The Status of*

Hawaiian Students in Hawai‘i Public Schools, report social and educational inequities for Native Hawaiians that articulate various challenges the Native Hawaiian student faces hindering their matriculation from high school.

- *Native Hawaiian students are more likely than their non-Hawaiian peers to attend low-quality schools. Fully 79% of predominantly Hawaiian student attended schools are in corrective action, compared to just 17% of predominantly non-Hawaiian schools.*
- *Schools with high concentrations of Native Hawaiians tend to have teachers with less experience and tenure. Generally, this relationship between size of Hawaiian student enrollment and teacher qualifications is statistically significant, even after controlling for differences in the student body’s economic background, English proficiency, and special education needs.*
- *The standardized test scores of Hawaiian students are the lowest among all major ethnic groups, consistently lagging behind total DOE averages by at least 9%. Moreover, the gap between Hawaiian student scores and total DOE averages increases as students move through the system.*
- *Hawaiian students are overrepresented in the special education system. In School-Year 2000-2001, more than 18% of Hawaiian students were classified as requiring special education, compared to just 11% of non-Hawaiian students.*
- *Absenteeism is more prevalent among Hawaiian students than non-Hawaiians. Nearly 10% of Hawaiian students missed more than 20 days in a semester during School Year 1999-2000, compared to just 6% of non-Hawaiians.*
- *Compared to other ethnic groups, Hawaiian students come from more economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as evidenced by their higher rates of participation in the subsidized lunch program. Whereas more than one-half of Hawaiian students receive subsidized lunches, just one-third of non-Hawaiian students do so.*
- *The graduation rates of Hawaiian students are among the lowest in the DOE and grade retention rates among the highest. Between grades 9 and 12, more than one in five Hawaiian students will be retained in grade. Hawaiian students are also most likely to be classified as “missing” from the system.*
- *Despite guidance programs aimed at decreasing high-risk behavior, Hawaiian adolescents have the highest rates of juvenile arrest, and are more likely than their non-Hawaiian counterparts to use drugs and engage in early sexual activity.*

Graduating from high school is proven to strongly correlate to an increase of social and economic opportunities to advance in life. The chart below, taken from the Hawai‘i DOE website, presents statistics of all students matriculating through the DOE system in East Hawai‘i for the school year 2008-2009.

Table 1: Hawai‘i DOE June Graduate Statistics 2008-2009 (DOE Website)								
School	BOE Diploma		Regular Diploma		Certificates		Non-Completers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hilo Hi	120	36.8%	189	58.0%	2	0.6%	15	4.6%
Honoka‘a Hi & Int	22	15.2%	109	75.2%	8	5.5%	6	4.1%
Ka‘ū Hi/Pahala El	21	33.9%	38	61.3%	2	3.2%	1	1.6%
Ke Kula O Nāwahīokalani‘ōpu‘u	0	0.0%	10	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Kea‘au Hi	54	26.3%	127	62.0%	12	5.9%	12	5.9%
Kealakehe Hi	101	25.9%	268	68.7%	21	5.4%	0	0.0%
Kohala Hi	0	0.0%	72	98.6%	1	1.4%	0	0.0%
Konawaena Hi	45	24.7%	124	68.1%	0	0.0%	13	7.1%
Laupāhoehoe Hi & El	1	7.7%	10	76.9%	2	15.4%	0	0.0%
Pāhoa Hi & Int	26	22.8%	81	71.1%	4	3.5%	3	2.6%
Waiākea Hi	102	35.4%	143	49.7%	6	2.1%	37	12.8%
N = Number of students % = Percentage of students BOE Diploma = Average of 3.0 or higher & completion of Senior Project Certificate = Conferred to SPED students who completed IEP requirements Non-Completers = Students who did not graduate								

These numbers reflect the high percentages of students in East Hawai‘i who do not graduate through the DOE system. When the numbers are further broken down according to ethnic background, the proportion of Hawaiians who do not graduate, in comparison to their non-Hawaiian counterparts, is even more alarming.

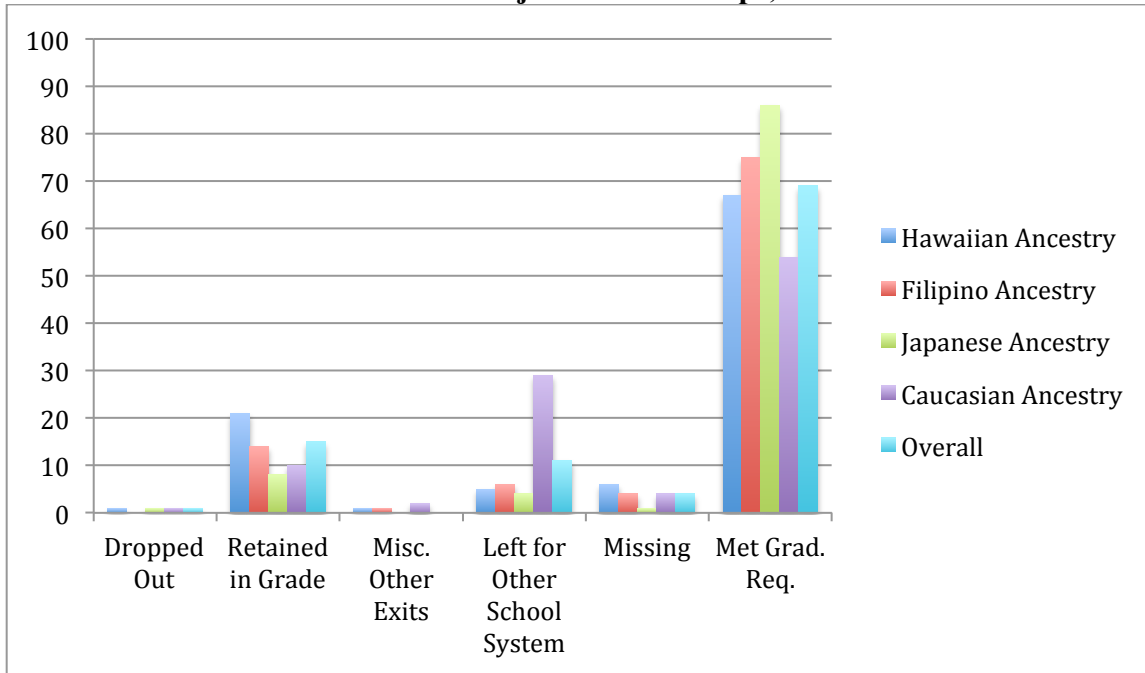
According to a study done by the Hawai‘i State Department of Education and The Kamehameha Schools in 2000 entitled, *High School Persistence and Completion for Selected Ethnic Groups in the Hawai‘i Public Schools*, data from the classes of 2000 and 2001 from public schools show that Hawaiian students are somewhat less likely to graduate than their non-Hawaiian counterparts.

The DOE has 25 exit codes for students leaving the public school system. For the purposes of the Kamehameha /DOE study they were condensed into five categories. They are as follows:

- *Left for other school system*
- *Dropped out*
- *Met graduation requirements*
- *Miscellaneous other exits*
- *Retained in grade*

The chart below shows the percentages of Hawaiian high school students that fell within these five categories in comparison to three other major ethnic groups in Hawai‘i high schools.

Figure 1: Outcomes for DOE High School Students for the Four Major Ethnic Groups, Class of 2000



**Statistics taken from the study entitled, "High School Persistence and Completion for Selected Ethnic Groups in the Hawai'i Public Schools".*

The study comments on the findings of these figures as follows:

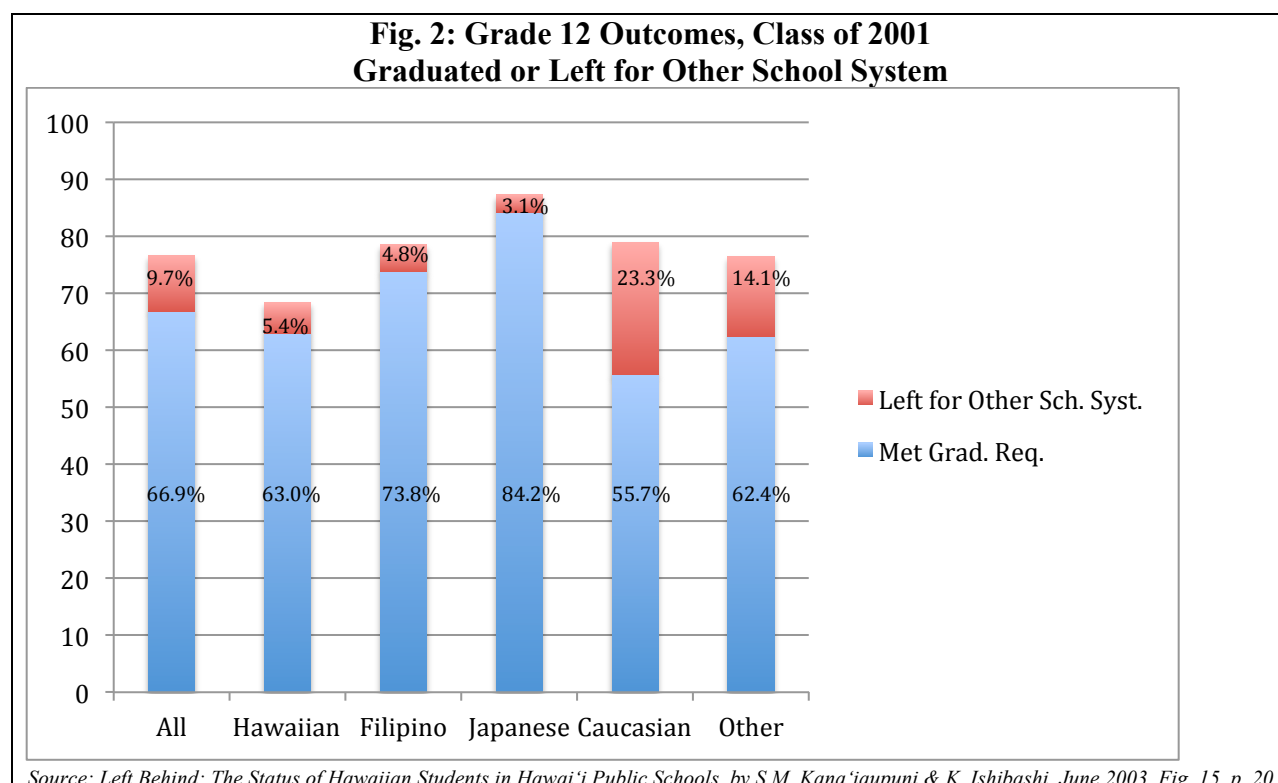
A total of 90 percent of Japanese students, 83 percent of Caucasian students, and 82 percent of Filipino students either graduated with their class or left for another school system. However, only 72 percent of Hawaiian students fall into these two categories. The single largest area of difference is in retention in grade: 21 percent of Hawaiian students compared to 12 percent of all non-Hawaiian students are retained in grade and do not later catch up with their class to graduate within four years. Hawaiian students are also more likely to drop out, exit for miscellaneous reasons, or not be accounted for in the DOE student database. A total of 8 percent of Hawaiian students fall into these three categories, as compared to 7 percent of Caucasian students, 5 percent of Filipino students, and 2 percent of Japanese students.

As we may gather from these numbers,

- 1) about one in five Hawaiian students are retained in grade, ranking it highest in comparison with other ethnic groups in this study; and
- 2) more Hawaiian students are likely to be "missing" from the DOE system than non-Hawaiian students.

These two categories account for a large number of Hawaiians who do not matriculate. Hawaiian students who are held back, in most cases do not graduate with their original class, with some dropping out all together.

In another study cited from *Left Behind? The Status of Hawaiian Students in Hawai‘i Public Schools*, by S.M. Kana‘iaupuni and K. Ishibashi, the findings are even less in favor for Hawaiian students.



As this chart suggests, Hawaiian students, at 68.4% with a combined “met graduation requirement” and “transferring to a different school system,” have the lowest rate of success.

A further point of interest in the study, *High School Persistence and Completion for Selected Ethnic Groups in the Hawai‘i Public Schools*, was in comparing the transfer percentages from DOE schools between Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians. Low graduation rates among other groups reflected a larger transfer to other (private or continental US) schools. For example, Caucasians have a 23.3% rate of transfer to another school system and only 54% graduate from a Hawai‘i public school with their class; whereas Hawaiians have only a 5.4% rate of transfer, with 63% graduating. Thus, even though high school transfer rates could account for the low percentage of graduation amongst Caucasian students within Hawai‘i DOE schools, no such reasoning may be accounted the statistically low graduation rates for Hawaiian students.

These challenges Hawaiian students face in graduating from a Hawai‘i DOE high school are often then predictive of future challenges for Hawaiian wellbeing, both economically and socially. Although investment in education is not the only indicator of advancing on social and economic opportunities in life, it is a proven significant contributor. *Hawai‘i County* statistics pinpoints that,

69% of Native Hawaiians with college degrees are employed full-time, compared to only 55% for those with a high school diploma, and 30% for those with less than a high school education.

The *Census 2000 Supplementary Survey* further details that,

Native Hawaiians who graduated from college have a median income of \$43,000, compared to \$17,500 for high school graduates and \$11,000 for those without a high school diploma.

As these points clarify, the more invested in education the higher the resulting social and economic opportunities and standard of living. Education is indeed a key factor in economic advancement and oftentimes breaking a cycle of poverty that has generationally continued. It encourages economic self-sufficiency and affords a person the vantage of larger social and economic opportunities. This is a key consideration, integral to the philosophy of the Pane'e Mua Project in encouraging the forward progression of its students. A part of PMP's GED/C-Based program encourages students to continue their education beyond the achievement of their high school diploma by providing them with information and referrals to sources that could help them attain a post-high education and or good employment.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

Based on Kamehameha Schools, *Aloha Counts*, extracted from the *Census 2000 Special Tabulations for Native Hawaiians*, the number of Native Hawaiian headed families for Hawai'i Island who fell within the income limits to be classified as poverty status numbered 1,495 or 17.4% of all Native Hawaiian headed households. Native Hawaiian individuals of the same status numbered 8,950 or 21.1% of all Native Hawaiian individuals; and of that number, 4,430 or 17.6% were 18 years and older. The breakdown of Native Hawaiian household incomes for Hawai'i Island is as follows:

- 33.2% at \$24,000 or less;
- 31.4% at \$25,000-\$49,999;
- 18.7% at \$50,000-\$74,999;
- and 16.7% at \$75,000 or more.

Tabulations for Native Hawaiian households for Hawai'i Island numbered at 10,715. Of these households, the income of:

- 1,370 or 12.8% at less than \$10,000;
- 689 or 6.4% at \$10,000 to \$14,999;
- 1,490 or 13.9% at \$15,000 to \$24,999;
- 3,549 or 33.1% under \$25K [poverty line]

Based on Kamehameha Schools, *Aloha Counts*, extracted from the *Census 2000 Special Tabulations for Native Hawaiians*, Native Hawaiian-headed families for Hawai'i Island numbered at 8,610. Of these families, the income of:

- 990 or 11.5% at less than \$10,000;
- 509 or 5.9% at \$10,000 to \$14,999;
- 1,114 or 12.9% at \$15,000 to \$24,999;
- 2,613 or 30.3% under \$25K [poverty line]

44% of East Hawai‘i households are at or below the threshold of poverty.

The overall unemployment rate for Hawai‘i Island has remained above 9% since 2009. As of September 2011 it increased to 9.6% (*Google Public Data Explorer*). What these statistics reflect, in part, are the overwhelming numbers of Native Hawaiians that have continuously subsisted without basic resources over extended periods of time. The *Native Hawaiian Data Book 2006* points out that what remains problematic is the fact that a disproportionately large percentage of Native Hawaiians still lack access to resources to meet basic needs, such as: food, shelter, primary health care, employment, training, and safety; and central to the problem of accessing resources is the fact that too many Hawaiians remain impoverished. This economic depression for Native Hawaiians is only exacerbated on Hawai‘i Island due to its larger size, spreading thin the few possibly means of support to alleviate economic stress. Statistically, as shown on data indexes relating to income, employment, and public assistance, Native Hawaiians still rank among the highest in negative social indicators. The *Native Hawaiian Data Book 2006* stated it clearly saying,

Native Hawaiians are among those with the lowest median incomes, highest unemployment rates, and prompted the phrase, ‘homeless in their own land.’

Native Hawaiian males and females of 16 years and over are at nearly 72% and 65% represented, respectively, in the labor force, which are higher in both cases than the US averages. However, they are also more likely to be unemployed; and their unemployment rates are higher than the US averages. In addition, Native Hawaiians of ages 25 to 54 years in Hawaii are about 2% points more likely to not be in the workforce compared with their counterparts on the continental US. Higher unemployment levels may not be due to the lack of jobs but rather to individuals who are actively seeking employment but lack the necessary education, skills and/or training. (*Native Hawaiian Data Book 2006*)

A little less than 5% of total Native Hawaiians are self-employed or own their own business. According to the 1997 Economic Census, there are 15,554 Native-Hawaiian-owned firms in the US, out of which 6,600 firms (or 42%) are in Hawaii. A Native Hawaiian-owned firm is usually a one-person operation, with assistance usually provided by family members. Only 2,023 firms (or 13%) out of the total Native Hawaiian-owned firms are with paid employees (*Native Hawaiian Data Book 2006*). Effective approaches to support entrepreneurship and increase the number of Native Hawaiian-owned firms are necessary to increase the wealth of Native Hawaiians.

HAWAIIAN CULTURE-BASED EDUCATION

Hawaiian Culture-Based Education (CBE) is a trend that started in Hawai‘i as pilot projects, most notably at Honoka‘a High School’s Hawaiian Academy. This gave rise to the charter school movement in the late 90s which the Hawaiian community readily adopted as a means to change the outcome of public school education for Native Hawaiian students. Today Hawaiian Culture-Based charter schools are still largely made up of a Native Hawaiian student body. There is also growing evidence that reinforces the idea of establishing Hawaiian culture as a foundational basis of the educational process. This idea has proved successful especially in schools where the student body is predominantly Native Hawaiian. Infusing culture into

education is nothing new. Schools are the primary vehicle for educating as well as socializing youth. In past and at present, the culture taught at Hawai‘i schools has been and is predominantly American with a Western worldview.

Although these biases may be invisible or unrecognized, students of indigenous and other minority communities often feel disconnected in an educational system in which their values, knowledge, and practices are largely ignored. Resulting educational disparities are evident. The gaps are particularly enduring among cultural groups that have not voluntarily migrated to this country with the intent of assimilating. (Culture-Based Education and It's Relation to Student Outcomes, Sept 2010 S. Kana‘iaupuni, B. Ledward, U. Jensen).

This holds true with Native Hawaiians, Native Americans, and Native Alaskans whose lands were taken over by the United States and whose cultures were nearly wiped out.

Since the 1970s “Hawaiian Renaissance,” Native Hawaiians have been making efforts to bring Hawaiian culture and language back to the people. Educationally, there are classes and programs in traditional DOE as well as non-traditional Charter schools, departments at colleges, and Hawaiian immersion schools that have all had a cumulative impact on raising Hawai‘i’s consciousness regarding its indigenous culture.

As prior research indicates, cultural relevance matters because it directly impacts student engagement, learning, and achievement. In education, efforts have been made to include non-Western cultural traditions and knowledge and to promote cultural awareness and tolerance for diversity in our schools and nation. These efforts have led to the practice of teaching about cultures rather than grounding teaching and learning within the culturally relevant framework of a particular community. (Culture-Based Education and It's Relation to Student Outcomes, Sept 2010 S. Kana‘iaupuni, B. Ledward, U. Jensen).

A Hawaiian Culture-Based education became a concept more commonly understood as Hawaiian Charter Schools began re-envisioning the educational needs of their students, and was in part articulated by Professor Manulani Aluli Meyer in her book, *Ho‘oulu, Our Time of Becoming: Hawaiian Epistemology and Early Writings*. Culture-based education does not only help students to better understand the relationship between themselves and the information they are learning but engages their awareness in their local surroundings, community, and the environment. What is revolutionary about this movement is that for decades, Hawaiian has not been and is not the dominant culture in Hawai‘i; but Hawaiian Culture-Based Education has not only brought Native Hawaiians an understanding of their homeland, its protocols, and culture, but has reached a wider audience with its use in the public school system, helping to bridge differences among Hawai‘i’s various races through promoting cultural awareness and tolerance for diversity.

An unexpected and added plus that has come out of the practice of using a Hawaiian Culture-Based curriculum is its positive effect on math and reading test scores. It has been found that teaching a Hawaiian Culture-Based curriculum raises the students’ overall sense of self and produces positive results in these academic indicators.

...CBE is positively related to math and reading test scores for all students, and particularly for those with low socio-emotional development, most notably when supported by overall CBE use within the school. (Culture-Based Education and It's Relation to Student Outcomes, Sept 2010 S. Kana‘iaupuni, B. Ledward, U. Jensen).

These findings are significant because of the importance of Math and reading as an essential skill for basic living and for furthering the educational goals of students.

The Pane'e Mua Project is working with the East Hawai'i Community School for Adults (CSA) in order to provide our students with State of Hawai'i Department of Education high school diplomas. What sets PMP apart from other programs that also run GED/C-Based courses, is our mode of delivery. PMP infuses the standard DOE curriculum with a Hawaiian culture base, enriching and enlivening the classroom experience for the Native Hawaiian students. These students are regularly exposed to Hawaiian protocol, perspectives, and values; and in a manner that is inclusive of all of them, they *pane'e mua*, or progress along, one move at a time. In addition to this everyday instruction, PMP also offers supplemental mandatory classes for the GED/C-Based students that include Hawaiian culture, life skills and workforce preparedness.

ADULT HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA PLAN

INTRODUCTION

East Hawai'i has always shown a need for adult education services. Hawai'i Island's vast size, the distance to population centers, and the isolation of many pockets of population all contribute to this need. With the drawn out recession and East Hawai'i's hard-hit economy consistently coupled with high unemployment rates, NNEF is concerned that Native Hawaiians in East Hawai'i may be longer in recovering from this recession as compared to other communities in the State of Hawai'i. As a part of the solution and a step towards encouraging our people back into the workforce, NNEF seeks to provide much needed services to help our Native Hawaiian population regain economic stability. The GED/C-Based Plan specifically addresses the low opportunity for community adult education in East Hawai'i, especially for those in need of a High School Diploma.

Currently, the only provider of GED/C-Based classes in East Hawai'i is the DOE's Hilo Community School for Adults (CSA) which has had to cut services and is in danger of being closed down altogether due to lack of funding. There is no provider of GED/C-Based classes in East Hawai'i that offers a comprehensive program that includes (1) workforce preparedness (2) life skills and (3) a Hawaiian cultural component. The current situation leaves little opportunity for East Hawai'i's Native Hawaiian population to take positive steps forward towards gainful employment. PMP will work with DOE's CSA to ensure compliance with State of Hawai'i requirements in providing a GED/C-Based certificate of completion. PMP will provide a much needed resource to our Native Hawaiian community to gain a high school certificate of completion. In addition, PMP will plan workshops for the GED/C-Based students to coincide with their classes. The results of NNEF's *East Hawai'i Educational Needs Assessment Survey* completed in 2011 will be utilized to ensure that our community's interests are incorporated into our class selection. We will work with our community partners and other organizations in East Hawai'i to procure sites and expertise to teach these classes.

GOALS

The overall goal of this High School Diploma Plan is two-fold:

- 1) To provide Native Hawaiian adults in need of a High School diploma with a supportive and culturally appropriate learning program that meets or exceeds the State of Hawai'i's High School diploma requirements; and
- 2) to provide the GED and C-Based students with supplemental mandatory courses in workforce preparedness, life skills, and Hawaiian cultural enrichment.

To achieve these goals, Native Nations has hired skilled staff to coordinate and implement courses, including a Project Director, Head Project Teacher, Enrichment and Community Coordinator, and Information & Retention Specialist.

In addition to the State of Hawai‘i, Department of Education, Hilo Community School for Adults, we have also secured five other East Hawai‘i community organization partnerships, which allows us to better share resources and information as well as expand our reach. These organizations are:

- Keaukaha Elementary School
- Keaukaha Technology and Resource Center
- Alu Like, Inc., Ho‘omānea ‘Ōiwi – Employment and Training
- Nā Pua No‘eau, Center for Gifted and Talented Native Hawaiian Children
- Five Mountains Hawai‘i

CHALLENGES

Native Nations has identified three prominent challenges that may potentially hinder students’ access to PMP’s educational programs, namely:

- 1) Size: Hawai‘i Island is geographically the largest island in the Hawaiian archipelago. Its size could nearly encompass all the other major Hawaiian islands twice over. The two main sectors of the island are East Hawai‘i and West Hawai‘i. Our service sector covers 4 of 5 Districts in East Hawai‘i, namely, Puna, Hilo (North and South), and Hāmākua.
- 2) Transportation: The lack of reliable transportation is another potential challenge to our students. There is no public transportation other than a bus service, recently begun and slowly growing, but remaining sparse and difficult to access in most areas of the island. Driving is the preferred mode of transportation on Hawai‘i island because of the distances between destinations, but many of our targeted clientele, without a GED, are struggling for employment in an economically depressed area where jobs are already a scarcity, and, thus, are often times extremely frugal on any gas expenditures, if they even have their own vehicle to expend it on.
- 3) Community Awareness: NNEF continues to operate PMP out of Hilo town, the seat of government for the County of Hawai‘i and the hub and center of commerce and education for the East side of Hawai‘i. Spread throughout our service sector are numerous pockets of very rural communities, and tapping into the communication network of these communities is a challenge. Tapping into newspaper and radio media along with pasting various community buildings with information flyers are but a small step in raising awareness to the opportunities our program offers. Building trust within the communities is the largest challenge for these opportunities to even register as something viable for any potential clientele. That is done via word of mouth, which simply takes time and constant exposure through participation in various community activities.

COMMUNITY NEEDS AND INTERESTS

The Adult High School Diploma Plan seeks to provide an outline for addressing some of the educational needs of East Hawai‘i’s Native Hawaiian adult population by pinpointing classes and workshops in the areas of life skills, workforce preparedness, and Hawaiian culture that are in demand for the communities in this area. Towards this end, NNEF conducted an *East Hawai‘i Educational Needs Assessment Survey* for the Native Hawaiian population. With this survey, NNEF collected a sampling of respondents from main towns and districts in East Hawai‘i so the results could reflect the needs of East Hawai‘i. The number of respondents from each district mirrored the population concentrations with the highest percentage of respondents coming from the districts of Hilo (North & South), followed by the district of Puna, and last by the district of Hāmākua. The surveys were disseminated with the help of Hawaiian community organizations and other businesses known to serve the Native Hawaiian community. A sample size of 371 respondents was derived from a possible pool of 9,560 people who were projected to self-identify as Native Hawaiian on the 2010 US Census. The survey’s purpose was two-fold:

- 1) to establish the attitudes that Native Hawaiians have towards education at various levels; and
- 2) to determine what kinds of Community classes Native Hawaiian adults seek.

The results of this survey show that PMP’s targeted community is most interested in the following classes by category and districts.

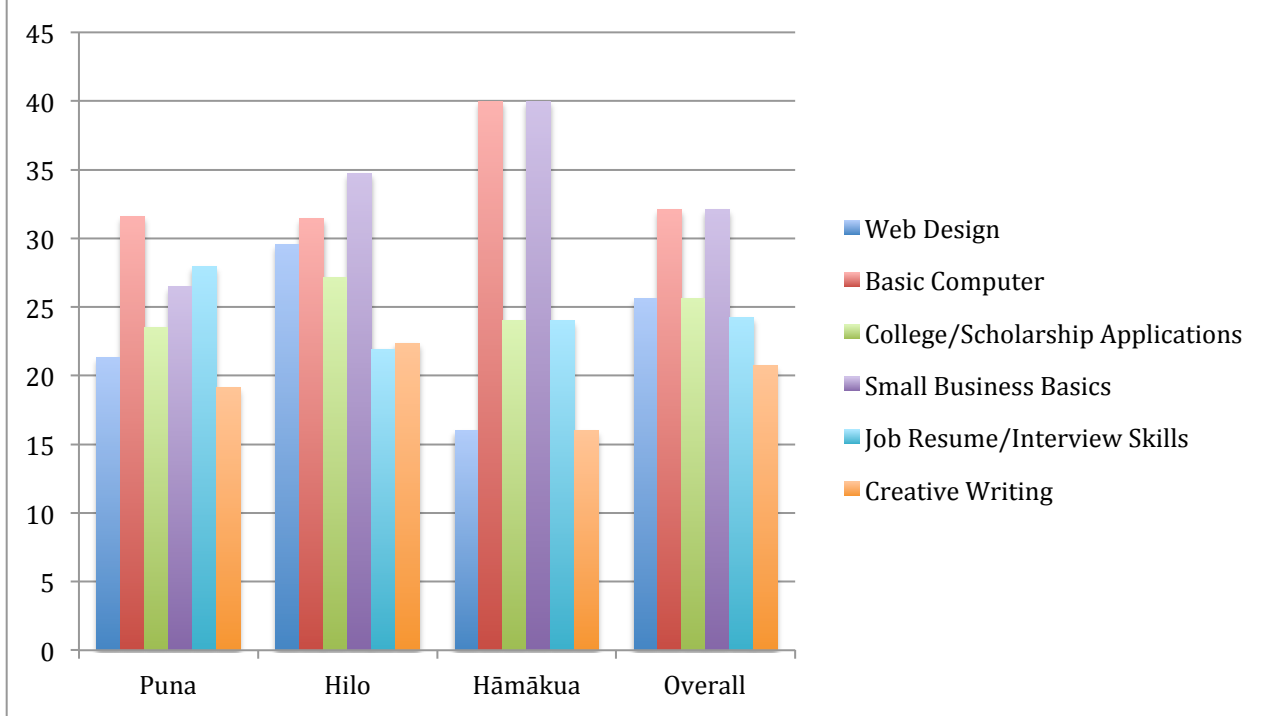
Workforce Preparedness

The first set of classes deal with Workforce Preparedness. Classes listed for selection included:

- Web Design
- Basic Computer
- College/Scholarship Applications
- Small Business Basics
- Job Resume/Interview Skills
- Creative Writing

A section was also included for personal suggestions. The figure below shows the percentage of demand for Workforce Preparedness classes for the main service districts of Puna, Hilo (North & South) and Hāmākua, including results for overall.

Figure 3: Workforce Preparedness Class Interests



**Source: Native Nations Education Foundation's East Hawai'i Education Needs Assessment Survey, 2011*

As the figure above shows, the top three Workforce Preparedness class selections for each district and overall are as follows.

Puna District:

- Basic Computer
- Job Resume/Interview Skills
- Small Business Basics

Hilo Districts (North & South):

- Job Resume/Interview Skills
- Basic Computer
- Web Design

Hāmākua District:

- Basic Computer
- Small Business Basics
- College/Scholarship Applications
- Job Resume/Interview Skills

Overall:

- Basic Computer
- Small Business Basics
- Web Design

- College Scholarship/Applications

The table below delineates in specific the percentage demand for Workforce Preparedness classes.

Table 2: Interest in Workforce Preparedness Classes				
Class	Puna (out of 136 respondents)	Hilo (out of 210 respondents)	Hāmākua (out of 25 respondents)	Overall (out of 371 respondents)
Web Design	21.32%	29.52%	16.00%	25.61%
Basic Computer	31.62%	31.43%	40.00%	32.08%
College/Scholarship Applications	23.53%	27.14%	24.00%	25.61%
Small Business Basics	26.47%	34.76%	40.00%	32.08%
Job Resume/Interview Skills	27.94%	21.91%	24.00%	24.26%
Creative Writing	19.12%	22.38%	16.00%	20.75%
No Response	?	?	?	16.98%
<i>*The percentage of each District reflects interests of the respondents from that District that chose that class. The overall percentage reflects interests of the total 371 survey participants that chose that class.</i>				
<i>*Source: Native Nations Education Foundation's East Hawai'i Educational Needs Assessment Survey, 2011</i>				

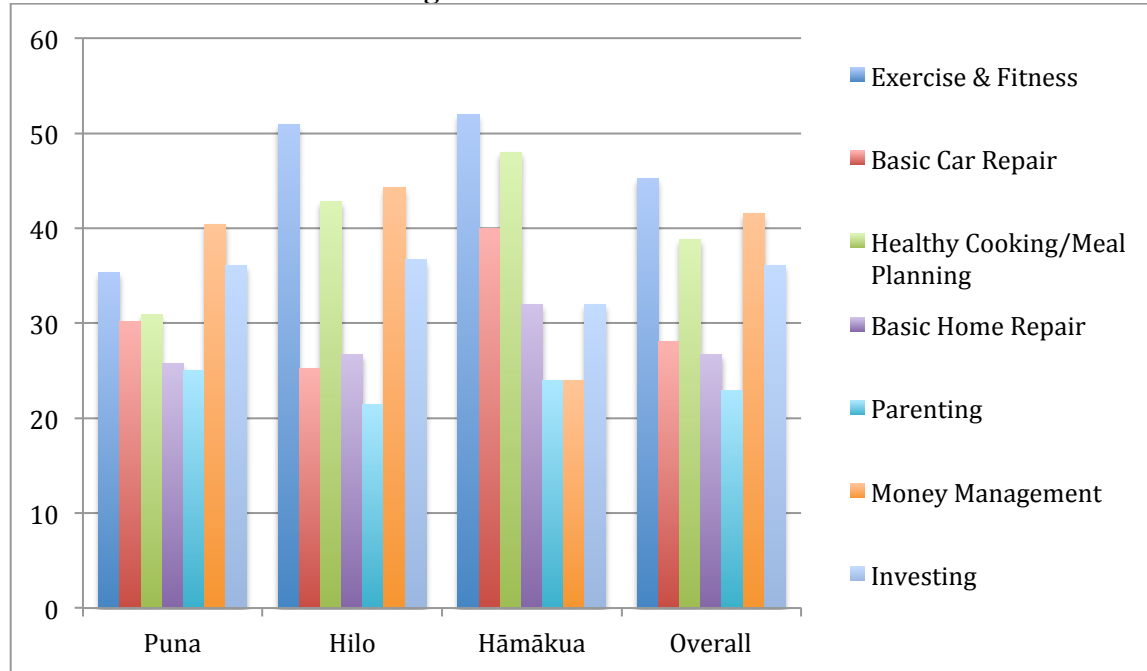
Life Skills

The second set of classes deal with Life Skills. Classes listed for selection included:

- Exercise & Fitness
- Basic Car Repair
- Healthy Cooking/M meal Planning
- Basic Home Repair
- Parenting
- Money Management
- Investing

A section was also included for personal suggestions. The figure below shows the percentage of demand regarding Life Skills classes for the main service districts of Puna, Hilo (North & South) and Hāmākua, including results for overall.

Figure 4: Life Skills Class Interests



**Source: Native Nations Education Foundation's East Hawai'i Education Needs Assessment Survey, 2011*

As the figure above shows, the top three Life Skills class selections for each district and overall are as follows.

Puna District:

- Money Management
- Investing
- Exercise & Fitness

Hilo Districts (North & South):

- Exercise & Fitness
- Money Management
- Healthy Cooking/Meal Planning

Hāmākua District:

- Exercise & Fitness
- Healthy Cooking/Meal Planning
- Basic Car Repair

Overall:

- Exercise & Fitness
- Healthy Cooking/Meal Planning
- Money Management

The table below delineates in specific the percentage demand for Workforce Preparedness classes.

Table 3: Interest In Life Skills Classes				
Class	Puna (out of 136 respondents)	Hilo (out of 210 respondents)	Hāmākua (out of 25 respondents)	Overall (out of 371 respondents)
Exercise and Fitness	35.29%	50.95%	52.00%	45.28%
Basic Car Repair	30.15%	25.24%	40.00%	28.03%
Healthy Cooking/M meal Planning	30.88%	42.86%	48.00%	38.82%
Basic Home Repair	25.73%	26.67%	32.00%	26.69%
Parenting	25.00%	21.43%	24.00%	22.91%
Money Management	40.44%	44.29%	24.00%	41.51%
Investing	36.03%	36.67%	32.00%	36.12%
<i>*The percentage of each District reflects interests of the respondents from that District that chose that class. The overall percentage reflects interests of the total 371 survey participants that chose that class.</i>				
<i>*Source: Native Nations Education Foundation's East Hawai'i Educational Needs Assessment Survey, 2011</i>				

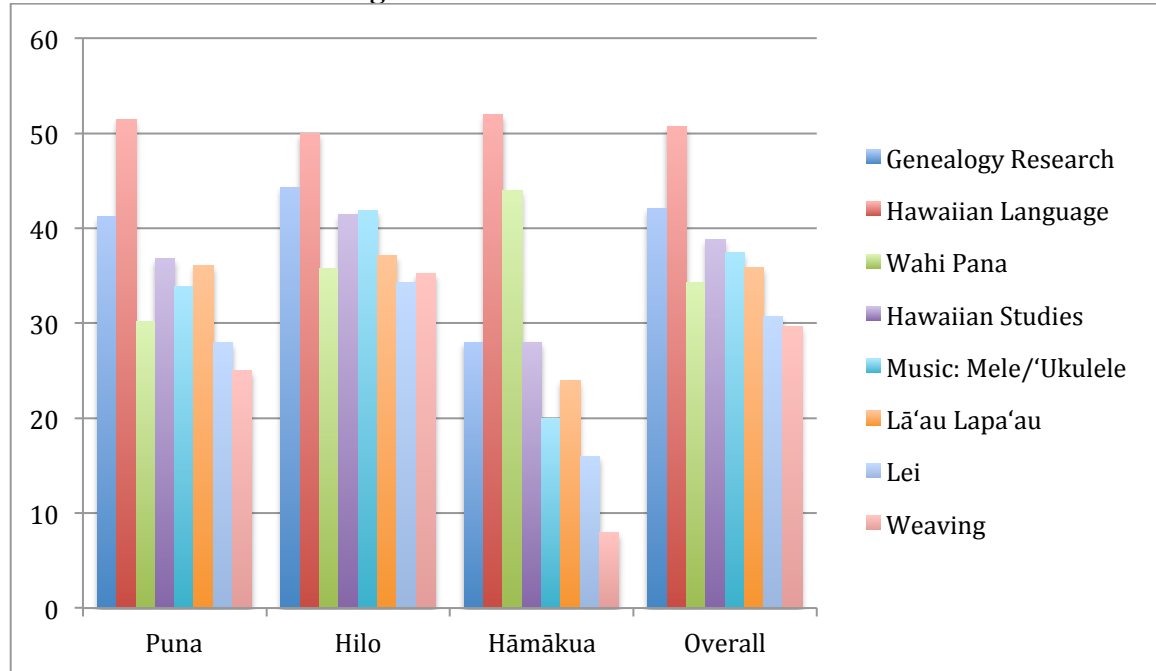
Hawaiian Culture

The third set of classes deal with Hawaiian Culture. Classes listed for selection included:

- Genealogy Research
- Hawaiian Language
- Wahi Pana
- Hawaiian Studies
- Music: Mele/'Ukulele
- Lā'au Lapa'au
- Lei
- Weaving

A section was also included for personal suggestions. The figure below shows the percentage of demand regarding Hawaiian Culture classes for the main service districts of Puna, Hilo (North & South) and Hāmākua, including results for overall.

Figure 5: Hawaiian Culture Class Interests



**Source: Native Nations Education Foundation's East Hawai'i Education Needs Assessment Survey, 2011*

As the figure above shows, the top three Hawaiian Culture class selections for each district and overall are as follows.

Puna District:

- Hawaiian Language
- Genealogy Research
- Hawaiian Studies

Hilo Districts (North & South):

- Hawaiian Language
- Genealogy Research
- Music: Mele/'Ukulele

Hāmākua District:

- Hawaiian Language
- Wahi Pana
- Genealogy Research
- Hawaiian Studies

Overall:

- Hawaiian Language
- Genealogy Research
- Hawaiian Studies

The table below delineates in specific the percentage demand for Hawaiian Culture classes.

Table 4: Interest In Hawaiian Culture Classes				
Class	Puna (out of 136 respondents)	Hilo (out of 210 respondents)	Hāmākua (out of 25 respondents)	Overall (out of 371 respondents)
Genealogy Research	41.18%	44.29%	28.00%	42.05%
Hawaiian Language	51.47%	50.00%	52.00%	50.67%
Wahi Pana	30.15%	35.71%	44.00%	34.23%
Hawaiian Studies	36.77%	41.43%	28.00%	38.81%
Music: Mele/‘Ukulele	33.82%	41.91%	20.00%	37.47%
Lā‘au Lapa‘au	36.03%	37.14%	24.00%	35.85%
Lei	27.94%	34.29%	16.00%	30.73%
Weaving	25.00%	35.24%	8.00%	29.65%
<i>*The percentage of each District reflects interests of the respondents from that District that chose that class. The overall percentage reflects interests of the total 371 survey participants that chose that class.</i>				
<i>*Source: Native Nations Education Foundation’s East Hawai‘i Educational Needs Assessment Survey, 2011</i>				

APPROACH

Pane‘e mua, as we’ve come to understand, is the methodical but sure progression forward, one step at a time. It is the guiding principle of this very project and a foundational concept of our GED/C-Based Plan. Towards this end, from initial contact to graduation, everything is geared to the *pane‘e mua* of our students via supported access and individualized attention in a Hawaiian culture based environment.

All our programs are free, in order to increase access for Native Hawaiians to attend and succeed in our program. Financial hardship is a common situation for many Native Hawaiians seeking their High School diploma. The Pane‘e Mua Project seeks to defer this often times overwhelming obstacle by providing free course instruction, study materials and examinations.

PMP also aims for clarity in all its communications with students. The expectations of the Pane‘e Mua Project and Hawai‘i Department of Education requirements students must meet in order to graduate are stated and described prior to any class instruction. At the same time, two-way ease of communication is encouraged as PMP strives to maintain good student rapport. When there is mutual respect between staff and students learning becomes enjoyable.

Student accountability, or *kuleana*, is a quality we stress. The Pane‘e Mua Project schedules class meeting times to accommodate most students’ busy life. We understand many of our students have families and/or employment and other pressing obligations. There will be times when life circumstances supersede class attendance. PMP encourages our students to accept *kuleana* for those instances, should they occur, by communicating any such difficulties to our staff and setting alternate plans to make-up any missed work and/or time. PMP staff will also follow-up if a student misses classes without an explanation. We make the effort to provide students the opportunity to make-up missed classes of reasonable excuse. We work closely with our students in scheduling classes so they may simultaneously work or raise a family as they also

strive to attain a high school diploma. Our overall objective is to work with our students to get them through the GED/C-Based programs and on to the next opportunity in their lives.

Pane'e Mua works to create a learning environment with a sense of *'ohana* and other Hawaiian values. Every class is begun with an *'ōlelo nō'eau* (Hawaiian proverb) and *oli* (Hawaiian chant) which is continuously incorporated throughout the lesson of the day. Pane'e Mua teachers bring the standard curriculum alive for students by relating lessons to Hawaiian culture and history as well as geographically specific and local examples. This increased relevancy provides an easier and more memorable understanding not only of the basic GED/C-Based curriculum but also its relationship to Hawaiian being and culture, and in this way, as Hawaiian students, a deeper understanding of how this knowledge applies to their life.

PMP also understands and appreciates that there are various modalities of learning. When students hit a bump in understanding, lessons are deconstructed and put forth in ways that address various learning styles (audio, visual, kinesthetic, etc.) to the point that can be understood thus accommodating various methods of understanding. In class students are also encouraged to demonstrate knowledge in their preferred style. Once confidence in the material is realized, students are then guided toward demonstrating knowledge in the method necessary to pass the examinations. In addition to Hawaiian culture, the GED/C-Based lessons are also supplemented with workforce preparedness and life skills materials.

In case additional support is needed, PMP provides excellent group and one-on-one tutoring services. In providing GED/C-Based instruction, experience has shown that students usually have difficulties in math and writing. We provide tutoring in these subjects along with others, as needed.

To meet the needs of today's job market and educational system, computer skills are essential. PMP realizes access to and familiarity with computers is lacking for many in our Native Hawaiian community; therefore, we offer computer literacy classes, in partnership with one of our sister organizations, to provide support with basic computer skills.

When it comes time for testing, experience has shown that Native Hawaiians don't always score well on standardized tests although they are quite knowledgeable on the material. To help alleviate and overcome the barriers this type of testing method engenders, PMP teaching staff ease students through the process by being present at the test site and welcoming them with an *oli* (chant), grounding them in Hawaiian sensibilities. This oftentimes calms and centers the students, increasing their likelihood for success.

PMP celebrates successes along the way to mark achievements, no matter how small, and encourages students to strive for the next benchmark. As a culminating celebration of their achievements, NNEF holds a Graduation Ceremony for every class that completes the GED/C-Based coursework. We provide food and music and invite our community partners and families to also celebrate in this recognition of the accomplishments of our graduates. There is presentation of certificates and tying of *kīhei*, representing a holding fast of the knowledge they have learned as we send them on to greater opportunities, marking a new beginning in their lives.

As a part of our *‘ohana*, NNEF continues to keep in touch with our graduates and applauds any future successes they achieve.

Last but not least, PMP provides food and drink refreshments at various class, workshop and graduation functions. In western educational settings, this practice may appear frivolous or unnecessary, but not so for PMP. In practical respects, many of our students arrive at class hungry, having come straight from a full day of work or errands. Providing food alleviates the distraction of hunger and/or irritability, contributing to more effective instruction periods. Sharing food is also a cultural practice that builds community and promotes a feeling of *‘ohana* strongly valued in our program.

In working closely with our students to address these and other various needs we are able to provide a supportive atmosphere so our students may then devote clear and focused attention to the lessons at hand and ultimately, walk out the door with diploma in hand.

Overall, PMP seeks to improve the educational skills and background of the East Hawai‘i Native Hawaiian community in the areas of workforce preparedness, life skills, and Hawaiian culture. In providing the various courses and supplemental mandatory classes for the GED/C-Based students that were most highly requested in Native Nations Education Foundation’s *East Hawai‘i Educational Needs Assessment Survey*, we are adding to the expertise of our students so they may use these skills to progress in their work, in their education, and in their lives. Within this same survey, 80% of the participants expressed a desire for lifelong learning. The Pane‘e Mua Project, in helping our students progress along one step at a time, seek to address this need while supporting ongoing interest in continuous educational advancement for Native Hawaiian adults.

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