Supporting Native American Language Instruction
Meeting for Project Directors
Native American and Alaska Native Children in School Program
U.S. Department of Education’s Office For English Language Acquisition
Washington, D.C.

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NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE ISSUES
• NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE KEY TO CONTINUITY OF IDENTITY, SPIRITUALITY
• EVERY SINGLE NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE IS FACING EXTINCTION BY 2100
• INDIVIDUAL NATIVE AMERICANS HAVE RIGHT TO THEIR LANGUAGES
• N.A. GOVERNMENTS HAVE RIGHT TO THEIR LANGUAGES
• N.A. GOVERNMENTS NEED HIGHLY EDUCATED MULTILINGUAL CITIZENS

‘AHA PŪNANA LEO P–20 HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE
• Key to identity: I ka ‘ōlelo nō ke ola; I ka ‘ōlelo nō ka make. (In language is life and death.)
• Endangered: In 1983 less than 50 children under age 18 fluent—total population 300,000
• NALA 1990 and UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples
• Hawaiian is official in state of Hawai‘i (note parallel to Puerto Rico, many tribes)
• ‘Aha Pūnana Leo developed P-20 system for Hawaiian–based multilingualism

A LANGUAGE NEST/SURVIVAL SCHOOL MODEL
• Goal 1. Hawaiian survives as “PRIMARY” language – English “AUXILIARY” (like Puerto Rico)
• Goal 2. Hawaiian speakers must have higher academic outcomes than English speakers
• Goal 3. Hawaiian speakers must have higher English outcomes than English speakers
• Goal 4. Hawaiian speakers must have higher foreign language outcomes than English speakers
A SITE PROFILE P–12
NĀWAHĪOKALANI‘ŌPUʻU SCHOOL

- 325 students (infants through 18 year olds)
- 96% Native Hawaiian
- 70% Free and Reduced lunch program
- Coordinated between private non-profit, Hawaiian language college, public charter school and public high school

NATURAL STRENGTHS OF THE HAWAIIAN MODEL

- INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE ACADEMIC ADVANTAGE
  - Student (and family) identification with language revitalization results in support for academics
  - English seen as an academic goal, rather than, as forced assimilation to be resisted
  - English easy to learn due to surrounding dominant population and its media
  - Immigrant student resistance to non–English language as “old country” is not a factor
  - Cognitive advantages of very high bilingualism and biliteracy support academics
  - High biliteracy/bilingualism supports high multilingualism/multiliteracy

NĀWAHĪOKALANI‘ŌPUʻU SCHOOL OUTCOMES

- Goal 1. Hawaiian Primary – all students fluent – Hawaiian now first language of 33%
- Goal 2– Academics – 100% high school graduation, 80% go on to college, early college enrollment
- Goal 3– English same as Native Hawaiian in English medium schools – working to further improve
- Goal 4– Foreign language – still growing, but, most comprehensive primary school Japanese program on island

THE HAWAIIAN MODEL AT NĀWAHĪOKALANI‘ŌPUʻU

- Total Hawaiian medium P–12 connected to supportive indigenous college (13–20)
  - 13–20 COMPONENT–Undergraduate/Graduate, Teacher Education, Doctorate
  - English Grade 5–12 (as an English Language Arts Course)
  - HAWAIIAN early “PARAGRAPH” reading at age 4
INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AND BEST PRACTICE

- Aligned with “world class” education of Finland (The administration’s A Blueprint for Reform)

FINLAND A COUNTRY WITH A “WORLD CLASS” EDUCATION SYSTEM

- Finland has “world class” education among top countries in PISA (Programme for International Students Assessment)
- Finland’s national languages all official and full medium of education and official in their traditional areas
- Finland’s practice meets the UN Declaration on Indigenous Rights

PARALLELS BETWEEN FINLAND’S EDUCATION AND THE HAWAIIAN MODEL

- As with the Hawaiian model at Nāwahīokalaniʻōpuʻu School
- Finland’s school languages (Sami, Finnish, Swedish) are little known elsewhere
- Finland’s schools teach English as an additional language
- Finland’s schools produce graduates with knowledge of several languages
- Finland’s schools produce high academic achievement

SPREAD OF HAWAIIAN MODEL CONSISTANT WITH “BLUEPRINT FOR REFORM”

- USDE seeks “world class” education
- Finland for example
- USDE seeks support for Native American languages
- Blueprint for Reform pg. 22
- USDE seeks students with multilingual skills
- Blueprint for Reform pgs. 8, 16, 29, 32
**NCLB CHALLENGES TO NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE P–20 Model**

- NCLB not in compliance with NALA or UN DECLARATION
- Title I testing, teacher qualification greatest barriers
- Medium of education should be medium of testing
- Teacher requirements must be realistic for N.A. languages
- Limited Discretionary Funding Opportunities
- Lack of familiarity of educational establishment and best practice for indigenous language medium education
- Immigrant transitional bilingualism dominates the construct
- Wrong assumptions that curriculum simply "translates"*
- Grouping with Puerto Rico positive trend
- N.A. languages and Puerto Rico together in Title III
- Puerto Rico’s (but not N.A.) uniqueness addressed in Title I

**P-20 HAWAIIAN MODEL BRINGS HOPE**

- Support Native American linguistic/cultural continuity
- Nurture Native American values for social stability
- Produce academic excellence
- Provides the benefits of high multilingualism
- Connects P–12 education to native higher education

**HAWAIIAN MODEL SPREADING**

- Hawai‘i P-12 streams statewide (2,300 students and growing)
- Established as P-8: Blackfeet, Navajo, Cherokee, Central Alaskan Yup’ik
- Expanding in other languages: Ojibwe, Arapaho, Atsina (White Clay)
- ‘Aha Puna Leo in a national consortium with some of these schools
- ‘Aha Puna Leo/Hawaiian language college working with native colleges

**HIKI KE LANAKILA! we can succeed!**