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"KA NA'I PONO" A MESSAGE FROM THE KAMEHAMEHA KINGDOM OF CHILD EDUCATION

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1. PROLOGUE

The intended mission of this short essay is to introduce to the readers, especially to the Japanese readers, a marvelous education and research center in Honolulu, Hawaii. It is called the Kamehameha Schools/Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estate.

The Kamehameha Schools/Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estate is a unique complex of properties, facilities, and activities for education, research, and training services. At the present time, the Schools seem to be well known to American educators and researchers, especially to those who are concerned with the education of children from minority groups and from families of different cultures. If we assume that the Bank Street College of Education in New York is "A Mecca of new era approach for educational practice and research in East America," then the Kamehameha Schools should be regarded as the "Mecca in West America."

They have much in common : a) a history of about a hundred years since the establishment of the first school ; b) vigorous activities for developing new educational programs ; c) a dynamic and effective combination of educative practical activities and academic research ; d) a special emphasis on teacher training ; e) well-organized school systems starting from pre-kindergarten (nursery school) and going up to college (or high school) ; f) a strong concern for the cultural background of children ; and g) self-sustaining financial policies.

Frankly speaking, the author was totally ignorant of the "two great cradles in the East and the West for education in the new era," until his recent visit to the Kamehameha Schools (a real stroke of luck) having been introduced by Professor Howard H. Crowell of Hawaii University. Here, an attempt will be made to describe some characteristic aspects of the educational efforts and research activities at the Kamehameha Schools, the "Mecca of new education in West America."

2. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS AND KEEP

According to the "Imua Kamehameha : Forward into the Eighties," guidebook for parents and visitors, Kamehameha Schools was established in 1887 and is going to celebrate its hundredth anniversary in a few years. Despite its rather long history, however, Kamehameha Schools was not widely known until the 1970's except through it's curious association with King Kamehameha The Great and associated lands and cultural

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facilities.

Based on several years of laborious effort which was focused upon exploring new approaches to education for Hawaiian and part-Hawaiian children, dramatic growth and change of the Schools has been evident since the 1970's. Before that time, the Schools had many problems. Children's school achievement was almost abysmal. Even at the high school level, a large proportion of students were virtually illiterate. These facts affected teachers' morale and attitudes toward children. Many teachers complained about children, by characterizing them with negative labels such as lazy, stupid, unmotivated, disinterested, unruly, defiant, uninvolved, and dishonest. Those negative aspects of the Hawaiian children were systemic and it was almost mandatory for researchers and teachers to literally undertake a paradigmatic revolution in their thinking and practice with respect to education.

A typical embodiment of the Schools efforts is seen in KEEP. KEEP stands for the Kamehameha Early Education Program. KEEP started its activities in 1970 and in the subsequent five years four major lines of research were pursued : 1) reading, 2) linguistics ; 3) student industriousness ; and 4) teacher training/consultation. In each of these areas, researchers developed new ideas and programs. In particular, research on the latter two (i.e. student industriousness and teacher training/consultation) deserve special attention. The reason why the researchers came to focus on the topic of student industriousness is simple enough to understand, it was because Hawaiian children's poor achievement was conceived of as a result of their laziness (insufficient industriousness). Researchers made various attempts to enhance industriousness, including the increase of student work time ; advice for teachers with respect to using more positive reinforcement ; and making the school and classrooms compatible to the children's cultural background. Needless to say, such promotion of industriousness resulted in the significant improvement of school achievement.

3. HOW TO MAKE THE CLASSROOM COMPATIBLE TO CHILDREN'S CULTURAL BACKGROUND?

Deviating from the traditional psychological interpretation that tends to ascribe poor school achievement to children's personal deficits (cognitive and socio-emotional), the KEEP research group investigated cultural backgrounds. Over a long period of time, they made intensive and extensive observations and conducted full interviews with Hawaiian families. They found that children play important roles in family life from a very early age. They take initiative and accept responsibility for such daily chores as laundry work, housecleaning, cooking, yard work, car maintenance and repair, care for young siblings, and, for adolescents (especially males), earning cash by doing part-time jobs. Of course the roles and responsibilities allocated to children are not in excess of their abilities. However, children's participation is inevitably necessary in order to keep such large Hawaiian family households running. Due to the above mentioned cultural practices, Hawaiian children come to prefer active participation in group activities and doing things in collaboration. Participation through active contribution of effort is one of the primary solidifying mechanisms of the Hawaiian family. Thus, the traditional ideas and practices of teacher-centered instruction proved ineffective for Hawaiian

children. However, these children certainly have the desired participation routines within their existing behavioral repertoires. What is needed in order to elicit them in the classroom setting is simply the formal "permission" of the teacher and a few altered circumstances in order to enhance the childrens' spontaneous participation. For example, the teacher must : 1) minimize verbal directions ; 2) minimize close supervision ; and 3) allow the peer-group to organize, select, and "assign" specific tasks for itself. These are the very characteristics of the average Hawaiian mother.

The other practical rules for making the classroom compatible with the children's culture are as follows :

1) The classroom door must be opened. Through this, the teacher can allow children instant access to the classroom from the moment of their arrival at school. This might seem trivial, but it is importantly different from the custodial system of making children line up outside a closed door and wait for a bell before the door is opened.
2) The teacher must model a routine. Modeling and imitation are the most common forms of learning for Hawaiian children in their daily life. Through modeling, the children are allowed to observe the teacher's performance of required tasks, thus allowing chiliren to feel comfortable in following their familiar method of observational learning. Because abstract verbal statements and instructions are not characteristic of the children's cultural background, the provision of modeling and imitation is highly important in order to facilitate learning.
3) The teacher must retire from a task as soon as the children take over. As stated earlier, Hawaiian children are accustomed to participating willingly in group activities and are able to judge their own readiness to take over more complex parts of a job. Therefore, the teacher does not have to stay long in the position of supervisor. When the children feel that they are being totally trusted by the teacher, they often perform better.
4) The teacher must allow leadership to emerge naturally from the class. Traditionally, teachers tend to take it as their alleged role to assign tasks to children and to nominate some preferred children to be class leaders. However, the effective leadership does not necessarily lie where teachers expect it to lie. Children are often good at finding their own good leaders. The children's perception of a good leader sometimes contradicts that of the teacher's. No child can lead the class without peers' respect and cooperation.
5) The teacher must not interfere when the children are negotiating with one another. From the perspective of child-centered education, the teacher must refrain from obtrusive intervention into the children's social problem solving processes. Reflecting their own cultural values and professional training as educators, teachers tend to impose their values on children. However, children's value systems and their perception of problem situations may be quite different from teachers'. Since children are ready to find solution through negotiation, the teacher must not interfere with this process.

4. IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER TRAINING

Another conspicuous characteristic of KEEP is that it specifically emphasizes

teacher training. However, children's spontaneous involvement is important in classroom activities, as well as the role and responsibility of the teacher being crucial in education. KEEP employed two study approaches for teacher training : 1) closely supervised case studies of teachers in training, with qualitative data taken on both teachers and children's behaviors in the classroom ; and 2) component-process studies involving both KEEP staff and public school teachers. The latter studies are simultaneous evaluations of various forms of "export consultation" to cooperating public schools. Thus, the ideas and programs developed by KEEP are now widely spreading not only in Hawaii Islands, but also in many other States of the United States Mainland such as Alaska, Arizona, and California, where better education for minority group children is being eagerly pursued.

5. PROBLEMS OF HAWAIIAN CHILDREN

Although the accomplishments of KEEP and of other efforts at the Kamehameha Schools are paramount, for the children who attend other schools there are various problems and tasks awaiting further studies and practical intervention.

According to the results of the Native Hawaiian Education Assessment Project (NHEAP), the Hawaiian students (as a whole) score below parity with national norms on standardized tests in reading and mathematics (see figure 1).

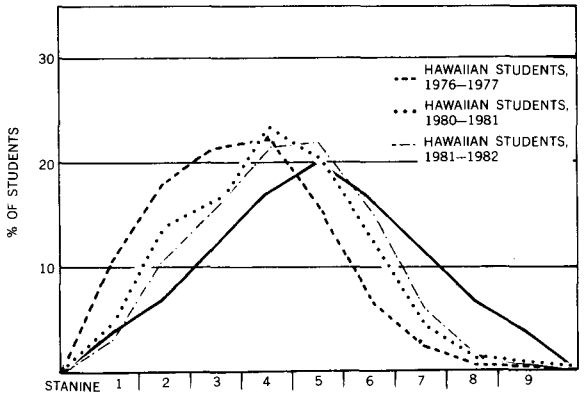

FIGURE 1. Reading achievement of Hawaiian fourth graders compared to national norm.

"Stanine" on the left bottom of the figure refers to a transformation of the normalized standard score, which provides a single-digit system of scores with a mean of 5 and an SD of approximately 2. The name stanine (a contraction of "standard nine") is based on the fact that the scores run from 1 to 9.

As seen in figure 1, Hawaiian children have steadily improved in their reading achievement during the past ten years, but are still behind the national average.

Table 1 shows a disproportionately high rate of absenteeism for Hawaiian students in each of ten public schools studied in Hawaii.

TABLE 1

Rates of excessive absenteeism (20 or more days absent from school per semester)

SCHOOL	% OF TOTAL STUDENT BODY	% OF HAWAIIAN STUDENTS
1	60.5	66.9
2	53.8	55.2
3	51.9	59.8
4	51.9	58.1
5	48.2	79.7
6	47.3	60.8
7	43.6	60.8
8	43.2	71.6
9	43.2	64.9
10	36.4	54.1

As an aspect of cultural backgrounds which affect children's behavior and achievement at school, the NHEAP survey refers to the stereotypic perception of Hawaiians as illustrated in figure 2.

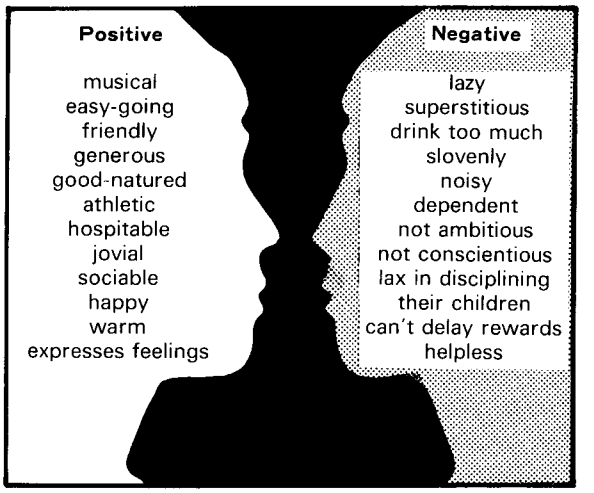

FIGURE 2. Stereotypes of Hawaiians.

In order to overcome the problems and disadvantages of Hawaiian children, more extensive efforts should be made, learning from the excellent pioneer efforts of the Kamehameha Schools.

6. SUMMARY OF THE KEEP FINDINGS

Here, an itemized summary of the major findings of KEEP might be in order.

1. KEEP's program to train its own staff in motivating children has been extremely successful.

2. KEEP's children are, on the average, 20% more industrious than children of comparison schools.
3. One contributing factor is that of providing children with success experiences and a rich diet of teacher praise. In comparison with both local and mainland schools, KEEP teachers praise children 3 times as much and scold them less.
4. KEEP children have the same average IQ scores as national norms by the time they have completed the kindergarten year at KEEP. (They are lower than national norms when they begin kindergarten.)
5. KEEP's children are handicapped in learning mathematics by their difficulties in reading and understanding word problems. Otherwise, they could probably perform at national norms in mathematics.
6. Even when KEEP children are very industrious they do not achieve grade-level reading proficiency when using available, standard curricula.
7. Reading-readiness programs in kindergarten are neccessary and valuable.
8. A reading curriculum for KEEP children should not begin with phonics, nor be primarily based on phonics.
9. Even though many KEEP children do not use Standard English in everyday speech, they still understand it.
10. There is a high correlation between skill in Standard English and skill in Hawaiian Islands Creole, as measured by KEEP tests. Relative to their classmates, there are very few children who are good in one dialect and poor in another.
11. Being a pidgin speaker does not in itself handicap a child in learning to read, even when instruction is in Standard English.
12. Skills in Standard English and Hawaiian Islands Creole are both related to reading achievement. However, Standard English skills are slightly more important.
13. Verbal IQ is more important for learning to read than skills for either Standard English or Hawaiian Islands Creole.
14. (Hawaiian Islands Creole English) Pidgin speakers show steady improvement in Standard English speech skills from ages five to nine . This improvement occurs in rural, suburban, and urban schools.
15. The grammatical features of Standard English that are difficult for Creole-speaking children are the same ones that are troublesome for Mainland Caucasian children. An investigation in progress indicates that this is also true for Indian, Black, Chinese, Japanese, Mexican immigrant, Korean, Philippino, and Hawaiian Americans living in California.
16. Hawaiian Creole speakers show steady improvement in Hawaiian Creole from ages five to seven, just as they show steady improvement in Standard English. There is no evidence of a decline in Creole-speaking ability as the result of attending school.
17. By age nine, Creole speakers are able to use Standard English. This occurs without special drills or programs.
18. It is probably true that increasing the number of oral language opportunities and activities in general is more likely to affect academic achievement than drill or special classes focused on Standard English. Research and development will be needed to define and train teacher classroom skills that foster oral language develop-

ment.

19. Social environment strongly affects oral language performance. Thus, Creole-speaking children will not always show the Standard English competence they have in test situations.
20. In the kindergarten classroom, children interact and speak to others in patterns that have nothing to do with either Standard English or Hawaiian Creole ability. There is no tendency for kindergarten children to group themselves in terms of the dialect they use.
21. Kindergarten verbal ability scores are higher for children who attended preschool, but there is no difference on any measure when the children complete first grade. KEEP children who did not attend preschool perform the same on first grade reading achievement tests as those that did attend.
22. The best predictors of first grade reading achievement are general verbal ability and reading-readiness scores.
23. The clusters of intellectual abilities in the KEEP population are identical to previous studies in other educationally disadvantaged populations.
24. Family background is strongly related to school achievement.
25. Hawaiian mothers use a different teaching style than U. S. Mainland mothers ; they use more demonstration than verbal instructions. For KEEP children, school achievement is related to the mother's use of verbal directions.
26. KEEP students do as well or better than appropriate comparison schools which do not carry out extensive research. Hawaiian-American children in many schools, including KEEP, perform below grade level in basic academic areas.
27. KEEP students show large and significant increases during kindergarten in school and reading readiness. They do not show increases of that magnitude in reading achievement in first grade.
28. About 10-15% of KEEP children have serious intellectual/learning deficiencies that require special education.
29. KEEP has devised effective methods for training public school teachers to motivate their pupils (when those teachers are interested in learning how).
30. At least half of our teachers are also competent trainers and consultants to DOE (Department of Education, i. e. "Public") teachers.
31. Effective cooperation has been maintained between KEEP and the DOE Board of Education, the superintendents, principals, and those teachers with whom we have worked.
32. We have successfully exported to DOE teachers the following : management techniques, improved classroom organization, curriculum materials and techniques in math and reading.
33. We have intensively studied two basic forms of exporting : workshops and continuing resource consultation. Both have been effective in meeting their goals. There is no real difference in cost. Both are labor-intensive.
34. To successfully influence public education on behalf of Hawaiian children, it is necessary that individual teachers be motivated to learn new skills. Further research is needed to find ways of enhancing teachers' motivation for participation in

KEEP training.

Finally, the Hawaiian phrase "Ka Na'i Pono" in the title of this paper means "Striving for Excellence."

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